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HISTORY OF THE JEWS

HISTORY OF THE JEWS

BY

HEINRICH GRAETZ

VOL. II

From the Reign of Hyrcanus (135 B. C. E.) to the Completion of the Babylonian Talmud (500 C. E.)

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135–106 B. C. E.

The reign of Hyrcanus is at once the pinnacle and the turning-point of this period. He not only carried on his father's work, but completed it. Under his predecessors Judæa was confined to a narrow space, and even within these bounds there were territories in the possession of foreign foes. Hyrcanus enlarged the boundaries to the north and to the south, and thus released the State from the external pressure that had been restricting its growth. His genius for war was aided by fortunate circumstances in bringing about these happy results.

If the reign of Hyrcanus corresponds in brilliancy to that of Solomon, it resembles it also in another respect: both reigns commenced and ended amid disturbance, sadness and gloom, while the middle of each reign was happy and prosperous. When Solomon first came to the throne he was opposed by Adonijah, the pretender to the crown, whom he had to subdue; and upon 2
Hyrcanus a similar but more difficult task devolved—that of carrying on a struggle with several opponents. One of these opponents was his brother-in-law, Ptolemy ben Habub, the murderer of his father, who had also sought after Hyrcanus's own life. It was only the support of the Syrian army, however, which could make Ptolemy dangerous, the inhabitants of Jerusalem having instantly declared themselves in favor of Hyrcanus as the successor of the murdered Simon. Still, both his safety and his duty called upon him to punish this unscrupulous enemy, and to avenge his father's death. Hyrcanus hastened, therefore, to attack him in his fortress before Antiochus could bring his troops to his relief. There is some uncertainty as to the progress of this siege and its result; according to one account, evidently somewhat embellished, Hyrcanus could not put his whole strength against the fortress, because his mother (by some it is said, together with his brothers) had been placed on the walls by Ptolemy, and was there horribly tortured. Like a true Hasmonæan, the heroic woman is said to have encouraged her son to continue the siege, without heeding her sufferings, and to persevere in his efforts until the murderer of her family should receive the chastisement due to his crimes. Hyrcanus's heart was torn by conflicting feelings; revenge towards his reckless foe urged him on, whilst tender pity for his mother held him back. The fact is, however, that Hyrcanus withdrew without accomplishing his purpose. It may have been the Sabbatical year which prevented him from proceeding with the siege, or, as is much more likely, his operations may have been interrupted by the approach of the Syrian king, who was advancing with his army to glean some advantage for himself from the troubles and the confusion in Judæa. After the withdrawal of Hyrcanus's troops, it is said that his mother and brothers were put to death by Ptolemy, who fled to Philadelphia, the former Ammonite capital 3
(Rabbath Ammon), where he was favorably received by the governor, Zeno Cotylas. The name of Ptolemy is no more mentioned, and he disappears altogether from the page of history.

A far greater danger now threatened Hyrcanus from Antiochus Sidetes, who was eager to avenge the recent defeat sustained by the Syrians (autumn 135). He marched forth with a large army, devastated the country round about, and approached the capital. Hyrcanus, doubtless feeling himself unable to cope with his enemy in the open field, shut himself up behind the strong walls of Jerusalem. Antiochus laid regular siege to the city and encircled it with elaborate preparations for its conquest. Seven camps were stationed around the city; on the north side, where the country is flat, a hundred three-storied towers were erected from which the walls could be stormed. A broad double trench was likewise made to prevent the sallies of the Judæans, who contrived nevertheless to come forth, thus bravely impeding the work of the enemy, and obstructing the progress of the siege. The Syrian army suffered much from the want of water and from sickness, the natural consequence of that deficiency. The besieged were well supplied with water, but food became scarce, and Hyrcanus found himself compelled to commit an act of cruelty. In order to husband the failing provisions, the inhabitants who could not bear arms were sent out of the city. Perhaps the hope was entertained that the enemy would take pity on them. But to the defenseless, foes are seldom generous. They were not allowed to pass the lines of the besieging army, and were thus exposed to death from both sides. In the meantime the summer passed, and still no prospect of storming the walls offered itself to the Syrians, whilst the Judæans, on account of the scarcity of provisions and the approaching holidays, were anxious for 4
a truce. Hyrcanus made the first overtures, and asked for a cessation of arms during the seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles. Antiochus not only granted that request, but sent him presents of animals with gilded horns for sacrificial purposes, and golden vessels filled with incense. Negotiations for peace followed upon this truce. Antiochus was urged by his advisers to show the greatest severity in his demands upon the Judæans. They reminded him of the policy of Antiochus Epiphanes, who knew no other way of crushing out the hatred of mankind felt by the Judæans than that of obliging them to renounce their peculiar laws. If Antiochus Sidetes had listened to these prejudiced counselors, who saw, according to the biased views of that time, nothing but

cynical exclusiveness in the singular customs of the Judæans, the cruel wars in which the people had fought for their faith would have been repeated. Happily for them, Antiochus had neither the harshness nor the strength to venture upon so dangerous a game. Antiochus contented himself with destroying the battlements of Jerusalem (autumn 134). With that act the dark cloud which had menaced the independence of Judæa passed away.

No great injury had been inflicted upon the State, and even the traces of disaster that had been left were soon obliterated. For Hyrcanus now sent an embassy to Rome consisting of three delegates: Simon, the son of Dositheus, Apollonius, the son of Alexander, and Diodorus, the son of Jason, to entreat the Senate to renew, with the Jewish commonwealth, the friendly treaties, which Rome lavishly accorded to the smallest nations. At the same time they were to complain that Antiochus Sidetes had taken possession of several places in Judæa, and among them the important fortresses of Joppa and Gazara. Rome always sided with the weak against the strong, not from a sense of justice but from self-interested calculation. She desired especially to humble the royal house of the Seleucidæ, which had occasionally shown her a defiant, or at least a haughty mien. The Judæan ambassadors were consequently most favorably received, their requests listened to with attention, and a decree issued by which Antiochus was called upon to restore the fortresses he had taken, and to forbid his troops to march through Judæa; nor was he to treat its inhabitants as his subjects (about 133). Antiochus appears to have acquiesced in this decision.

He was, moreover, obliged to assume a friendly demeanor towards Hyrcanus; for at that moment he was meditating an attack against Parthia, which had formerly belonged to, but had since separated itself from the kingdom of his ancestors. His brother, Demetrius Nicator, had likewise undertaken an expedition against the Parthians, but had sustained a defeat, and was kept in imprisonment for nearly ten years. Antiochus believed that he would be more fortunate than his brother. In addition to the army of 80,000 which he had assembled, he requested the aid of Judæan troops and of the forces of other surrounding nations, and Hyrcanus consented to join with his army in the expedition. The Syrian king treated his Judæan allies with the greatest regard. After a victory gained on the banks of the river Zab (Lycus), he ordered, according to the desire of Hyrcanus, that a two days' respite should take place, so that the Judæans might celebrate their Sabbath and the festival of the Feast of Weeks which followed it (129).

Fortune, however, had changed sides since the time of Antiochus the Great, and no longer favored the Seleucidæan dynasty. Antiochus lost his life in this campaign, and his brother Demetrius, who had been set at liberty by the king of Parthia at the time of the invasion of Antiochus, to be opposed to him as a rival monarch, now reigned in his brother's stead (from 128–125). Hated by the Syrians on account of his long imprisonment in Parthia, Demetrius was opposed by a rival, Alexander Zabina, whom Ptolemy Physcon had set up against him. Demetrius was obliged to flee before Zabina, and could not even find a refuge in Accho, where his wife Cleopatra resided. Syria fell into a state of still greater confusion under his successors, when Zabina disputed the throne with the legitimate heir, Antiochus VIII, the latter finding likewise a competitor in his brother on the mother's side, Antiochus IX. The last pages of the history of Syria are stained with crimes caused by the deadly hatred of the various members of the Seleucidæan house against each other, and with the murders they committed. Soon after the death of her husband Demetrius, Cleopatra had one of her sons, Seleucus, killed, and mixed the poisoned cup for the other one, Antiochus Grypus, who forced her to drink it herself.

Hyrcanus took advantage of this state of anarchy and weakness in Syria, which lasted several years, to enlarge the boundaries of Judæa, until his country attained its former limits. Soon after the death of Antiochus Sidetes, the last traces of vassalage to which the siege of Jerusalem had reduced Judæa were completely wiped out, and even the bonds of alliance were canceled, whilst Alexander Zabina was grateful to be acknowledged by Hyrcanus as king of Syria. It was at this period (124) that the inhabitants of Jerusalem, particularly those included in the great council, made an appeal to the Egyptian community and to the priest, Judas Aristobulus, teacher to the king, and of priestly lineage, to allow the anniversaries of the consecration of the Temple and of the victory over the sinners to be numbered among the memorial holidays of the nation. To strengthen their request they referred to the unexpected help which God had given His people in the evil days of Antiochus, enabling them to restore the sanctuary to its former purity. This appeal from Judæa was at the same time a hint to the Alexandrian community to acknowledge the new conditions that had arisen.

John Hyrcanus, who until then had acted only in self-defense, was now, after the fall of Alexander Zabina (123), ready to strike energetically at Syria. Judæa at that time was encompassed on three sides by foreign tribes: on the south by the Idumæans, on the north by the hated Samaritans, and beyond the Jordan by the Greeks, who had never been friendly to the Judæans. Hyrcanus therefore considered it his mission to reconquer all those lands, and either to expel their inhabitants or to incorporate them with the Judæans; for so long as foreign and hostile tribes existed in the very heart of the country, its political independence and religious stability would be in constant danger. Not only were these hostile peoples ever ready to join surrounding nations, and assist them in their greed for conquest, but they also often interfered with the religious worship of the Judæans, thus frequently giving rise to acts of violence and bloodshed. Hyrcanus was consequently impelled by religious as well as by political motives to tear up these hotbeds of constant disturbance and hostility.

To accomplish so great a task Hyrcanus required all the strength he could muster, and, in order not to tax too heavily the military resources of the nation, he employed mercenaries, whom, it is said, he paid out of the treasures he had found in David's sepulcher. The first place he

attacked was Medaba, in the Jordan district. That city was taken after a six months' siege. Then the army moved on towards Samega, which, situated on the southern end of the Sea of Tiberias, must have been a place of great importance to the Judæans. Next in turn came the towns of Samaria; its capital, Shechem, as well as the temple erected on Mount Gerizim, which had always 8
been a thorn in the side of the Judæans, were destroyed (21 Kislev, about 120). The anniversary of the destruction of this temple (Yom har Gerizim) was to be kept with great rejoicing, as the commemoration of a peculiarly happy event, and no fasting or mourning was ever to mar the brightness of the festival. From this time forth the glory of the Samaritans waned; for, although centuries to come still found them a peculiar people, and, at the present day even, they continue to exist and to offer sacrifice on Mount Gerizim, still, from the want of a central rallying point, they gradually decreased in numbers and prosperity.

After his victory over the Samaritans, Hyrcanus marched against the Idumæans. This people, although fallen very low during the many vicissitudes of fortune attending the constant changes of the Macedonian and Asiatic dynasties, and forced by the Nabathæans to leave their dwellings, had alone, among all the tribes related by blood to the Judæans, been able to maintain themselves, and had preserved their ancient bitter animosity against them undiminished. Hyrcanus laid siege to their two fortresses, Adora and Marissa, and after having demolished them, gave the Idumæans the choice between acceptance of Judaism and exile. They chose the former alternative, and became, outwardly, followers of that faith. The temples of the Idumæan idols were, of course, destroyed, but the priests secretly adhered to their worship. Thus, after more than a thousand years of enmity, Jacob and Esau were again united—the elder serving the younger brother. For the first time Judaism, in the person of its head, John Hyrcanus, practised intolerance against other faiths, but it soon found out with deep pain how highly injurious it is to allow religious zeal for the preservation of the faith to degenerate into the desire to effect violent conversion of others. The enforced union of the sons of Edom with the sons of Jacob was fraught 9
only with disaster to the latter. It was through the Idumæans and the Romans that the Hasmonæan dynasty was overthrown and the Judæan state destroyed.

The first result of the conquest of the Idumæans and of their adoption of Judaism was a new contest with the city of Samaria, now chiefly inhabited by Macedonians and Syrians. A colony of Idumæans had been transplanted from Marissa to the vicinity of Samaria. They were attacked and ill-treated by their neighbors, who were urged on to their acts of aggression by the Syrian kings, Grypus and Cyzicenus. The latter, who resembled Antiochus Epiphanes in his folly and extravagance, manifested in particular a fierce hatred against Hyrcanus. His generals invaded Judæa, took several fortresses near the sea-coast, and placed a garrison in Joppa. Hyrcanus thereupon complained to the Roman Senate, which had guaranteed to Judæa the possession of this seaport, and sent five ambassadors to plead the justice of his cause at Rome. Among these was Apollonius, the son of Alexander, who had appeared before the Senate in a former embassy. Rome replied in fair words to the petition of Hyrcanus, and promulgated a decree forbidding Antiochus Cyzicenus to molest the Judæans, who were the allies of Rome, and commanding him to restore all the fortresses, seaports and territories which he had seized. It was further ordered that the Judæans should be allowed to ship their goods duty free from their ports, a favor not granted to any other allied nation or king, excepting the king of Egypt, who was regarded as the peculiar friend of Rome, and finally that the Syrian garrison should evacuate Joppa. Whether the sentence pronounced by Rome had any great effect upon Antiochus Cyzicenus or not, the fact that it was not adverse to Hyrcanus was so far a boon that it strengthened his cause. It appears 10
to have restrained Cyzicenus within certain bounds.

When, however, Hyrcanus, bent upon punishing Samaria for its enmity to the people of Marissa, besieged that city, causing famine within its walls by closely surrounding it with trenches and ramparts, and thus cutting off every possibility of exit, Cyzicenus came to its assistance. In an engagement with Aristobulus, the eldest son of Hyrcanus, who was conducting the siege conjointly with his younger brother Antigonus, Cyzicenus was defeated and forced to flee to Bethshean (Scythopolis). Too weak to confront the Judæans alone, he called to his help the co-regent of Egypt, Ptolemy VIII (Lathurus), who, inspired by the hatred entertained by the Egyptians against the Judæans, readily complied with that request. His mother Cleopatra, with whom the people had obliged him to share the government, was secretly in league against him, befriending, like her parents, the cause of Judæa. Two sons of Onias IV, Helkias and Ananias, sided with her. It was doubtless on that account that her son took an aversion to the Judæans, and gladly came forth at the call of Cyzicenus to compel Hyrcanus to withdraw from the siege of Samaria. Despite the wishes of his mother, Lathurus sent an army of six thousand men to support Cyzicenus against Judæa. Too weak to venture on meeting the Judæan troops in the open field, the operations were confined to laying waste the country around, in the hope of thus impeding the work of the besiegers. The Judæan princes, however, instead of being forced to abandon the siege, contrived by various manœuvres to compel the king of Syria to leave the scene of action and to withdraw to Tripolis. During one of the battles in which Cyzicenus was beaten, it is said that a voice from the Holy of Holies was heard announcing to Hyrcanus, at the very moment in which it took place, the victory achieved by his sons. He is said to have heard the following words 11
pronounced in Aramaic: "The young princes have defeated Antiochus." The two generals, Callimandrus and Epicrates, whom Lathurus had left behind to continue the hostilities, were not more fortunate than himself, for the first lost his life in some engagement, the second succumbed to bribery, and delivered into the hands of the Judæan princes the town of Bethshean, as well as other places in the plain of Jezreel, as far as Mount Carmel, which had been held by the Greeks or the Syrians. The heathen inhabitants were instantly expelled from the newly conquered cities, and the anniversaries of the recovery of Bethshean and of the Plain (Bekaata), 15–16 Sivan (June,

109), were added henceforth to the days of victory. Samaria, no longer able to rely upon foreign help, was obliged to capitulate, and after a year's siege was given up to the conqueror. Actuated either by revenge or prudence, Hyrcanus caused Samaria to be utterly destroyed, and ditches and canals to be dug through the place, so that not a trace should remain of the once flourishing city. The day of its surrender was added to the number of days of thanksgiving (25th Marcheshvan, November, 109).

Thus Hyrcanus had carried out the comprehensive plans of the Hasmonæans and crowned them with success. The independence of Judæa was assured, and the country raised to the level of the neighboring states. The enemies who had menaced it from every side, Syrians, Idumæans, Samaritans, were nearly all conquered, and the land was delivered from the bonds which had hitherto prevented its development. The glorious era of David and Solomon seemed to have returned, foreign tribes were obliged to do homage to the ruler of Judæa, the old hatred between the latter and Idumæa was blotted out, and Jacob and Esau again became twin brothers. Moabitis, the daughter of Arnon, again sent presents to the mountain of the daughter of Zion. 12
The banks of the Jordan, the sea-coast, the caravan tracks that passed from Egypt through Syria, were all under the dominion of Judæa. She saw also the humiliation of her enemy, Ptolemy Lathurus. The latter was living in constant discord with his mother, the co-regent, who at last aroused the anger of the people against him to such a degree that he was obliged to flee from Alexandria (108). He took refuge in the island of Cyprus, whither Cleopatra despatched an army in pursuit of him. But the troops sent to destroy him went over to his side. The Judæan soldiers who came from the province of Onion, commanded by the generals Helkias and Ananias, the sons of Onias, alone remained faithful to the Queen, and vigorously attacked Ptolemy to force him to leave the island. In Alexandria as in Judæa, at that time, the Judæans played a leading role, and worked together in a common cause for mutual advantage. They fought against common foes, against Lathurus and his ally, Antiochus Cyzicenus.

After all he had achieved for his country, it was only natural that Hyrcanus should cause Judæan coins to be struck, and should inscribe them in old Hebrew characters, but he abandoned the modest example of his father and allowed his own name to appear on them, "Jochanan, High Priest." Upon some of the coins we find, next his name, the inscription "and the Commonwealth of the Judæans" (Cheber ha-Jehudim), as though he felt it necessary to indicate that it was in the name of the people that he had exercised the right of coinage. Upon other coins, however, we find the following words inscribed: "Jochanan, High Priest, and head of the Commonwealth of the Judæans" (Rosch Cheber ha-Jehudim). Instead of the lily which was graven on his father's coins, he chose an emblem similar to that of the Macedonian conquerors—the horn of plenty. Towards the end of his reign Hyrcanus assumed more the character of a worldly potentate, and became 13
more and more ambitious. His constant aim was to enlarge his country and to increase his own power. Hyrcanus appears to have cast a wistful eye upon the widely-extended territory which commanded the route to Damascus. The conquest of Ituræa, a tract of country lying to the east of Mount Hermon, which his successors completed, appears to have been planned by him. But a formidable disturbance in the land, which he was unable to suppress, speedily followed by his own death, prevented him from carrying out this undertaking. And this disturbance, apparently insignificant in its beginning, took so unfortunate a turn that the great Hasmonæan edifice, built up with so much labor and care, was completely destroyed. For the second time the Judæan State, having reached its highest pinnacle of prosperity, ascertained that it was not to maintain itself in external greatness.

The high tide of political development, which swept over Judæa whilst that country was under the dominion of John Hyrcanus and his predecessors, could not fail to permeate the life of the people, and in particular to stimulate all their spiritual powers. With only short interruptions they had, during half a century, been continually engaged in a warfare in which they were alternately victorious and defeated, and in which, being brought into contact with various nations, now as friends, now as foes, they attained a greater maturity, and their former simple existence rose to a more complex and a higher life. The hard struggles by which they had achieved independence caused them to examine more curiously into their own condition, and to hold fast to their national traits; but it led them also to adopt those foreign views and practices which appeared to blend harmoniously with their own. If the pious Judæans had formerly opposed with all their might everything that bore the Hellenic impress, many of them were now convinced that among the 14
customs of Greece there might occasionally be something which they could adopt without prejudice or injury to their own faith. The Hasmonæans had not only learnt from their neighbors the arts of war, how to fashion arms and construct fortresses, but also the peaceful arts of coining money with artistic ornamentation, and the rules of Greek architecture. A magnificent palace, evidently built in the Grecian style, arose in Jerusalem. In front of the Hasmonæan Palace, near the valley-like hollow which divided the higher town from the Temple, there was a wide covered colonnade, called the "Xystum," where the people assembled. A bridge led across from the Xystum to the west gate of the furthest court of the Temple. There was likewise a building erected in the higher town, devoted to judicial meetings, constructed according to Grecian art; with it was combined a Record Office, where important archives were kept. John Hyrcanus also erected, in the Grecian style, a family mausoleum in Modin, the birthplace of the Hasmonæans. It consisted of a lofty building of white polished marble. Around it was a colonnade, and on the columns were beautiful carvings of various weapons and figureheads of ships. Seven pyramids crowned the edifice, in memory of the progenitors of the Hasmonæans and their five heroic sons. The Hasmonæan mausoleum was of so great a height that it was visible from the sea.

The tendency of the Judæans of that period, however, was more especially directed to the

maintenance and development of all that belonged peculiarly to themselves than to the acquiring of the arts of foreign civilization. The Hebrew language, which, since the close contact of the people with Asiatic nations, had been almost superseded by the Aramaic, appeared now to be celebrating to a certain extent its renaissance; it was rejuvenated and became, for the second time, though in an altered form, the language of the people. It was rendered precious to them 15
through the Holy Scriptural records which they had preserved from destruction, and which had ever been the source of their zeal and enthusiasm. Their coins were, as mentioned before, stamped in Hebrew, public records were written in Hebrew, and the songs of the people were sung in the same language. Though some prevalent Aramaic names were still retained, and Grecian numbers were adopted, the Hebrew language showed its strong vitality by enriching its vocabulary with new forms of words, and stamping the foreign elements it admitted with its own mark. The form that Hebrew assumed from this time forth is called the "New Hebrew." It was distinguished from the old Hebrew by greater clearness and facility, even though it lacked the depth and poetical fervor of the latter. At the same time Greek was understood by all the leaders and statesmen of the community. It was the language made use of in their intercourse with the Syrian kings, and was likewise spoken by their ambassadors to the Roman Senate. Along with Jewish names, Greek names appeared now more frequently than before. The character of the literature was also marked by the change which took place in the spirit of the people at this period of its revival. The sweet note of song was mute; not a trace of poetical creation has come down to us from this and the next epoch. The nation called no longer for the fiery inspiration which flows through the lyric songs of the Psalms, and it could not furnish matter for mournful elegies. What it required to promote religious sentiment and fervor was already provided by the poetry of the Temple, and in the rich stores of the Scriptures the people found knowledge and instruction. Sober history now took the place of triumphant hymns, and related facts and deeds for the use of posterity. History was the only branch of literature which was cultivated, and the recent past and the immediate present furnished the historian's pen with ample subjects. That 16
Hebrew was used in historical writings is shown by the fragments which have come down to us. The so-called first book of the Maccabees, which was written in Hebrew, (but is now extant only in a Greek translation) is a proof of the inherent power of rejuvenescence belonging to the language.

The change in the current of life, caused by political events, showed itself even more in the sphere of religion than in the literature and habits of the people in general. The victory over the Syrians, the expulsion of the Hellenists, the subjection of the Idumæans, the humiliation of the Samaritans, culminating in the destruction of the Temple of Gerizim, were so many triumphs of Judaism over its enemies, and were sanctioned as such by the champions of the religious party. In order to stamp them indelibly on the memory of future generations, their anniversaries were to be kept like the days of the consecration of the Temple. Religion was still the great underlying impulse in all movements, and showed its strength even in the abuse to which it gave rise when it forced Judaism upon the heathens. In the meantime the religious consciousness of the people shone with a clearer light in consequence of the wider field upon which it had entered; the wider view which had been gained into the various relations of life, the advance out of the narrow circle of tradition and inherited customs, produced schism and separation amongst the Judæans themselves. The strict religious party of Assidæans withdrew from the scene of passing events, and, in order to avoid mixing in public life, they sought a secluded retreat where they could give themselves up to undisturbed meditation. In this solitude they formed themselves into a distinct order, with strange customs and new views, and received the name of Essenes. Their example, however, of giving up all active share in the public weal was not followed by all the strictly 17
devout Judæans, the majority of whom, on the contrary, whilst firmly adhering to the precepts of their faith, considered it a religious duty to further the independence of their country. Thus there arose a division among the pious, and a national party separated itself from the Assidæans or Essenes, which did not avoid public life, but, according to its strength and ability, took an active part in public affairs. The members of this numerous sect began at this time to bear the name of Pharisees (Perushim). But this sect, the very center, as it were, of the nation, having above all things at heart the preservation of Judaism in the exact form in which it had been handed down, insisted upon all political undertakings, all public transactions, every national act being tried by the standard of religion. To these demands, however, those who stood at the head of military or diplomatic affairs, and who saw how difficult it was always to deal with political matters according to the strict claims of their faith, would not or could not reconcile themselves. Thus a third party was formed—that of the Sadducees (Zadukim)—the members of which, without forsaking the religion, yet made the interests of the nation their chief care and object. Of these sects—the Assidæan-Essenes, the Pharisees, and the Sadducees—only the last two exerted a powerful influence upon the course of events. At what precise period opposition began to show itself among these several parties cannot be determined, as indeed the birth of new spiritual tendencies must ever remain shrouded from view. According to one account, the adverse parties first appeared at the time of Jonathan.

The Pharisees (Perushim) can only be called a party figuratively and by way of distinction from the other two, for the mass of the nation was inclined to Phariseeism, and it was only in the national leaders that its peculiarities became marked. The Pharisees received their name from 18
the fact of their *explaining* the Scriptures in a peculiar manner, and of deriving new laws from this new interpretation. As expounders of the law the Pharisees formed the learned body of the nation. Their opinions were framed, their actions governed by one cardinal principle—the necessity of preserving Judaism. The individual and the State were to be ruled alike by the laws and customs of their fathers. Every deviation from this principle appeared to the Pharisees as treason to all that was most precious and holy. To their opponents, the Sadducees, who argued

that, unless other measures were used for political purposes, weighty national interests would be often wrecked by religious scruples, the Pharisees replied that the fate of the State, like that of the individual, depended not upon man but upon God. It was not human strength, nor human wisdom, nor the warrior's prowess that could determine the weal or the woe of the Judæan people, but Divine Providence alone. Everything happened according to the eternal decrees of the Divine will. Man was responsible only for his moral conduct and the individual path he trod. The results of all human endeavors lay outside the range of human calculation. From this, the Pharisees' view of life, the rival opinion of the Sadducees diverged; whilst the Essenes, on the contrary, exaggerated it. Another view of the Pharisees was probably directed against the following objection urged by the Sadducees: If the fate of the individual or of the State did not depend upon the actions of the one or the policy of the other, there would be an end to Divine justice; misfortune might then assail the righteous man, whilst the sun of happiness smiled upon the sinner. This reproach the Pharisees set aside by the doctrine, borrowed from another source, which taught that Divine justice would manifest itself not during life but after death. God will rouse the dead out of the sleep of the grave; He will reward the righteous according to their works, and punish the wicked for their evil deeds. "Those will rise up to everlasting life, and these to everlasting shame." 19

These views, however, precisely because they concerned only the inner convictions of men, did not mark the opposition between the parties so clearly as did the third dogma of the Pharisees, establishing the importance and all-embracing influence of religious injunctions. In a nation whose breath of life was religion, many customs whose origin was lost in the dim twilight of the past had taken their place by the side of the written Law. If these customs were not found in the books of the Law they were ascribed to the great teachers (the Sopherim and the great assembly—Keneseth hagedolah), which, at the time of the return of the Captivity, had given form and new vigor to the religious sentiment, and at the head of which stands the illustrious expounder of Scripture, Ezra. Such religious customs were called the legacies of the teachers of the Law (Dibre Sopherim). All these unwritten customs, which lived in the heart of the nation and, as it were, grew with its growth, gained an extraordinary degree of importance from the dangers that Judaism had encountered and the victories that it had achieved. The people had risked, in behalf of these very customs, their property and their life; and the martyrdom that many of the faithful had undergone, and the antagonism they felt towards the renegade and frivolous Hellenists, had much increased the reverence and attachment with which these customs were regarded. The Temple, especially, which had been so ruthlessly defiled and afterwards been reconsecrated in so marvelous a manner, had become doubly precious to the whole people, who were determined to keep it free from the faintest breath of desecration. The Levitical rules of purity, so far as they related to the Temple, were therefore observed with peculiar care and rigorous strictness. 20

But this devotion to outward forms and ceremonies by no means excluded the religion of the heart. The Pharisees were acknowledged to be moral, chaste, temperate and benevolent. In their administration of justice they allowed mercy to prevail, and judged the accused not from the point of view of moral depravity but from that of human weakness. The following maxim was given by Joshua, the son of Perachia, one of the leaders of the sect, who, with his companion, Matthai of Arbela, lived in the time of Hyrcanus: "Take a teacher, win a friend, and judge every man from the presumption of innocence." His high moral temperament is indicated by this maxim. Their rigid adherence to the Law, and their lenient mildness and indulgence in other matters, gained for the Pharisees the deep veneration of the whole people. Of this sect were the pious priests, the teachers of the Law, and, above all, the magistrates, civil and religious, who at that time often combined both offices in one. The whole inner direction of the State and the Temple was in their hands. But the Pharisees owed their influence chiefly to their knowledge of the Law and to the application they made of it to the affairs of daily life, and they alone were called the interpreters and teachers of the Law. The degrading charge of hypocrisy, which was applied to them by their enemies in later times, they by no means merited, and, indeed, it is altogether preposterous to stigmatize a whole class of men as dissemblers. They were rather, in their origin, the noblest guardians and representatives of Judaism and strict morality. Even their rivals, the Sadducees, could not but bear witness to the fact that "they denied themselves in this world, but would hardly receive a reward in a future world."

This party of the Sadducees, so sharply opposed to the Pharisees, pursued a national-political policy. It was composed of the Judæan aristocracy, the brave soldiers, the generals and the statesmen who had acquired wealth and authority at home, or who had returned from foreign embassies, all having gained, from closer intercourse with the outer world and other lands, freer thought and more worldly views. They formed the kernel of the Hasmonæan following, which in peace or war faithfully served their leaders. This sect doubtless included also some Hellenists, who, shrinking from the desertion of their faith, had returned to Judaism. The Sadducees probably derived their name from one of their leaders, Zadok. The national interests of the Judæan community were placed by the Sadducees above the Law. Burning patriotism was their ruling sentiment, and piety occupied but the second place in their hearts. As experienced men of the world, they felt that the independence of the State could not be upheld by the strictest observance of the laws of religion alone, nor by mere reliance upon Divine protection. They proceeded from this fundamental principle: man must exert his bodily strength and his spiritual powers; he must not allow himself to be kept back by religious scruples from forming political alliances, or from taking part in wars, although by so doing he must inevitably infringe some of the injunctions of religion. According to the Sadducæan views, it was for that purpose that God bestowed free will upon man so that he himself should work out his own well-being; he is master 21

of his fate, and human concerns are not at all swayed by Divine interposition. Reward and punishment are the natural consequences of our actions, and are therefore quite independent of resurrection. Without exactly denying the immortality of the soul, the Sadducees completely repudiated the idea of judgment *after* death. Oppressed by the abundance of religious 22
ordinances, they would not admit their general applicability nor the obligation of keeping them. Pressed to give some standard by which the really important decrees might be recognized, they laid down the following rule: that only the ordinances which appeared clearly expressed in the Pentateuch were binding. Those which rested upon oral tradition, or had sprung up at various times, had a subordinate value and could not claim to be inviolable. Still they could not help occasionally recognizing the value of traditional interpretations.

From a number of individual instances in which the Sadducees separated themselves from their rivals, one can mark the extent of their opposition to the latter. This appeared in their judiciary and penal laws and in the ritual they adopted, their worship in the Temple being in particular a subject of angry controversy. The Sadducees thought that the punishment ordered by the Pentateuch for the infliction of any bodily injury—"an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth"—should be literally interpreted and followed out, and obtained in consequence the reputation of being cruel administrators of justice; whilst the Pharisees, appealing to traditional interpretations of the Scriptures, allowed mercy to preponderate, and only required a pecuniary compensation from the offender. The Sadducees, on the other hand, were more lenient in their judgment of those false witnesses whose evidence might have occasioned a judicial murder, as they only inflicted punishment if the execution of the defendant had actually taken place. There were many points relating to the ritual which were warmly disputed by the two parties; for instance, the date of the Feast of Weeks, which, according to the Sadducees, should always fall upon a Sunday, fifty days from the Sabbath after the Passover; so also the pouring of water on the altar and the processions round it with willow branches during the seven days of the Feast of 23
Tabernacles, which the Pharisees advocated and the Sadducees rejected. The latter objected to the providing of the national offerings out of the treasury of the Temple, and insisted that the required sacrifices should be left to the care and zeal of individuals. The manner in which the frankincense should be kindled on the Day of Atonement, whether before or after the entrance of the high priest into the Holy of Holies, was also the cause of bitter strife. On these and other points of dispute the Sadducees invariably followed the exact letter of the Law, which resulted in their occasionally enforcing stricter rules than the Pharisees, who have been so much abused for their rigid austerity. To one Levitical injunction, however, they paid but little attention—that of carefully avoiding the touch of any person or thing considered unclean—and when their rivals purified the vessels of the Temple after they had been subject to any contact of the sort, they ridiculed them, saying, "It wants but little, and the Pharisees will try and cleanse the sun."

In spite of the relief which these less stringent views gave the people, the Sadducees were not popular; the feeling of the time was against laxity and in favor of strict religious observance. Besides, the Sadducees repelled their countrymen by their proud, haughty demeanor and their severe judicial sentences. They never gained the heart of the public, and it was only by force and authority that they were able to make their principles prevail. At that period the religious sentiment was so active that it gave birth to a religious order which far surpassed even the Pharisees in strictness and painful scrupulousness, and which became the basis of a movement that, mixing with new elements, produced a revolution in the history of the world. This order, which, from a small and apparently insignificant origin, grew into a mighty power, destined to 24
exert an irresistible influence, was that of the Essenes.

The origin of this remarkable Essene order, which called forth the admiration even of the Greeks and the Romans, can be dated from the period of great religious enthusiasm excited by the tyranny and persecutions of the Syrians. The Essenes had never formed a political party, but, on the contrary, avoided the glare and tumult of public life. They did not place themselves in harsh antagonism to the Pharisees, but rather assumed the position of a higher grade of Pharisaism, to which party they originally belonged. They sprang without doubt from the Assidæans, whom they resembled in their strict observance of the Sabbath. In their eyes the mere act of moving a vessel from one place to another would count as a desecration of that holy day. Even the calls of nature were not attended to on that day. They lived in all respects like the Nazarites, whose ideal it was to attain the highest sanctity of priestly consecration. It was their constant endeavor, not only to observe all the outward Levitical laws, but to attain through them to inward sanctity and consecration, to deaden their passions and to lead a holy life. The Levitical laws of cleanliness had, through custom and tradition, developed to such a pitch that their austere observers must have been in constant danger of being defiled by contact with persons and objects; and bathing and sacrifices were prescribed, through which they might recover a state of purity. A life-long Nazarite, or, what is the same thing, an Essene, was consequently obliged to avoid any intercourse with those who were less strict than himself, lest he should be contaminated by their proximity. Such considerations compelled him to frequent the society of, and to unite himself with, those only who shared his views. To keep their purity unspotted, the 25
Essenes were thus induced to form themselves into a separate order, the first rule of which commanded implicit obedience to the laws of scrupulous cleanliness. It was only those whose views coincided with their own who could be allowed to cook food for them, and from such likewise had to be procured their clothes, tools, implements of trade and other things, in order to ensure that, in their manufacture, the laws of cleanliness had been duly carried out. They were thus completely set apart by themselves; and, in order to keep clear of any less strictly rigid observers, they thought it advisable to have their meals in common. Thus the Passover supper, which could be partaken of only in a circle of fellow-worshipers, must have been their ideal

repast. It was almost impossible for Essenes to mix with women, as by the slightest contact with them they risked coming under the Levitical condemnation of uncleanliness, and, led on from one deduction to another, they began to avoid, if not to despise, the married state. How was it possible for the Essenes to maintain their excessive rigidity, especially in those warlike times? Not only the pagan enemy, but even the Judæan warriors returning from the battle-field, defiled by the touch of a corpse, might bring all their precautions to naught. These fears may have induced the Essenes to seek seclusion in some retired place, where they could remain unvexed by the sounds of war and undisturbed in their mode of life by any of its necessary incidents. They chose for their residence the desert to the west of the Dead Sea, and settled in the oasis of Engadi. The fruit of palm trees, which abound in this district, partly furnished their simple fare. All the Assidæans did not join in the asceticism of the Essenes, nor did all the Essenes betake themselves to the desert. Some continued to live in their own family circles and did not renounce marriage; but, in consequence of their rigid scruples, they were met by many difficulties. 26

Thus it was that celibacy and repasts held in common came to be considered as the general and most important characteristics of the Essenes. This mode of living led the Essenes to divest themselves of all their private possessions. To a member of their sect private property could be of no use; each one placed his fortune in the common treasury, out of which the wants of the various members of the order were supplied. Hence the proverb, "A Chassid says, 'Mine and thine belong to thee'" (not to me). There were consequently neither rich nor poor among them, and this lack of all concern about material matters naturally led them to abstract their attention from everything mundane and to concentrate it upon religious matters. They thus avoided more and more all that pertained merely to the world, and followed with the enthusiasm of recluses a visionary, ideal tendency. The Essenes were distinguished also by other peculiarities. They were always clothed in white linen. Each of them carried a small shovel, with which, like the Israelites during their wanderings in the desert, they would cover their excrements with earth and thus hide impurity from sight. They also wore a sort of apron or handkerchief (knaphaim), with which to dry themselves after their frequent ablutions. In order to remove even unperceived impurities, they, like the priests before officiating in the Temple, bathed every morning in fresh spring water; and from these daily baths they were called "Morning Baptists" (*Toble Shacharith*). The name Essene appears likewise to have been derived from this peculiarity, as in the Chaldaic language it means a bather (*Aschai*, pronounced *Assai*).

These outward forms were, however, only the steps that were to lead to inward purity and righteousness—the symbols of their close communion with God; to which, according to the 27
opinion of antiquity, man could only attain by fleeing from the world, and devoting himself to an ascetic mode of life. The utmost simplicity in food and dress, abstinence, and the practice of morality and self-sacrifice were certainly virtues which adorned the Essenes, but were not peculiar to their sect, as they belonged equally to the Pharisees. The distinguishing traits of the Essenes, however, were their frequent prayers, their aversion to taking an oath, and their devoted pursuit of a kind of mystic doctrine. Before saying their prayers no profane word was permitted, and at the first dawn of day, after the *Shema* had been read, they assembled for quiet meditation, preparatory to what was considered their real prayer, which was always to be a spontaneous effusion of the heart. To the Essenes their repasts were a kind of divine service, the table on which their food was spread, an altar, and the fare which they partook of, a holy sacrifice, which they ate in deep and pious meditation. No language of a worldly nature passed their lips during their meals, and these were generally partaken of in complete silence. This strange silence doubtless produced a great impression upon those who did not belong to the order; the more so, because the real nature of this exclusive sect was not known to its contemporaries, and everything concerning it assumed a mysterious and awful aspect.

It was not, perhaps, at first the object of the Essenes to become absorbed in mystic lore; but their asceticism, their intensely quiet life, which gave them so much opportunity for meditation, their freedom from family cares, and, lastly, their religious visionariness, made them seek for other truths in Judaism than appear to less subtle minds. The name of God was to them a subject of deep contemplation, justified in some degree by the dread which existed among the Judæans of pronouncing the name of the Almighty, formed of the four letters J h w h. If the name of God 28
be thus holy, surely something mysterious must belong to the letters themselves. Thus reasoned the Essenes, whose seclusion from the world gave them abundant leisure to ponder over this sacred enigma. So holy was the name of God in their estimation that they refused to take any oath which called for its use, and their statements were attested by a simple "yes" or "no." In close connection with the mystery attaching to the name of God was that which they applied to the names of angels. The Essenes faithfully handed down in their theosophic system the names, as well as the importance and position of the various angels. When they endeavored to explain the meaning of Holy Writ by their fantastic and newly discovered ideas, what fresh phases must have presented themselves to their distorted vision! Every word, every expression must have revealed a hitherto unsuspected meaning; the most difficult questions as to the being of God, and His relations to the heavenly powers and the lower creatures, were explained. Through their indifference to all that concerned the State, as well as the affairs of daily life, they gradually led Judaism (dependent as it was on the establishment of national prosperity) into the darkness and exaggerations of Mysticism. Their deep and mystic reverence for the Prophet and Lawgiver Moses carried them to the greatest excesses. His memory and name were endeared to all the Judæans within and beyond Palestine. They took oaths in the name of Moses, and bestowed that name on no other man. But the Essenes carried their devotion to such an extreme that he who spoke against the name of Moses was treated as one who blasphemed God.

The final aim of the Essenes was, without doubt, the attainment to prophetic ecstasy so that

they might become worthy of the Divine Spirit (*Ruach Kodesh*). The Essenes believed that through an ascetic life they might re-awaken the long-silent echo of the Heavenly voice, and this end gained, prophecy would be renewed, men and youths would again behold Divine visions, once more see the uplifting of the veil which hides the future, and the great Messianic kingdom would be revealed. The kingdom of Heaven (*Malchuth Shamaim*) would commence, and all the pain and trouble of the times would, at one stroke, be at an end. 29

The Essenes were considered not only holy men (on account of their peculiar mode of life and visionary views), but they were also admired as workers of miracles. People hung upon their words and hoped for the removal of impending evils through their means. Some of the Essenes bore the reputation of being able to reveal the future and interpret dreams; they were reverenced yet more by the ignorant, on account of their miraculous cures of so-called "possessed" persons. The intercourse of the Judæans with the Persians had brought with it, together with a belief in the existence of angels, a superstitious belief in malicious demons (*Shedim*, *Mazikin*). Imbeciles were thought to be possessed by evil demons, who could only be exorcised by a magic formula; and all extraordinary illnesses were attributed to such demons, for which the advice of the wonder-worker, and not that of the doctor, was sought. The Essenes occupied themselves with cures, exorcisms, etc., and sought their remedies in a book (*Sefer Refuoth*) which was attributed to King Solomon, whom the nation considered as the master of evil spirits. Their curative remedies consisted partly in softly-spoken incantations and verses (*Lechis'ha*), and partly in the use of certain roots and stones supposed to possess magic power. Thus the Essenes united the highest and the lowest aims,—the endeavor to lead a pious life and the most vulgar superstitions. Their exaggerated asceticism and fear of contact with others of a different mode of life caused a morbidly unhealthy development among them. 30

The more rationally-minded Pharisees paid them but little attention; they made sport of the "foolish Chassid." Although sprung from a common root, the more the Pharisees and Essenes developed, the more widely they diverged. The one party saw in marriage a holy institution appointed for the good of mankind, and the other an obstacle to a thoroughly religious life. The Pharisees recognized man's free will in thought and action, and consequently deemed him responsible for his moral conduct. The Essenes, on the contrary, confined to the narrow circle of their self-same, daily-repeated duties, came to believe in a sort of divine fatalism, which not only governed the destiny of mankind but also ruled the acts of each individual. The Essenes avoided the Temple, the worship practised there being framed according to the doctrines of the Pharisees and unable to satisfy their ideals. They sent their offerings to the Temple, and thus fulfilled the duty of sacrificing without being themselves present at the ceremony. With them, patriotism became more and more subordinate to the devotion they felt towards their own order, and thus by degrees they loosed themselves from the strong bands of nationality. There lay concealed in Essenism an element antagonistic to existing Judaism, unsuspected by friends or foes.

The Essenes had no influence whatever upon political events. Their number was small, and even at the time of their greatest prosperity the order consisted only of about four thousand members. Consequent upon the life of celibacy which they adopted, the losses made by death in their ranks could not naturally be replaced. To avoid dwindling away entirely, they had recourse to the expedient of enrolling novices and making proselytes. The new member was admitted with great solemnity, and presented with the white garment, the apron, and the shovel, the symbols of Essenism. The novice was not allowed, however, to enter immediately into the community, but was subjected by degrees to an ever stricter observance of the laws of abstinence and purity. There were three probationary degrees to be passed through before a new member was received into complete brotherhood. At his admission the novice swore to follow the mode of life of the Essenes, to keep conscientiously and to deliver faithfully the secret teachings of their order. He who was found to be unworthy was expelled. 31

The unfriendly relationship between the Pharisees and Sadducees did not exist in the time of Hyrcanus. He made use of both parties according to their capabilities—the Sadducees as soldiers or diplomatists, and the Pharisees as teachers of the Law, judges, and functionaries in civil affairs. The one honored Hyrcanus as the head of the State, the other as the pious high priest. In fact, Hyrcanus personally favored the Pharisees, but as prince he could not quarrel with the Sadducees, among whom he found his soldiers, his generals and his counselors. Their leader Jonathan was his devoted friend. Until old age crept on him, Hyrcanus managed to solve the difficult problem of keeping in a state of amity two parties that were always on the verge of quarreling. He understood how to prevent either party from gaining the upper hand and persecuting its rival. But (as too often happens in such difficult situations) a word, a breath can upset the best-arranged plans, bringing to naught the most skilful calculations, and the slowly, carefully built edifice falls and crumbles in a day. A heedless word of this kind turned the zealous follower of Pharisaism into its bitter opponent. In the last years of his life Hyrcanus went quite over to the Sadducees.

The cause of this change, which brought such unspeakable misery to the Judæan nation, was trivial in comparison with its results; but the antagonism of the two parties, which could only with the utmost difficulty be kept from breaking out into open discord, gave it a terrible and far-reaching importance. Hyrcanus had just returned from a glorious victory over one of the many nations in the northeast of Peræa (Kochalit?). Rejoicing in the happy result of his arms and in the flourishing state of his country, he ordered a feast to be held, to which he invited without distinction the leaders of the Sadducees and Pharisees. Around golden dishes laden with food were placed various plants that grew in the desert, to remind the guests of the hardships they had endured under the Syrian yoke, when the nobles of the land were obliged to hide themselves 32

in the wilderness. Whilst the guests were feasting, Hyrcanus asked if the Pharisees could reproach him for any transgression of the Law? If so, he desired to be told in what he had failed. Was this apparent humility only a cunningly-devised plan to discover the real disposition of the Pharisees towards him? Had the Sadducees inspired him with suspicion against the Pharisees, and advised him to find some way of proving the sincerity of their attachment? In reply to the challenge thus thrown out, a certain Eleazer ben Poira arose and bluntly answered, "Hyrcanus should content himself with the crown of royalty, and should place on a worthier head the high priest's diadem. During an attack on Modin by the Syrians his mother, before his birth, was taken prisoner, and it is not fitting for the son of a prisoner to be a priest—much less the High Priest!" Although inwardly wounded by so outspoken an insult to his pride, Hyrcanus had sufficient self-possession to appear to agree with the bold speaker and ordered the matter to be examined. It was, however, proved to be an empty report; in fact, without the slightest foundation.

Hyrcanus's anger was doubly roused against the Pharisees through the care taken by the 33
Sadducees and his devoted friend Jonathan to persuade him that the former had invented the story purposely to lower him in the eyes of the people. Anxious to find out if the aspersion cast on his fitness for the high-priesthood was the act of the whole party or only the slander of an individual, he demanded that their leading men should punish the calumniator, and expected that the chastisement inflicted would be in proportion to his own exalted rank. But the Pharisees knew of no special penalty for the slanderer of royalty, and their judges only awarded him the lawful punishment of thirty-nine lashes. Jonathan, the leader of the Sadducees, failed not to use this circumstance as a means to rake up the fire in Hyrcanus's breast. He led him to see in this mild judgment of the court a deep-rooted aversion entertained by the Pharisees against him, thus estranging him completely from his former friends, and binding him heart and soul to the Sadducees. There is probably some exaggeration in the account of Hyrcanus's persecution of the adherents of the Pharisees, and of his setting aside all the decrees of the latter. There is, however, more truth in another report, from which we learn that Hyrcanus had deposed the Pharisees from the various high posts they had filled. The offices belonging to the Temple, to the courts of law and to the high council were given to the followers of the Sadducees. But this stroke of policy produced the saddest results. Naturally enough it awakened in the hearts of the Pharisees, and of the people who sided with them, a deep hatred against the house of the Hasmonæans, which bore civil war in its train and hastened the nation's decline. One act had been sufficient to cast a cloud over the brilliant days of the Hasmonæans.

Hyrcanus lived but a short time after these events. He died in the thirty-first year of his reign, 34
the sixtieth year of his age (106), leaving five sons, Aristobulus, Antigonus, Alexander, Absalom, and one other, whose name has not come down to us. Hyrcanus bore some resemblance to his prototype Solomon, inasmuch as that, after the death of both, dissensions broke out and the country became a prey to constant strife and discord.

35

CHAPTER II.

HYRCANUS'S SUCCESSORS, ARISTOBULUS I, ALEXANDER JANNÆUS, AND SALOME ALEXANDRA.

Character of Aristobulus—Antigonus—Mythical Account of his Death—Alexander Jannæus: his Character and Enterprises—His Support of the Pharisees—Simon ben Shetach—Alexander's Breach with the Pharisees, and its Consequences—His last Wars and Death—Salome Alexandra's Relations to the Opposing Parties—The Synhedrion—Judah ben Tabbai and Simon ben Shetach—Institutions against the Sadducees—Party Hatred—Diogenes—Persecution of the Sadducees—Death of Alexandra.

106–69 B. C. E.

John Hyrcanus had proclaimed his wife queen, and his eldest son, Judah, high priest. The latter is better known by his Greek name Aristobulus, for he, like his brothers and successors, bore a Greek as well as a Hebrew name. But it was soon evident that the Greek custom of placing a female ruler at the head of the State was not looked upon with favor in Judæa. Thus Aristobulus was able to remove his mother from her official position without creating any disturbance, and he then united in his own person the two dignities of ruler and high priest. It is said that he was the first of the Hasmonæans to assume the royal title; but this title did not add in any way to his power or his importance. His coins, indeed, which have since been discovered, bear only the following inscription, "The High Priest Judah, and the Commonwealth of the Judæans," and they are engraved with the same emblem as those of his father, viz., a cornucopia, although this symbol of plenty was hardly a truthful characteristic of the times.

The seed of discord sown by Hyrcanus grew and spread alarmingly in the reigns of his descendants. In vain did the successive rulers attempt to raise the importance of the royal 36
dignity, in vain did they surround themselves with a body-guard of trusty hirelings and perform the most brilliant feats of valor, the breach between them and their subjects became irreparable, and no remedy proved effectual. The royal house and the people were no longer at one; political life was separated from religious life, and the two were pursuing opposite paths.

The king, Aristobulus, not only supplanted his mother upon the throne, but he also imprisoned her with three of his brothers. His brother Antigonus alone, of like temperament to himself and his companion-in-arms, whom he tenderly loved, was permitted to take part in the government. In spite of the meager and unsatisfactory accounts of his short reign, we may gather from them that he followed the example of his father's last years, in remaining closely connected with the Sadducees, and in keeping the Pharisees from all power and influence. Aristobulus had but few friends in his own family, and he does not appear to have been beloved by his subjects. The fact of his having had a decided preference for Hellenism accounts for his surname, which was honored by the Greeks and hated by the Judæans—"Friend of the Hellenes." This one characteristic gave such offense to the people that they were ready to ascribe to him the authorship of any evil deed that might occur in the kingdom. Whilst the Greeks called him fair-minded and modest, the Judæans accused him of heartlessness and cruelty. His mother expired during her imprisonment, possibly of old age; evil report whispered that her own son was guilty of having allowed her to die of starvation. His favorite brother, Antigonus, was foully murdered (probably through the intrigues of the party hostile to the Hasmonæans); sharp-tongued calumny affirmed that the king, jealous of him, was the author of the foul deed, and tradition has woven a 37
web of tragic incidents round the sad fate of Antigonus. But of this later.

Aristobulus had inherited not only his father's military ability, but also his plans of extending Judæa in a northeasterly direction. The Ituræans and the Trachonites, who often left their mild, pastoral pursuits for the rougher trade of war, occupied the district surrounding the gigantic Mount Hermon, and eastwards as far as the lovely plain of Damascus. Against these half-barbaric tribes Aristobulus undertook a campaign, probably continuing what his father had commenced. His brother Antigonus, in whose company he had won his first laurels when fighting against the Samaritans and the Syrians, was once more his companion-in-arms. The fortunes of war were favorable to Aristobulus, as they had been to his father; he acquired new territory for Judæa, and, like his father, forced the Judæan religion upon the conquered people. Continued conquests in the same direction would have put the caravan roads leading from the land of the Euphrates to Egypt into the hands of the Judæans; which possession, combined with the warlike courage of the inhabitants and the defensive condition of the fortresses, might have permitted Judæa to attain an important position among the nations. But, as though it had been decreed by Providence that Judæa should not gain influence in such a manner, Aristobulus was forced by severe illness to abandon his conquests and to return to Jerusalem. Antigonus, it is true, carried on the war successfully for some little time; but after his return to the capital, for the celebration of the festivals in the approaching month of Tishri, neither he nor his royal brother was fated ever again to tread the arena of war. Antigonus fell, as was mentioned previously, by the hand of an assassin, and Aristobulus died of a malignant disease, after a reign of one year (106–105). 38

The deaths of the two brothers following in close succession gave evil-tongued calumny the opportunity of inventing the following fearful tragedy: It was said that the opponents of Antigonus seized the occasion of his triumphal return to excite the suffering king's jealousy. Aristobulus, while still reposing confidence in his brother, sent for Antigonus, and intimated that he should appear unarmed. For greater protection he had his body-guard stationed in one of the

passages, and gave orders that Antigonus was to be dispatched forthwith if he should enter armed. The queen, who hated Antigonus, made use of this order for the destruction of her brother-in-law, for she persuaded him to go fully equipped to the king's chamber, and in one of the dark passages of the tower of Straton the foul deed was executed. When the king heard that his commands had been carried out he was violently affected, and his grief caused a hemorrhage. His servant, in carrying away a vessel filled with the blood that he had lost, slipped upon the floor of the antechamber, still wet with the blood of the assassinated man, and, dropping the vessel, caused the blood of the two brothers to mingle. This accident was said to have had so overpowering an effect upon the king's mind that he instantly declared himself to be his brother's murderer, and the agony of remorse was the final cause of his death. Tradition adds that an Essene seer of the name of Judah had not only predicted the violent death of Antigonus, but also that it would take place in the tower of Straton.

The commencement of the reign of Aristobulus's successor is involved in legend. From this we gather that Alexander, whose Judæan name Jannaï (Jannæus) is the abbreviation of Jonathan, had not only been imprisoned by his brother, but had been so hated by his father that he had been banished to Galilee. This was the result of a dream, in which it had been revealed to John Hyrcanus that his third son would one day be king of Judæa. The widow of Aristobulus is said to have released him from prison, and to have given him her hand with the crown. But in that case Alexander would have married a widow, which it was unlawful for him, as high priest, to do. It is more probable that Alexander ascended the throne, being the nearest heir to it, without the aid of the widow of Aristobulus. Nor is there any foundation for the story that Alexander commenced his reign by the murder of a brother with whom he had actually shared the sufferings of his captivity. Alexander appears to have begun by studying the people's wishes, for the Pharisees were once more allowed to appear at court. Simon ben Shetach, the brother of his wife, Queen Salome, the champion of the Pharisees, was constantly in the king's presence. 39

Alexander Jannæus, who came to the throne at the age of twenty-three, was as warlike as the family from which he sprung, but he was wanting in the generalship and the judgment of his ancestors. He rushed madly into military undertakings, thus weakening the power of the people, and bringing the State more than once to the verge of destruction. The seven and twenty years of his reign were passed in foreign and civil wars, and were not calculated to increase the material prosperity of the nation. His good luck, however, was greater than his ability, for it enabled him to extricate himself from many a critical position into which he had brought himself, and also, upon the whole, to enlarge the territory of Judæa. Like his father, he employed mercenaries for his wars, whom he hired from Pisidia and Cilicia. He did not dare enroll Syrian troops, the hatred that existed between Judæans and Syrians being too deeply ingrained to permit the harmonious working of the two to be counted upon. 40

Alexander's attention was principally directed to the seaports which had managed to free themselves from Syrian rule, owing to the rivalry that existed between the two half-brothers, Antiochus Grypus and Cyzicenus. He was particularly anxious to possess himself of the thickly-populated and important seaport town of Ptolemaïs, colonized by Judæans. Whilst his troops overran the district of Gaza, then under the dominion of Zoïlus, a captain of mercenaries, he pressed the seaport town himself with a persistent siege. The inhabitants of Ptolemaïs turned for help to the Egyptian prince Ptolemy Lathurus, who, at open warfare with his mother, had seized upon Cyprus. Lathurus, glad to have found an opportunity of acquiring greater power, and of being able at the same time to approach the caravan roads of Egypt, hastened to send thirty thousand men to the Judæan coast. He chose a Sabbath day for victoriously driving the Judæan army, consisting of at least fifty thousand men, from Asochis, near Sepphoris, back to the Jordan. More than thirty thousand of Alexander's troops remained on the field of battle, many were taken prisoners, whilst the others fled. Lathurus, with part of his army, marched through Judæa, slaughtering the inhabitants, without sparing women or children. He wished not only to revenge himself upon Alexander, but also upon the Judæans, for had they not been his enemies in Egypt? Accho likewise surrendered, and Gaza voluntarily opened its gates to him.

This crushing defeat would doubtless have brought Judæa into the most revolting slavery, had not Cleopatra attempted to snatch the fruit of her son's triumphs from him before he could turn them against herself. She sent a mighty army against Lathurus, under the command of two Judæan generals, Helkias and Ananias, the two sons of Onias, to whom she was indebted for the integrity of her crown. Helkias died during the campaign, and his brother took his place in the council and in the field. The position of trust occupied by Ananias was of distinct advantage to his compatriots in Judæa. Cleopatra had been urged not to lose the favorable opportunity, when Judæa was unable to forego her help, of invading that country and of dethroning Alexander. But Ananias was indignant at this advice. He not only pointed out the disgrace of such faithlessness, but he made the queen understand the evil consequences that would follow upon such a step. Many Egyptian Judæans, who were the upholders of her throne against the threatened attacks of her son, would make common cause with her enemies, were she to strike a blow at the independence of their country. His words even contained the menace that he would, in such case, not only withhold his political knowledge and his generalship from her interests, but that he might possibly devote them to the cause of her opponents. This language had its desired effect upon the queen; she rejected the cunning advice of the enemies of the Jews, and made an offensive and defensive league with Alexander at Bethzur (98). Lathurus was obliged to leave Judæa and to retreat with his army to Cyprus. All the cities that had resisted the arms of the Judæan king were now visited by his wrath. 41

But he was, above all things, determined upon retaking Gaza. This object was accomplished

only after a year of desperate fighting, and was finally brought about by an act of treachery. All the cruelty inherent in Alexander was poured out upon the besieged inhabitants of Gaza. He executed some of the most distinguished amongst them, and the terror he inspired was so great that many of the men killed their own wives and children to prevent them from falling into Judæan slavery (96).

The nine years of Alexander's reign had been too prolific in dangerous and perplexing 42
situations to allow of his disturbing the internal harmony of his country. He appears to have been strictly neutral in the strife that was raging between the Pharisees and Sadducees. His wife Salome may have exercised her influence in urging him to maintain this neutral position, as she was a warm partisan of the once-hated Pharisees.

Alexander appears to have made Simon ben Shetach the mediator between the two parties; the Pharisees being still somewhat in the background, and the Sadducees holding posts of trust. Ever since John Hyrcanus's secession from Pharisaism, the Great Council had been composed of Sadducæan members, and as long as one party was thus openly preferred to the other, peace and reconciliation seemed impossible. The king may, therefore, have been inspired by the wish to bring about some kind of equality between the two parties by dividing offices and dignities between them. But the Pharisees positively refused to act conjointly with their opponents and offered the most active resistance. Simon ben Shetach alone allowed himself to be chosen member of the Council, secretly determining to purge it by degrees of its Sadducæan element.

Alexander's impartial conduct continued only so long as the critical position drew his attention away from home affairs. It changed visibly when he returned from his campaign, the conqueror of cities and provinces deeming himself the despotic master of his people. Either the newly acquired influence of the Pharisees threatened to be an obstacle in his path, or he may have wished to reward and attract the Sadducees upon whom he might rely for carrying on his campaigns, or he may have been influenced by his favorite, the Sadducee Diogenes; at all events, Alexander appeared as the inveterate opponent of Pharisaic teaching, and made his views public 43
in a most insulting manner. Whilst officiating as high priest, during the Feast of Tabernacles, it was his duty, in accordance with an ancient custom, to pour the contents of a ewer of water upon the altar as an emblem of fruitfulness. But in order to show his contempt for a ceremony considered by the Pharisees as a religious one, Alexander poured the water at his feet. Nothing more was required to ignite the wrath of the congregation assembled in the outer court of the Temple. With reckless indignation they threw the branches and the fruit, which they carried in their hands in honor of the festival, at the heretical king, denouncing him as an unworthy high priest. Alexander would certainly have paid for this disgraceful action with his life had he not called in the help of the Pisidian and Cilician mercenaries, who had been ordered to be in waiting, and who fell upon the congregation, slaughtering 6000 within the precincts of the Temple (95). In order to avoid a repetition of such scenes, Alexander thenceforth prevented the worshipers from entering the court of sacrifices, by building up a partition wall. But these events gave rise to an implacable hatred between the king and the Pharisees. Thus, after three generations, the descendants of the great Hasmonæans had so far weakened the edifice raised at the expense of their ancestors' lives, that it appears marvelous how it could have continued to resist such repeated attacks. The bitter rivalry of the two kingdoms of Judah and Israel in the days of Rehoboam and Jeroboam was repeated in the history of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.

But Alexander did not see the breach that his hand had childishly and ruthlessly made; absorbed in magnificent schemes of future conquest he ignored the fact that if the harmonious intercourse between the king and his subjects, the very life of the State, were to cease, greater possessions would but weaken and not strengthen the kingdom. He had set his heart upon 44
invading the trans-Jordanic land, still called Moabitis, and the southeastern provinces of the sea of Tiberias, called Galaditis or Gaulonitis. But his progress in this campaign was checked by the Nabathæan king Obeda, who lured him into a pathless country broken up by ravines, where Alexander's army found its destruction, and where the king himself escaped only with his life to Jerusalem (about 94). There the wrath of the Pharisees awaited him. They had excited the people to revolt, and six years of bloody uprisings against him were the consequence (94–89). Alexander succeeded in putting down one revolt after another by the aid of his mercenaries, but the horrible butcheries that took place on these occasions were a perpetual incentive to fresh uprisings. Alexander, worn out at length by these sanguinary proceedings, offered to make peace with the Pharisees. It was now, however, their turn to reject the proffered hand of peace, and to be guilty of an act of treachery towards their country which must remain as an indelible stain upon their party. Upon Alexander's question as to what conditions of peace they required, the Pharisaic leaders answered that the first condition was the death of the king. They had, in fact, secretly offered their aid to the Syrian monarch Eucærus to humble Alexander. Summoned by their promises, Eucærus advanced upon Judæa with 40,000 infantry and 3000 cavalry. Upon the news of this impending danger, Alexander marched out at the head of 20,000 infantry and 1000 cavalry. In the terrible encounter that ensued at Shechem, Judæan fought against Judæan, Greek against Greek, for each army remained true to its leader and could not be bribed into desertion. The battle, disastrous for both sides, was finally gained by Eucærus, and Alexander was driven, through the loss of his mercenaries, to wander among the mountain-passes of Ephraim. There, his solitary position moved his people to pity, and six thousand of his Pharisaic opponents left the 45
Syrian camp and went over to their king, who was now able to force Eucærus's retreat from Judæa.

But the more relentless amongst the Pharisees still held out against Alexander, and after an unsuccessful battle in the open field, threw themselves for safety into the fortress of Bethome,

which, however, they were obliged to surrender. Urged by his Sadducæan favorite Diogenes, and impelled by his own thirst for revenge, the king had eight hundred Pharisees crucified in one day. Tradition even relates that the wives and children of the victims were butchered before their eyes, and that Alexander, surrounded by his minions, feasted in the presence of this scene of carnage. But this exaggeration of cruelty was not required to brand him with the name of "Thracian"; the crucifixion of eight hundred men was enough to stigmatize him as a heartless butcher, and this action alone was to bring forth bitter fruits for the Sadducees who had witnessed it with malicious joy. During the civil wars that had lasted for six years, fifty thousand men of both parties had been sacrificed, but the Pharisees had suffered most. The remaining Pharisees trembled for their lives, and the night after the crucifixion of the eight hundred, eight thousand fled from Judæa, part of them to Syria and part to Egypt.

The weakness of Alexander's position may readily be gauged by the fact of his powerlessness to prevent Judæa from being made the seat of war by the kings of Nabathæa and Syria. Yet his good fortune did not forsake him, for a sudden change in the affairs of Syria, resulting in the overthrow of its king, Aretas, worked to Alexander's advantage. Thereby he was enabled to engage in the siege of some important towns, colonized by Greeks and subject to Aretas: Diospolis, Pella and Gerasa. Marching north, he invaded the lower Gaulonitis, with its capital, Gamala, the upper province, with the town of Sogane, and the city of Seleucia. He forced the 46
inhabitants of these towns to accept Judaism and the sign of the covenant. The city of Pella, making a show of resistance, was destroyed. He also recovered the cities lying east of the Red Sea, which had been taken from him by Aretas. The territory of Judæa now embraced within its circumference a number of important towns; it extended on the other side of the Jordan, from Seleucia in the north to Zoar, the city of palms, south of the Dead Sea; from Rhinokolura and Raphia in the south, on the shores of the Mediterranean, to the mountains of Carmel in the northwest. The cities on the sea-coast were of the most importance. Alexander ordered some coins to be struck for his Greek subjects, with the Greek inscription, "King Alexander," while an anchor was stamped upon one side, and upon the other, in Hebrew characters, "Jonathan the King" (Jehonathan ha-Melech). His coins of an earlier date bore the same inscription as those of his predecessors, "The High Priest Jonathan, the Commonwealth of the Judæans."

After a campaign of three years' duration Alexander returned to Jerusalem, where he was received with the honors due to a conqueror. He had caused his crimes in part to be forgiven. In the very center of the kingdom, on a mount near the Jordan, he built a strong fortress, called after him, Alexandrion; and in the neighborhood of the Dead Sea, upon a towering height, protected on all sides by deep ravines, he raised the citadel of Machærus, the formidable guardian of his trans-Jordanic conquests. These two mountain fortresses, together with the third, Hyrcanion, built by John Hyrcanus, on Middle Mountain, were so amply fortified by nature and by art that they were considered impregnable.

Even in the last years of Alexander's reign, although he was suffering from an intermittent fever, he undertook the siege of some of the yet unconquered fortresses of the trans-Jordanic 47
territory. During the siege of Argob, however, he was seized with so severe an attack that he was forced to prepare himself for death. The solemnity of his last hours led him to look upon his former actions in a new light. He was horror-stricken to think how cruelly and foolishly he had persecuted the Pharisees, and how in consequence he had alienated himself from his people. He earnestly enjoined upon his queen, whom he declared regent, to connect herself closely with the Pharisees, to surround herself with counselors from their ranks, and not to embark in any undertaking without having their consent. He also impressed upon her to keep his death secret from his army until the beleaguered fortress should have fallen, and then to resign his body to the Pharisees, that they might either vent their rage upon it or else generously inter it. From an obscure but more authentic source we gather that Alexander sought to allay the queen's anxiety with regard to the party strife rampant in Jerusalem by the following words: "Do not fear either the true Pharisees or their honest opponents, but be on your guard against hypocrites of both sides (the counterfeit ones), who, when they commit sins, like the dissolute Prince Zimri, expect to be rewarded like Phineas, who was zealous for the Law." Alexander died in the forty-ninth year of his life and the twenty-seventh of his reign (79), and left two sons, Hyrcanus and Aristobulus. The Pharisees ungenerously appointed the anniversary of his death as a day of rejoicing.

It was indeed most fortunate for the Judæan nation that a woman of gentle nature and sincere piety should have been called to the head of the State after it had been torn asunder by the recklessness of its former ruler. She came like the refreshing dew to an arid and sunburnt soil. The excited passions and the bitter hatred of the two parties had time to abate during her reign, 48
and the country rose above narrow partisanship to the worthier occupation of advancing the common welfare of the nation. Although Queen Salome, or, as she was called, Alexandra, was devoted with her whole soul to the Pharisees, entrusting them with the management of home affairs, yet she was far from persecuting the opposing party. Her authority was so greatly respected by the neighboring princes that they did not dare make war with Judæa, and she shrewdly succeeded in keeping a mighty conqueror, who had possessed himself of Syria, from the confines of her own kingdom. Even the heavens, during the nine years of her reign, showered their blessings upon the land. The extraordinarily large grains of wheat gathered during this time in the fields of Judæa were kept and exhibited during many subsequent years. The queen ordered coins to be struck, bearing the same emblems as her predecessors, with the Greek inscription, "Queen Alexandra." On the whole, her reign passed peacefully and happily. The Law, which had fallen into great neglect, became a fixed institution, and if it occasionally affected the Sadducees, who were constantly breaking it, they could not consider themselves victims of caprice. The crowded prisons were opened; the Pharisees returned from exile, with their narrowed vision

widened by the experience they had gained in foreign lands.

Salome Alexandra proclaimed her eldest son Hyrcanus high priest; he was a weak prince, whose private life was irreproachable, but who was not fitted for a public post of importance.

Simon ben Shetach, the brother of the queen, the oracle of the Pharisaic party, stood high in her favor. So great a part did he play in the history of that time that it was called by many "the days of Simon ben Shetach and of Queen Salome." The chief post in the Council of Seventy, hitherto possessed by the high priest, was now, however, given up to the Pharisees by order of 49
the queen. The Nasi, or president of the Great Council, was from this time on, as a rule, the most learned and the most respected of the Pharisees. No one, of course, could lay juster claim to this distinction than Simon ben Shetach. But Simon was not an ambitious man, and he determined to waive his own rights of precedence in favor of Judah ben Tabbai, who was then residing in Alexandria, of whose profound learning and excellent character he had formed a high estimate. The Alexandrian Judæan community had probably entrusted this celebrated Palestinean scholar with some important office. A flattering epistle was sent to Judah, inviting him to return to Jerusalem and was couched in this form: "From me, Jerusalem, the holy city, to thee, Alexandria: my spouse dwells with thee, I am forsaken." Judah ben Tabbai responded to this appeal by hastening to Jerusalem. With the help of Simon he undertook the reorganization of the Council, the improvement of administration of the law, the re-establishment of neglected religious observances, the furthering of education, and generally the fashioning of such regulations as the times required. Like Ezra and Nehemiah of old, these two zealous men insisted upon a return to the strictest form of Judaism; and, if they were often obliged to employ severe and violent measures, these are not to be accounted to any personal malice, but to the sternness of the age itself. They were indeed scrupulously strict in their own conduct, and in directing those closely connected with them. From the days of Judah ben Tabbai and Simon ben Shetach, the rule of Judæan Law, according to the views of the Pharisees, may be said to have begun, and it grew and developed under each succeeding generation. These two celebrated men have therefore been called "Restorers of the Law," who "brought back to the Crown (the Law) its ancient splendor."

Their work commenced with the reorganization of the Synhedrion. The Sadducæan members 50
were deprived of their seats, the penal code which they had added to the Biblical penal laws was set aside, and the old traditionary methods again made valid. The people had nothing to complain of in this change, for they hated the severity of the "eye for eye" punishment of the Sadducees. On the other hand, certain days of rejoicing, disregarded by the Sadducees, were proclaimed as half-holidays by the Pharisees. Witnesses in the law courts were no longer to be questioned merely upon the place where and the time when they had seen a crime committed, but they were expected to give the most detailed and minute evidence connected with it, so that the judge might be better able to pronounce a correct judgment and to detect the contradictory statements of witnesses. This was particularly designed as a protection against the charges of informers, who were numerous enough in an age when conquerors and the conquered were constantly changing parts. A salutary measure also was enforced to lessen the number of divorce cases, which the literal interpretation of the Pentateuchal divorce laws, as administered by the Sadducees, had failed in doing. The High Court, as reorganized by the Pharisees, ordered the husband to give his repudiated wife a certain sum of money, by which she could support herself, and, as there was but little current coin amongst a people whose wealth consisted principally in the fruits of the soil or in cattle, the husband would often pause before allowing a momentary fit of passion or excitement to influence his actions.

One of the reforms of this time expressly attributed to Simon ben Shetach was the promotion of better instruction. In all large towns, high schools for the use of young men from the age of sixteen sprung up at his instance. But all study, we may presume, was entirely confined to the Holy Scriptures, and particularly to the Pentateuch and the study of the Law. Many details or 51
smaller points in the Law which had been partly forgotten and partly neglected during the long rule of the Sadducees, that is to say, from Hyrcanus's oppression of the Pharisees until the commencement of Salome's reign, were once more introduced into daily life. Neglected customs were renewed with all pomp and solemnity, the days of their re-introduction being celebrated with rejoicing, and any public mourning or fast thereon was suspended. Thus the ceremony of pouring a libation of water upon the altar during the Feast of Tabernacles, which had been mockingly ridiculed by Alexander, was in time reinstated with enthusiasm, and became a favorite and distinctive rite. Upon these occasions, on the night succeeding the first day of the festival, the women's outer court of the Temple was brilliantly illuminated until it glowed like a sea of fire. All the people would then crowd to the holy mount to witness or take part in the proceedings. At times these bore a lively character, such as torch-light processions and dancing; at others they took the more solemn form of musical services of song and praise. This jubilee would last the whole night. At break of day the priests announced with a blast of their trumpets that the march was about to commence. At every halting-place the trumpets gathered the people together, until a huge multitude stood assembled round the spring of Siloah. Thence the water was drawn in a golden ewer. In solemn procession it was carried back to the Temple, where the libation was performed. The water streamed over the altar, and the notes of the flute, heard only upon the most joyful occasions, mingled with the rapturous strains of melody that burst from countless instruments.

A similar national festival was the half-holiday of the wood-feast, held in honor of the wood that was offered to the altar of the Temple; it fell upon the fifteenth day of Ab (August). A number 52
of white-robed maidens were wont to assemble upon this occasion in some open space among the vine-trees, where, as they trod the measure of the dance, they chanted strophes of song in the

Hebrew tongue. It was an opportunity for the Judæan youths, spectators of this scene, to select their partners for life. This festival, like the preceding one, was inaugurated by the Pharisees in opposition to Sadducæan customs. The Synhedrion seized upon the sacrificial ardor of the people to introduce a measure which, above all things, was calculated to arouse feelings of patriotism in the nation, and which was diametrically opposed to the views of their rivals. The Sadducees had declared that the daily offerings, and in fact the needs of the Temple, should not be paid for from a national treasury, but with individual, voluntary contributions. But the Council, in the reign of Salome Alexandra, decreed that every Israelite from the age of twenty—proselytes and freed slaves included—should contribute at least a half-shekel yearly to the treasury of the Temple. In this way the daily sacrifices acquired a truly national character, as the whole nation contributed towards them. Three collections were instituted during the year: in Judæa at the beginning of spring; in the trans-Jordanic countries, in Egypt and Syria, at the Feast of Weeks; and in the yet more distant lands of Babylonia, Media and Asia Minor, at the Feast of Tabernacles. These last collections were the richest, the Judæans who dwelt outside Palestine being very generous as well as very wealthy; thus, instead of the silver or copper shekel or denaria, they offered gold staters and darics. Central places in each land were chosen where the offerings should be deposited until they could be taken to Jerusalem. The most distinguished Judæans were selected to carry them thither, and they were called "holy messengers." In the Mesopotamian and 53
Babylonian towns of Nisibis and Nahardea (Naarda), treasure-houses were built for these Temple gifts, whence, under a strong escort to protect them from the Parthian and Nabathæan robber-hordes, they were safely borne to Jerusalem. The communities of Asia Minor had likewise their treasure-houses, Apamea and Laodicea, in Phrygia, Pergamus and Adramyttium, in the country of Aeolis. From this stretch of land nearly two hundred pounds weight of gold was sent to Jerusalem about twenty years after the first proclamation had been issued. From this we may gather what an immense revenue poured into the Temple, leaving a large surplus after all the requisites for divine service had been obtained. The Temple of Jerusalem became thereby in time an object of envy and of greed.

So far, the revival, introduced by Judah ben Tabbai and Simon ben Shetach, bore a harmless character; it reinstated old laws, created new ones, and sought means of impressing them upon the memory and attention of the people. But no reaction can remain within moderate bounds; it moves naturally towards excesses. The Sadducees, who were unwilling to adopt the Pharisaic rendering of the Law, were summoned to appear before the seat of justice and were unsparingly condemned. The anxiety to exalt the Law and to banish all opposition in the rival party was so great that upon one occasion Judah ben Tabbai had a witness executed who had been convicted of giving false testimony in a trial for a capital crime. He was, in this instance, desirous of practically refuting the Sadducæan views, forgetting that he was at the same time breaking a law of the Pharisees. That law required all the witnesses to be convicted of perjury before allowing punishment to be inflicted; and, as one witness alone could not establish an accusation, so one witness alone was not punishable. But the two chiefs were so clean-handed that Simon ben 54
Shetach did not fail to upbraid his colleague on account of ill-advised haste, and Judah ben Tabbai evinced the profoundest remorse at the shedding of the innocent blood of the executed witness by resigning his office of president and by making a public acknowledgment of his contrition. A favorite maxim of Judah ben Tabbai reveals his gentle disposition. "Consider accused persons as lawbreakers only whilst before you for judgment; the moment that is rendered, look upon them as innocent."

Simon ben Shetach, who succeeded Judah as President of the Council, does not seem to have relaxed in severity towards the infringers of the Law. The rare case of witchcraft was once brought before him, when eighty women were condemned for the offense, and crucified in Ascalon. On account of his unsparing severity, Simon ben Shetach brought upon himself such hatred of his opponents that they determined upon a fearful revenge. They incited two false witnesses to accuse his son of a crime punishable with death, in consequence of which he was actually condemned to die. On his way to the place of execution the young man uttered such vehement protestations of innocence that at last the witnesses themselves were affected, and confessed to their tissue of falsehoods. But when the judges were about to set free the condemned, the prisoner himself drew their attention to their violation of the law, which enjoined that no belief was to be given witnesses who withdrew their previous testimony. "If you wish," said the condemned youth to his father, "that the salvation of Israel should be wrought by your hand, consider me but the threshold over which you must pass without compunction." Both father and son showed themselves worthy of their sublime task, that of guarding the integrity of the Law; for to uphold it one sacrificed his life, and the other, his paternal love. Simon, the Judæan 55
Brutus, let the law pursue its course, although he, as well as all the judges, were convinced of his son's innocence.

The severity of the Pharisaic Synhedrion had naturally not spared the leaders of the Sadducees. Diogenes, the favorite of Alexander, and a number of others who had advised or authorized the execution of the 800 Pharisees, expiated this act of cruelty with their lives. The most distinguished of the Sadducees began to be uneasy at this constant persecution; they felt the sword of justice hanging over their heads, ready to descend upon them if they were guilty of the slightest infringement of the Law. In fear of their lives they turned to Alexander's second son, Aristobulus, who, without being a warm adherent of the Sadducees, was prepared to be the protector of their party. He sent their chiefs to Alexandra, commending them warmly to her mercy. When they appeared before the queen they reminded her of their services to the late king, and of the terror with which their name had once inspired Judæa's neighbors, and they threatened to offer their valuable services to the Nabathæan king Aretas or to the Syrian

monarch. They implored the queen to grant them a safe retreat in some fortress where they would not be under the constant supervision of the Pharisees. The gentle-hearted queen was so much moved by the tears of these gray-haired warriors that she entrusted them with the command of most of the fortresses, reserving, however, the three strongest—Hyrcanion, Alexandrion, and Machærus.

No political events of any great importance occurred during Alexandra's reign. Tigranes, king of Armenia, master of nearly the whole of Syria, had threatened to invade some of the Judæan provinces which had formerly belonged to the Syrian kingdom. The proximity of this ruler had greatly alarmed the queen, and she endeavored by gentle words and rich presents to prevent a contest with this powerful Armenian king. Tigranes had received the Judæan embassy, and accepted the queen's gifts most courteously, but they would hardly have prevented him from moving upon Judæa, had he not been compelled to devote himself to the defense of his own country from the attack of the Roman commander Lucullus (69).

Alexandra fell hopelessly ill, and her illness occasioned the saddest of entanglements. The violent and ambitious Aristobulus, supposing that his mother destined his weak brother Hyrcanus as her successor, left the capital secretly, and arriving at the Galilean fortress of Gabata in the neighborhood of Sepphoris, upon the friendship of whose governor, the Sadducee Galaistes, he could rely, insisted upon its being entirely given up to him. He garrisoned it with mercenaries, furnished by some of the minor Syrian trans-Jordanic princes and the robber-hordes of Trachonitis, and was thus enabled to hold a large force at his command. Hyrcanus and the chiefs of the Synhedrion, fearing an impending civil war, entreated of the queen to take measures to prevent it, but without avail. Alexandra bade them trust to the army, to the fortresses that had remained faithful, and to the rich treasury, and devoted herself exclusively to preparation for death. She expired soon after, in the year 69, leaving her people and her kingdom to all the horrors of a civil war which was ultimately to destroy their dearly won independence. Salome Alexandra had reigned for only nine years; she had witnessed the happy days of her people's freedom, and, when lying on her death-bed, may have felt in her troubled soul the presentiment that the coming night of slavery was at hand. She was the only queen in Judæan history whose name has been handed down to us with veneration, and she was also the last independent ruler of Judæa.

CHAPTER III.

HYRCANUS II. ARISTOBULUS II.

Brothers contend for the throne—Arrangement between the brothers—The Idumæan Antipater—Hyrcanus's weakness—Aretas besieges Jerusalem—Interference of Rome—Pompey at Jerusalem—The Judæan colony in Rome—Flaccus in Asia Minor—Cicero's oration against the Judæans—Weakening of the power of the Synhedrion—Shemaya and Abtalion—Violent death of Aristobulus and his son Alexander—Julius Cæsar and the Judæans—Antipater's sons Phasael and Herod—Herod before the Synhedrion—Operations of Cassius in Judæa—Malich—Antigonus as King—Herod escapes to Rome.

69–40 B. C. E.

When Providence has decreed that a State shall be destroyed, no event is more certain to hasten its fall than the contentions between two rival parties for the possession of the throne. The noblest upholders of the nation's rights are then invariably arrayed against each other, until at last the civil wars in which they are engaged are usually referred to some foreign ruler, whose yoke is all the more galling as he appears invariably in the light of a peacemaker with the olive branch in his hand.

The death of the queen gave the first incentive to the war which broke out between the two brothers and divided the nation into two camps. To Hyrcanus II, her eldest son, the dying mother had, in right of his birth, bequeathed the throne. He, whose virtues would have graced the modest life of a private individual, but who would have been but an indifferent ruler even in a peaceful era, was certainly not fitted to govern in troubled times. He did more harm by his good nature than many another could do by acts of tyranny. His younger brother was the direct opposite to him in character. Hyrcanus's cowardice contrasted vividly with the reckless courage 58
of Aristobulus, a quality in which he resembled his father Alexander. Added to this, he possessed unlimited ambition, which blinded him to practical considerations and quitted him only with his last breath. His aim was to be the mighty ruler of Judæa, and with the means at his command to make the neighboring countries subject to his rule. But his rash impetuosity prevented him from being successful, and, instead of gathering laurels, he brought only contempt upon himself and his nation. Hardly had Alexandra expired when Aristobulus, at the head of his mercenaries and Sadducæan followers, marched upon Jerusalem for the purpose of dethroning his brother. Upon Hyrcanus's side were ranged the Pharisees, the people and the army. The wife and children of Aristobulus had been imprisoned as hostages in the citadel of Baris in Jerusalem. The brothers met at Jericho, each at the head of his army. Hyrcanus was defeated and fled to Jerusalem, the greater number of his troops going over to Aristobulus. The younger brother attacked and took the Temple, where many of his opponents had sought refuge. Hyrcanus was obliged to lay down his arms when he saw that the invader was master of the sanctuary and the capital. The two brothers met again, agreed upon making peace, and signed their covenant in the Temple. Aristobulus, as the one more capable of ruling, was to wear the royal crown, whilst Hyrcanus was to retain the high priest's diadem. This agreement was ratified by the marriage of Aristobulus's son Alexander to Alexandra, daughter of Hyrcanus.

Aristobulus II, who had attained royal dignity by a successful stroke of arms, does not appear to have in any way excited the displeasure of the Pharisees. The position of the two parties in Judæa now assumed a different character, and they might have become extinct as parties, had it not been for the advent of a man whose measureless ambition and personal interest brought him 59
to the fore, and who, together with his family, became the vampire of the nation, sucking its noblest blood away. This man was Antipater, the descendant of a distinguished Idumæan family, who, in common with all other Idumæans, had been compelled by John Hyrcanus to accept Judaism. Never had a mistaken action found its punishment more surely and swiftly. The fanaticism of Hyrcanus I was now to bring ruin upon his house and family. The wealth and diplomatic talents of Antipater had raised him to the post of satrap of Idumæa during the reign of Alexander Jannæus and of his queen. His courteous acts and generous presents had won the affections not only of his countrymen, but also those of the inhabitants of Gaza and Ascalon.

Hyrcanus II, who required a guide in his helplessness, bestowed his confidence upon Antipater, who abused it, and exerted his influence to his own advantage. The Idumæan lost no opportunity of reminding Hyrcanus of the degrading part that he had had to play in having been called to the throne only to relinquish it to his younger brother. So successfully did Antipater work upon his feelings, making him believe that Aristobulus was actually planning his death, that Hyrcanus was tempted into breaking the covenant he had sworn to respect, by calling in a foreign ruler to decide between the claims of the two brothers. Antipater had laid his plans beforehand with Aretas, king of the Nabathæans. He fled one night from Jerusalem, bearing Hyrcanus with him, and arrived by forced marches at Petra, the capital of the Nabathæan king. Aretas was ready to help Hyrcanus, having been richly bribed by Antipater, and having the prospect of recapturing twelve cities east and south of the Dead Sea, which had been bought so dearly by the Hasmonæans. He marched, therefore, upon Judæa, with an army of fifty thousand 60
men, whose numbers were augmented by the followers of Hyrcanus (66). Thus the peace which the nation had enjoyed for nearly three years was disturbed for many a long day by the scheming ambition of Antipater and the boundless folly of Hyrcanus.

Aretas laid siege to Jerusalem in the beginning of the spring. To escape so deplorable a sight, many of the most distinguished Judæans (probably some of the Pharisaic leaders amongst them)

fled from the capital to Egypt. The siege lasted for several months, the strong walls of the city to a certain extent making up for the insufficient numbers of Aristobulus's warriors. But provisions began to fail, and, what was a far more serious consideration for the pious Judæans, the animals necessary for sacrificial purposes, particularly for the coming Paschal feast, were sensibly diminishing. But Aristobulus relied, and rightly so, upon the piety of the Judæan besiegers, who would not dare refuse the required victims for the altar. He ordered baskets to be lowered each day from the walls, containing the price of the lambs that were placed in the baskets, and were drawn up in return. But as the siege dragged on, and as the end seemed far off, some counselor—we may imagine that it was Antipater—advised Hyrcanus to hurry on the final scene, and to desist from supplying the sacrificial lamb. The basket that was lowered after this advice had been tendered was found to contain, when received within the city walls, a pig. This insult to the Law created a feeling of disgust amongst the besieged, and so deeply affected them that subsequently the breeding of swine was forbidden by the Synhedrion.

The adherents of Hyrcanus were guilty of yet another enormity. Amongst those who had left the besieged city was a pious man called Onias, who had once successfully prayed for rain in a drought. The soldiers of Hyrcanus dragged him from his solitary retreat, and believing that 61
Heaven would again answer his prayer, commanded him to pronounce a curse upon Aristobulus and his followers. But instead of giving vent to a curse, the old man exclaimed with fitting dignity, "Lord of the universe, as the besieged and the besiegers both belong to Thy people, I entreat of Thee not to grant the evil prayers of either party." The coarse soldiers could not understand the feelings that prompted such words, and murdered him as if he had been a criminal. In this way they thought they could silence the spirit of Judaism rising to protest against this civil war. But although the mighty ones of the land defied all right and proper feeling, the people were grievously distressed, and believed that the earthquake and the hurricane that devastated Palestine and other parts of Asia at that time were the visible signs of Divine wrath.

But more terrible than earthquake or hurricane was the harbinger of evil that appeared in Judæa, "the beast with iron teeth, brazen claws, and heart of stone, that was to devour much, and trample the rest under foot," which came to the Judæan nation, to drink its blood, to eat its flesh and to suck its marrow. The hour had struck when the Roman eagle, with swift flight, was to swoop down upon Israel's inheritance, circling wildly round the bleeding nation, lacerating her with cruel wounds and finally leaving her a corpse.

Like inexorable fate, Rome watched over the destinies of the people of western Asia, plundering, dividing and destroying. Judæa was destined to the same lot. The bird of prey scented its booty from afar with astonishing precision, and hastened to put out the last spark of life. It came to Judæa for the first time in the person of Scaurus, a legate of Pompey. In leaving for Asia, Scaurus hoped to exchange an insignificant position in his own country for a powerful one in foreign lands. He had imagined that in Syria he might acquire wealth and honor, but 62
finding that country already in possession of other birds of prey, he turned his attention to Judæa. There he was warmly welcomed by the rival brothers, who looked upon him as an arbitrator in their difficulties. They both sent ambassadors to meet him, and as they knew that the Romans were not indifferent to gold, they took care not to appear empty-handed before him. But Aristobulus's gifts prevailed; he sent three hundred talents, whilst Hyrcanus, or more properly speaking Antipater, gave little but promises. Roman interest accorded well with the greed of Scaurus. The Republic, fearing the growth of his power, began by insisting that the Nabathæan king should retire from the civil war in Palestine; Scaurus was therefore able to command Aretas to raise the siege of Jerusalem. Aretas complied, but was overtaken with his army at Rabbath Ammon by the troops of Aristobulus and defeated.

For the moment Aristobulus might fancy that he was the victorious monarch of Judæa. The direction that Roman statesmanship had taken, and the slow, deliberate movements that the commander Pompey employed against Mithridates, lulled him into the delusion that his monarchy was one of lasting duration. A lover of war like his father, he began immediately to make inroads into neighboring provinces, and also organized a fleet for warlike purposes. For two years Aristobulus nursed this vain dream, and he may even have wished to establish a show of independence by ordering, during this interval, coins to be struck in his name. But Antipater's inventive genius soon dissipated this dream; for in the arts of bribery and diplomacy he was far superior to Aristobulus. Antipater had already induced Scaurus to side with Hyrcanus, and to win for him the favor of Pompey, who was at this time gathering laurels in Syria. Pompey looked upon the quarrel between the two brothers as an excellent means for adding another conquest to his 63
long lists of triumphs. Although Aristobulus had made him a magnificent gift, valuable in point of art as of intrinsic merit, the contest had not been brought to an end. This gift consisted of a golden vine, bearing clusters of golden grapes and golden leaves, valued at five hundred talents, and it had probably been designed by King Alexander for the adornment of the Temple. This work of art aroused the admiration of all those who saw it, and for that reason Pompey hastened to send it to Rome, where it was placed in the Temple of Jupiter on the Capitol, as the harbinger of his triumphs. But the pious Judæans, naturally, would not allow their own sanctuary to be deprived of such an ornament, and spontaneously made contributions, some for golden grapes, others for golden leaves; so that another golden vine, in later days, graced the outer court of the Temple.

Although Pompey's vanity was flattered by this magnificent present, he was far from deciding in favor of the donor. He had the insolence to command Antipater and Nicodemus, the two envoys of the rival brothers, to bid their masters appear in person at Damascus, where the vexed question should be discussed, and where he would decide in favor of one of the two princes. In

spite of the deep humiliation which each felt, both Hyrcanus and Aristobulus appeared, and upheld their individual claims; the one resting upon his rights of birth, the other upon his capacity for governing. But a third party had also appeared before Pompey, which was to represent the right of the nation apart from the angry princes. Weary of the Hasmonæan quarrels, a republican party had sprung up, which was ready to govern the Judæan community, according to the letter of the Law, without an hereditary sovereign. The republicans especially complained that the last of the Hasmonæans had changed the Judæan form of government from a 64
hierarchy to a monarchy, in order to reduce the nation to servitude. Pompey, however, gave ear neither to the murmurs of the republicans nor to the arguments of the two brothers. It was not his intention to put an end to the strife; what he desired was, in the guise of a peaceful arbitrator, to bring Judæa under the Roman rule. He soon saw that the weak-minded Hyrcanus (under the tutelage of a designing minister) would be better adapted for the part of a ward of Rome than the daring Aristobulus, and he inwardly determined to support the weaker prince. But as he feared that by too rash a decision he would only be involved in a long contest with Aristobulus in an inaccessible country, and that he would only delay his triumphal entry into Rome, he endeavored to put off the younger brother with empty promises. Aristobulus, however, saw through the snare that was prepared for him, and determined to make sure of his freedom whilst there was yet time. He, therefore, entrenched himself in the citadel of Alexandrion, intending to oppose the invasion of the enemy from the walls of the fortress. But Roman greed of conquest was now to manifest itself in all its abhorrent nakedness.

The Roman commander was pleased to look upon this prince's justifiable act of self-defense as evidence of insubordination, and to treat him as an obstinate rebel. He crossed the Jordan at Bethshean, and taking the field against Aristobulus, commanded him to surrender, following up this command by a series of delusive promises and serious threats, such as would have induced a more wily man to take a false step. The unfortunate prince surrendered the fortress of Alexandrion, but soon repenting of this folly, returned to entrench himself behind the strong walls of the city of Jerusalem, whither Pompey followed him. When the Roman commander 65
arrived at Jericho he heard, to his infinite satisfaction, of the suicide of Mithridates, the great and dangerous enemy of the Roman State, and he felt that he had now only to subdue Aristobulus before celebrating his triumphs in Rome. It seemed as if this end would be easily attained; for Aristobulus, impelled by fear, came penitently to the feet of Pompey, loading him with presents, and promising to deliver Jerusalem into his hands. For this purpose Aristobulus started for the capital, accompanied by the legate Gabinius; but their advance was repelled by the patriots, who closed the gates of Jerusalem upon them, and Pompey was compelled to lead his army against the city. The Hyrcanists, or lovers of peace, as they were called, opened their gates to the enemy; but the patriots entrenched themselves upon the Mount of the Sanctuary, and destroying the bridge that connected the Temple with the town, prepared for a desperate defense. Pompey, much against his will, found that he was involved in a regular siege, the Temple Mount being strongly fortified. Then he sent to Tyre for his battering-rams, and ordered trees to be felled for bridging over the moats. The siege lasted for a long while, and might have continued still longer, had not the storming of the fortress been rendered easier to the besiegers by the patriots' strict observance of the Sabbath-day. In accordance with either a Pharisaic or a Sadducæan rendering of the Law, the besieged declared that they were permitted to resist an attack of the invaders on the Sabbath, but that they were infringing upon the sanctity of that day if they merely defended the walls from the enemy's onslaughts. As soon as the Romans were aware of this distinction, they turned it to their own advantage. They let their weapons rest on the Sabbath-day, and worked steadily at the demolishing of the walls. Thus it happened that upon one Sabbath, in the 66
month of Sivan (June, 63 B. C.), a tower of the Temple fell, and a breach was effected by which the most daring of the Romans prepared a way for entering the Sanctuary. The legions of Rome and the foreign mercenaries crowded into the court of the Temple, and killed the priests as they stood sacrificing before the altar. Many of the unfortunate victims threw themselves headlong from the battlements into the depths below, whilst others lit their own funeral pyre. It is believed that twelve thousand Judæans met their death upon this day. Pompey then penetrated into the Sanctuary, in order to satisfy his curiosity as to the nature of the Judæan worship, about which the most contradictory reports prevailed. The Roman general was not a little astonished at finding within the sacred recesses of the Holy of Holies, neither an ass's head nor, indeed, images of any sort. Thus the malicious fictions busily circulated by Alexandrian writers, and of a character so prejudicial to the Judæans, were now shown to be false. The entrance of the Roman conqueror into the Temple, though deplorable enough, was in a way favorable to Judaism. Whether he was penetrated by awe at the sublime simplicity of the Holy of Holies, or whether he did not wish to be designated as the robber of sanctuaries, we know not; but, wonderful to relate, Pompey controlled his greed for gold and left the treasury, containing 2000 talents, untouched. But the independence of the nation ceased forever from that hour. Exactly a century after the Maccabees had freed their people from the tyranny of the Syrians, their descendants brought down the tyranny of the Romans upon Judæa.

What did Hyrcanus gain by his supplication for aid from the Republic? Pompey deprived him of his royal title, only leaving him the dignity of the high priesthood, with the doubtful appellation of ethnarch, and made him the ward of Antipater, who was named governor of the country. The 67
walls of Jerusalem were razed to the ground, Judæa put into the category of conquered provinces, and a tax was levied upon the capital. The territory was brought within narrower confines, and its extent became once more what it had been in pre-Hasmonæan times. Several seaports lying along the coast, and inhabited by Greeks, as well as those trans-Jordanic towns which Hyrcanus and Alexander had conquered after hard fighting, and had incorporated with Judæa, were declared to be free towns by Pompey, and were placed under the guardianship of

the Roman governor of Syria. But these cities, particularly the trans-Jordanic ones, joined together in a defensive and offensive league, calling themselves the Decapolis. Pompey ordered the most determined of his prisoners of war, the zealots, to be executed, whilst the rest were taken to Rome. The Judæan prince, Aristobulus, his son Antigonus, his two daughters, and his uncle Absalom were forced to precede Pompey's triumphal car, in the train of the conquered Asiatic kings and kings' sons. Whilst Zion veiled her head in mourning, Rome was reveling in her victories; but the Judæan prisoners that had been dragged to Rome were to become the nucleus of a community destined to carry on a new kind of warfare against long-established Roman institutions, and ultimately to modify or partly destroy them.

There were, without doubt, many Judæans living in Rome and in other Italian cities before Pompey's conquests, who may have emigrated into Italy from Egypt and Asia Minor for commercial objects. As merchants, bringing grain from the Nile country, or tribute money from Asia Minor, they may have come into contact with the Roman potentates. But these emigrants could hardly have formed a regular communal organization, for there were no authorized teachers of the Law amongst them. Probably, however, some learned men may have followed in 68
Pompey's train of captives, who were ransomed by their compatriots, and persuaded to remain in Rome. The descendants of these prisoners were called according to Roman law *libertini* (the freed ones). The Judæan quarter in Rome lay upon the right bank of the Tiber, on the slope of Mount Vatican, and a bridge leading across that river to the Vatican was known for a long while by the name of the Bridge of the Judæans (Pons Judæorum). Theodus, one of the Judæans settled in Rome, introduced into his own community a substitute for the paschal lamb, which could not be eaten outside of Jerusalem, and the loss of which was a bitter deprivation to the exiles. This aroused the displeasure of the Judæans in the home country, who wrote to Theodus: "If thou wert not Theodus, we should excommunicate thee."

The Roman Judæans influenced, to a certain extent, the course of Roman policy. For as the original emigrants, as well as the ransomed captives, enjoyed the power of voting in public assemblies, they were able at times, by their combined action on a preconcerted plan, by their assiduity, by their temperate and passionless conception of the situation, perhaps also by their keen intelligence, to turn the scale upon some popular question. So important was their quiet influence that the eloquent but intolerant Cicero, who had learned to hate the Judæans from his master Apollonius Molo, was afraid on one occasion to give vent to his anti-Judæan feelings in a public speech, for fear of stirring them up against him. He had to defend the unjust cause of a prætor Flaccus, who was accused of having been guilty of numerous extortions during his government of the Asia Minor provinces. Amongst other things, Flaccus had seized upon the votive offerings of the Temple (*aurum Judæorum*) given by the community of Asia Minor—about two hundred pounds of gold, collected by the Judæan inhabitants of the towns of Apamea, 69
Laodicea, Adramyttium, and Pergamus (62). In order to justify his proceedings Flaccus cited a resolution of the Senate, by which all exportation of money was forbidden from Roman to foreign provinces; and although Judæa had been conquered by Roman arms, yet she did not enjoy the honor of being enrolled amongst the provinces of the Republic. The Roman Judæans were intensely interested in this trial, and many of them were present among the populace. The cowardly Cicero was so much afraid of them that he would have liked to speak in a low tone in order to be heard by the Judges but not by the Judæans. In the course of his defense he made use of an unworthy piece of sophistry, which might have made an impression upon some bigoted Roman, but which could hardly satisfy an intelligent mind. "It requires great decision of character," he said, "to oppose the barbaric superstitions of the Judæans and, for the good of our country, to show proper contempt towards these seditious people, who invade our public assemblies. If Pompey did not avail himself of a conqueror's rights, and left the treasures of the Temple untouched, we may be sure he did not restrain himself out of reverence for the Judæan sanctuary, but out of astuteness, to avoid giving the suspicious and slanderous Judæan nation an opportunity of accusing him; for otherwise he would hardly have spared foreign, still less Judæan, sanctuaries. When Jerusalem was unconquered, and when the Judæans were living in peace, they displayed a deeply-rooted antipathy to the glory of the Roman State, to the dignity of the Roman name, and to the laws of our ancestors. During the last war the Judæan nation proved most effectually how bitterly they hate us. How little this nation is beloved by the immortal gods is now evident, as her country is conquered and leased out." What impression this speech made upon 70
the audience, and what decision was given to Flaccus, are unknown. A year later Cicero was punished by a sentence of banishment. He was not allowed to be seen within eighty miles of Rome, and his villas were razed to the ground.

After Pompey's departure from Syria, the thraldom imposed upon dismembered Judæa became more onerous than before, because she was left in the anomalous condition of a partly conquered province and a partly independent country. The powerful minister of Hyrcanus contributed to make this condition lasting and oppressive. He endeavored to strengthen his connection with Rome by munificent presents, trusting that the Republic would support him, in spite of his unpopularity with the Judæan people, who hated him as the cause of their subjection. With the sweat from Judæa's brow he sustained the Roman commander Scaurus, who had opened a campaign against the Nabathæan king, Aretas. Meanwhile Alexander II, the eldest son of Aristobulus, escaping from captivity and arriving in Judæa, gained the support of the patriots, and putting himself at the head of fifteen hundred horse and ten thousand foot soldiers, marched upon Jerusalem. Hyrcanus, or more properly speaking his master Antipater, could not resist so great a force, and left the capital to Alexander, who entered and had it fortified. The great Roman power fought alternately upon either side, according to the bribes that were offered its officials. Alexander felt so secure of his position that he had coins struck with the following inscription in

Greek and Hebrew, "King Alexander and High Priest Jonathan." Aulus Gabinius, however, the governor of Syria, and the most unscrupulous of the Roman extortioners of his times, succeeded in ending this revolt and in subduing Alexander. The death-stroke that awaited the latter was only warded off by his mother, who, embracing the knees of the Roman commander, entreated him to show mercy to her son. 71

Gabinius succeeded in weakening the unity of the Judæan State, which had of late been so unworthily represented by the last of the Hasmonæans, but the integrity of which had always been so jealously watched over by the Great Council. Judæa was no longer to be an independent State with self-governing and legislative powers over the whole country, but was to be divided into five provinces, each having its own independent Senate or Synhedrion for the control of home affairs. These assemblies were held at specially appointed towns, at Jerusalem, Gazara, Emmaus, Jericho, and Sepphoris; and Judæans selected from the aristocratic party, who were well disposed towards Rome, were placed at the head of these councils.

Although the fact of having dismembered the State testified in favor of Gabinius's political insight, yet he deceived himself as regarded the ultimate success of his plans. As the Synhedrion had grown out of the innermost life of the whole nation and had not been forced upon it by outside influences, it was no easy matter to break its centralizing power. The new scheme of dividing Judæa into five provinces was hardly introduced before it disappeared with Gabinius, leaving no trace of its existence. The Great Council remained as before the heart of the people, but its power was lessened by unfavorable circumstances. From that time it was called the "Synhedrion," and to distinguish it from the small Councils, the "Great Synhedrion." But it could not boast of any political power, for that was now entirely in the hands of the Romans. Simon ben Shetach, the celebrated president of the Council, was succeeded by his two most distinguished disciples, Shemaya (Sameas) and Abtalion (Pollion). We can trace the despairing sentiments of that generation in some of their sayings which have been handed down to us: "Love thy handicraft and shun governing; estrange thyself from worldly power." "Be prudent in your words," said Abtalion to the law-framers; "do not bring upon yourselves the penalty of exile, for your disciples would have to follow you into a land full of ensnaring influences (poisonous waters) which they would imbibe, and the sacred name of God would be through them profaned." These two presidents of the Synhedrion seem to have been Alexandrian Judæans, or at least they must have spent some years of exile in Alexandria, perhaps with their master Judah ben Tabbai. 72

During their twenty-five years of official life (60–35), whilst the political power of the Synhedrion was waning, their energy appears to have been directed towards its inner or moral power. They assembled a circle of eager disciples around them, to whom they taught the tenets of the Law, their origin and application. They were indeed accredited in after ages with so profound a knowledge of the Law, that to cite Shemaya or Abtalion in support of an interpretation was considered indisputable proof of its accuracy. One of their most distinguished and most grateful disciples called them "the two great men of the era," and the peculiarly careful study of the Law, for which the Pharisees became so justly celebrated, may be said to have originated with them.

For some little time the history of Judæa contains nothing but accounts of insubordination to Roman despotism and its unhappy consequences, of scenes of oppression and robbery, and of acts of spoliation of the Temple. Aristobulus, who had succeeded in escaping from Rome with his son Antigonus, now appeared in Judæa. The rule of the Romans was of so galling a character that Aristobulus, who had not been a favorite in the old days, was now received with unbounded enthusiasm. Sufficient arms could not be procured for the volunteers who flocked to his camp. He was joined by Pitholaus, a Judæan commander, who had once served as a general to Hyrcanus. Aristobulus placed himself at the head of 8000 men, and began immediately to regarrison the citadel of Alexandrion, whence he hoped to exhaust the Romans by guerrilla warfare. But his impatient temper led him into open battle, in which a large part of his army was utterly destroyed, and the rest scattered. Still unsubdued, Aristobulus threw himself with the remnant of his followers into the citadel of Machærus, but at the approach of the Romans with their battering-rams he was obliged to capitulate, and for the second time was sent with his sons into captivity at Rome (56). 73

Another insurrection, organized by his son Alexander, who had obtained his freedom from the then all-powerful Pompey, was doomed to come to as disastrous a termination. Galled by the oppression of the Governor of Syria, the inhabitants of that unfortunate country sent an army of 30,000 men to join Alexander. They commenced by killing all the Romans who came in their way, Gabinius's troops not being strong enough to oppose them. But the Governor craftily succeeded in detaching some of Alexander's followers from his ranks, and then tempted the Judæan prince into open battle. At Mount Tabor (in 55), the Judæans were signally defeated.

Meanwhile the three most eminent men of Rome—Julius Cæsar, distinguished by his brilliant sagacity, Pompey by his martial renown, and Crassus by his boundless wealth—had agreed to break the power of the Senate, and to manage the affairs of the State according to their own will. The triumvirs began by dividing the fairest lands into provinces, which they separately appropriated. Syria fell to the share of Crassus, who was intensely avaricious in spite of his vast riches. Judæa from this time on was annexed to Syria quite as a matter of course. Crassus went out of his way, when marching against the Parthians, to enter Jerusalem, being tempted thither by the rich treasury of the Temple. He made no secret of his wish to seize upon the two thousand talents that Pompey had spared. In order to satisfy his greed, a pious priest, Eleazer, delivered up to him a solid bar of gold, the existence of which, hidden as it was in a hollow staff of curiously carved wood, had been unknown to the priests. Upon the receipt of this gift, Crassus swore 74

solemnly that he would spare the treasury of the Temple. But when was a promise known to be binding that was made by a Roman to a Judæan? He took the golden bar, the two thousand talents, and all the golden vessels of the Temple, which were worth another eight thousand talents (54). Laden with these and other spoils of the Sanctuary, Crassus marched against the Parthians; but the Roman arms had always failed to subdue this people. Crassus was slain, and his army was so entirely disabled that his legate, Cassius Longinus, returned to Syria with scarcely the tenth part of the army of one hundred thousand men (53). The Parthians pursued the weakened army, and the Syrians, weary of the Roman yoke, lent them secret aid. To the Judæans this seemed an auspicious moment also for their own emancipation.

It fell to Pitholaus to call the army together, which he led against Cassius. Fortune, however, always deserted the Judæan arms when they were turned against the Romans. Shut up in Tarichea on the lake of Tiberias, the troops were obliged to surrender. Upon the urgent demand of Antipater, Pitholaus was sentenced to death by Cassius, and thirty thousand Judæan warriors were sold into slavery (52).

But the imprisoned Aristobulus looked forward once again to the hope of placing himself upon his father's throne and of banishing Antipater into obscurity. Julius Cæsar, the greatest man that 75
Rome ever produced, had openly defied the Senate, and broken with his associate Pompey. The bitter strife between the two Roman potentates lit the torch of war in the most distant provinces of the Roman empire. Cæsar had given Aristobulus his freedom, and in order to weaken Pompey's influence, had sent him with two legions to Palestine to create a diversion in his favor. But the partisans of Pompey contrived to poison the Judæan prince. His followers embalmed his body in honey and carried it to Jerusalem, where it was buried beside the bodies of the Hasmonæan princes. His eldest son, the gallant Alexander, was decapitated by order of Scipio, a follower of Pompey, at Antioch. The widow of Aristobulus and his surviving son Antigonus found protection with Ptolemy, prince of Chalcis, whose son Philippion had fallen in love with Alexandra, the daughter of Aristobulus, and had brought her to his father's court. But Ptolemy, out of criminal love to his own daughter-in-law, caused his son to be murdered and married the widow.

Antipater continued to be Pompey's faithful ally, until the Roman general met with a miserable end in Egypt. Then the Idumæan offered his services to Cæsar. When the great general found himself in Egypt, without sufficient forces, without news from Rome, in the midst of a hostile population, Antipater evinced a touching eagerness to help him, which did not remain unrewarded. He provided the army of Cæsar's ally, Mithridates, king of Pergamus, with all necessaries, and sent him a contingent of Judæan troops; he aided him in conquering Pelusium, and conciliated the Egyptian-Judæans who had taken the part of his opponent. He was now well able to forego the favor of Hyrcanus. To no effect did Antigonus, the last surviving son of Aristobulus, seek an interview with Cæsar, in which he dwelt upon his father's and his brother's 76
loyalty to the Roman general; Antipater had but to display his wounds, which he had received in the very last campaign, to gain the victory over his rival. Cæsar, who was an astute reader of men, and who had himself revolted from the legitimate order of things, knew well enough how to value Antipater's loyalty and energy, and did not support the rightful claims of Antigonus. Out of consideration for Antipater (47), Hyrcanus was proclaimed high priest and ethnarch, and to Judæa was given some relief from her burdens. The walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt, the provinces that formerly belonged to Judæa, namely, Galilee, the towns in the plains of Jezreel, and Lydda, were once more made part of her territory. The Judæans were no longer forced to provide winter quarters for the Roman legions, although the landowners were obliged to give the fourth part of their harvest every second year to the Roman troops.

Cæsar was altogether benevolent to the Judæans, and rewarded them for their loyalty. To the Alexandrian Judæans he granted many privileges, confirming their long-enjoyed equality with the Greeks, and permitting them to be governed by a prince of their own (Ethnarch). Money was again liberally provided for the Temple. Cæsar enabled the supplies to reach their destination. He prevented the Greek inhabitants of Asia Minor from molesting the Judæans of those provinces, from summoning them before the courts of justice on the Sabbath, from interfering with their public assemblages and the building of their synagogues, and in general from disturbing them in their religious observances (47–44). Cæsar must also have extended his generosity to the Judæan community in Rome, for they evinced the warmest devotion to his memory.

But in spite of all these favors, the Judæan nation as a whole remained cold and distant. The 77
foreign communities of Judæans might bless Cæsar as their benefactor, but the Palestinean Judæans could see in him only the Roman, the patron of the hated Idumæan. So defiant was the attitude of the nation that Antipater felt himself compelled to threaten the disaffected with the triple wrath of Cæsar, of Hyrcanus and of himself, whilst he promised liberal bounty to the obedient and loyal Judæans. Meanwhile, a small body of men taken from the army of Aristobulus had assembled under the command of Ezekias upon one of the mountain heights of Galilee, where they only awaited an opportune moment for raising the standard of revolt against Rome. The Romans, it is true, only looked upon this little army as a band of robbers, and upon Ezekias as a robber chieftain, but to the Judæans they were the avengers of their honor and their freedom. For they were deeply mortified that Antipater had placed the reins of government in the hands of his sons, and that he cared only for the growing power of his house. Of the four sons born to him by Kypros, the daughter of the King of Arabia, he proclaimed Phasael, the eldest, Governor of Jerusalem and Judæa, and the second, Herod, a youth of the age of twenty, Governor of Galilee.

This prince was destined to become the evil genius of the Judæan nation; it was he who brought her as a bound captive to Rome; it was he who placed his feet triumphantly upon her neck. Like an ominous cloud weighted down with misfortune, he seems from the very first to have thrown a dark shadow upon the life of the nation, which, as it slowly but surely advanced, quenched all light in the gathering darkness and withered all growth, until nothing remained but a scene of desolation. True to his father's policy, Herod began by basely flattering Rome and by wounding the Judæan spirit. In order to gain favor with Cæsar, and also to establish the security 78
of his family, he undertook a campaign against the followers of Ezekias; he captured the leader of the band, and, without any trial or show of justice, sentenced him and his followers to decapitation. Eager were the words of praise and of thanks awarded to him by the Syrians and the Romans; he was called the "Robber-subduer"; but whilst he was loaded with favors by Sextus Cæsar, the Roman Governor of Syria, all true patriots mourned.

The bitter degradation which the people suffered at the hands of this Idumæan family inspired some of the most distinguished Judæans to lay before the weak-minded Hyrcanus the true state of their own and of their High Priest's new position. They explained to him that his dignity was but an empty name, that all real power lay with Antipater and his sons. They pointed to the execution of Ezekias and his followers as an act of gross contempt for the Law. These bitter complaints would have had but little effect upon the weak Hyrcanus, had not the mothers of the slain torn his heart with their cries of anguish. Whenever he appeared in the Temple they threw themselves before him and entreated him not to let the death of their sons remain unavenged.

At last Hyrcanus permitted the Synhedrion to summon Herod before the seat of justice. But Antipater did not fail to warn his son of the terrible storm that was gathering over his head, and of the danger of entering Jerusalem alone and unarmed; while at the same time he cautioned him not to appear surrounded by too many troops, and so arouse the suspicions of Hyrcanus. Herod appeared at the appointed time, but with an armed escort, and with a letter from Sextus Cæsar, making the king answerable for the life of the favorite. Thus the day arrived for the great trial to which all the inhabitants of Jerusalem were looking forward with feverish impatience. When the members of the court had taken their places, the accused, clad in purple, with aggressive 79
demeanor, and escorted by his followers, appeared before them. At this sight most of the accusers felt their courage fail them; Herod's bitterest enemies looked downcast and shamefaced, and even Hyrcanus was embarrassed. A painful silence ensued, during which each man stood breathless. Only one member found words to save the waning dignity of the Council, the President, Shemaya. Quietly and calmly he spoke: "Is it not the intention of the accused to put us to death if we pronounce him guilty? And yet I must blame him less than the king and you, who suffer such contempt to be cast upon the Law. Know, then that he, before whom you are all trembling, will one day deliver you to the sword of the executioner." These words roused the fainting courage of the judges, and they soon showed themselves to be as determined as they had before appeared to be cowardly. But Hyrcanus was afraid of their growing wrath, and commanded the Council to adjourn the sitting. Meanwhile Herod withdrew from the anger of the people, and was cordially received at Damascus by Sextus Cæsar, who proclaimed him governor of Cœlesyria (46). Overwhelmed with honors, he was on the point of wreaking his vengeance upon the king and the Council, when his father and his brother Phasael urged him to milder measures. But he silently nursed his revenge, determined to gratify it upon some future occasion.

The wide-spread disturbance occasioned by the murder of Cæsar (44) involved Palestine in new troubles. The Roman Judæans justly were so inconsolable at the death of this great man that they spent several entire nights mourning beside the grave that contained his ashes. The internal struggles, the bloody warfare, the constant proscriptions, were but the labor-throes of Rome previous to the birth of a new order of things; but for Judæa they were to a certain extent a fresh 80
attack of a fatal disease. The heads of the republican party supplanted those of the Cæsarian party, but merely to be supplanted by them again in a short time; and this was the case not only in Judæa, but in various parts of the Roman empire. The republican, Cassius Longinus, had arrived in Syria for the purpose of raising troops and money, and demanded that Judæa should supply him with 700 talents. Cassius was in desperate haste, for any moment might deprive him of the supreme power with which he ruled at that time over persons and events in Syria. Thus he threw the inhabitants of four Palestinean cities into chains and sold them into slavery, because their contributions were not delivered quickly enough.

The eyes of the unfortunate monarch, Hyrcanus, were opened at last to the fact that the Idumæans were seeking only their own interest under the cloak of warm partisanship for his cause. He began to be suspicious in his dealings with them, and turned for support to a true and faithful friend, Malich, who had long since recognized the duplicity of the Idumæans. As yet Hyrcanus knew nothing of the fiendish plot by which he was to be dethroned, and which was to raise Herod, by the help of the Roman legions, to the throne of Judæa. But this rumor had reached the ears of Malich. Determined to rid the king of the hated Antipater, he contrived to poison him when he was feasting at a banquet with Hyrcanus (43). In cutting at the root, he failed, however, to destroy the growing evil, for Herod surpassed his father, not only in determination and in audacity, but also in duplicity. He avenged the death of Antipater by the assassination of Malich. All attempts to ruin the Idumæan brothers were unsuccessful. Even when Herod fell suddenly and grievously ill, Phasael was fortunate enough to subdue his enemies. A plot conceived by Antigonus, the son of Aristobulus II, supported by his kinsman 81
Ptolemy of Chalcis, to deprive the Idumæans of their power, failed likewise, and Herod compelled Hyrcanus to crown him with the garland of victory when he made his entry into Jerusalem. As a means of disarming this terrible and mighty prince, Hyrcanus tried to attach him to his house, by

betrothing him to his granddaughter Mariamne, celebrated in history no less for her beauty than for her misfortunes. The victim was to be bound to the executioner by the bonds of marriage, and her own mother, Alexandra, helped to bring about this miserable alliance.

Fortune smiled so persistently upon the Idumæan that all changes in the political world, however they might appear to damage his cause, only gave him greater power. The republican army was completely routed at Philippi (in 42), the leaders, Brutus and Cassius, committed suicide, and the Roman world lay at the feet of the second triumvirate—Octavius, Antony, and Lepidus. Herod and Phasael looked upon these changes with a troubled eye; for had they not displayed the warmest zeal for the opponents of the triumvirate? Besides this, some of the Judæan nobles had hurried forth to meet the victor Antony in Bithynia, carrying to him their complaints of the rapacity of the Idumæan brothers. But Herod soon found the means to scatter the clouds. He also appeared before Antony with a smooth tongue and ready money. Antony did not fail to remember that he had formerly tasted of Antipater's hospitality. He turned a deaf ear to the Judæan nobles, and dismissed Herod with marks of favor. The voice of the nation, which made itself heard through its ambassadors, was no longer heeded. Antony sentenced some of the unfortunate envoys to be thrown into prison, and others to be executed, whilst he proclaimed the two Idumæan brothers governors of Judæa, with the title "Tetrarch."

82 At one time it seemed as if this constant good fortune were about to desert the Idumæan brothers and to return to the Hasmonæan house. The Parthians, stimulated by the fugitive Roman republican Labienus, had made, under the command of their king's son Pacorus, and his commander, Barzapharnes, an inroad into Asia Minor and Syria, whilst Mark Antony was reveling at the court of the bewitching queen Cleopatra. The Parthians, enemies of the Roman republic, were also violently antagonistic to Herod and Phasael; they became doubly so on account of their connection with Lysanias, the son of Ptolemy, who was related to the house of Aristobulus, and who had promised great rewards to the Parthian commanders if they would sweep the hated brothers out of the way, dethrone Hyrcanus, and crown Antigonus. The Parthians agreed to this scheme, and, dividing their army into two detachments, marched by the sea-coast and the inland road upon Jerusalem. At every step they were met and joined by Judæan troops, who outstripped them in their haste to arrive at the capital. Upon entering Jerusalem they besieged the Hasmonæan palace, and flocked to the Mount of the Temple. The common people, in spite of being unarmed, supported the invaders. The festival of Pentecost was at hand, and a crowd of worshipers from all parts of Judæa were streaming into Jerusalem; they also declared themselves in favor of Antigonus. The Idumæans held the palace and its fortress, and the invaders, the city. Hyrcanus and Phasael were at last persuaded by Pacorus, the king's cup-bearer, to go as envoys of peace to the general, Barzapharnes, whilst Herod was closely watched. Upon arriving at Ecdippa the two unfortunate ambassadors were thrown into prison, where Phasael committed suicide, and where Hyrcanus had his ears mutilated, in order to incapacitate him thereafter for holding his priestly office. Plots were also laid to ensure the downfall of Herod, but, warned by 83 some faithful followers of his brother, he contrived to escape from his palace at night. Accompanied by his bride Mariamne, and by the female members of his family, he hurried to the fortress Masada, which he left in command of his brother Joseph, retiring first into Arabia, then into Egypt, and finally to Rome. He was followed by the execrations of the people. Antigonus was now proclaimed king of Judæa (the Parthians carrying off Hyrcanus to Babylon), and feeling himself to be in truth a monarch, he had coins struck with his Hebrew and Greek names: "Mattathias, High Priest, and the Commonwealth of the Judæans," and also "King Antigonus." The Parthian auxiliary troops were dismissed, and Antigonus destroyed the last of the Roman contingent that still held some of the fortresses in Palestine. So Judæa was once more freed from foreign soldiery, and could indulge in the sweet dream of regained independence after thirty hard years of internal troubles and terrible warfare.

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CHAPTER IV.

ANTIGONUS AND HEROD.

Weakness of Antigonus and Herod's Strength of Character—Contest for the Throne—Herod becomes King—Proscriptions and Confiscations—Herod's Policy—Abolition of the Hereditary Tenure of the High Priesthood—Death of the High Priest Aristobulus—War with the Arabians—The Earthquake—Death of the last of the Hasmonæans—Hillel becomes the Head of the Synhedrion—His System of Tradition—Menahem the Essene—Shammai and his School—Mariamne—Herod's Magnificence and Passion for Building—Herod rebuilds the Temple—Herod executes his Sons Alexander and Aristobulus—Antipater and his Intrigues—The Pharisees under Herod—The Destruction of the Roman Eagle—Execution of Antipater and Death of Herod.

40–3 B. C. E.

It is certain that Judæa derived her greatness and independence rather from the tact and foresight of the first Hasmonæans than from their skill in arms; and in like manner she suffered humiliation and bondage from the short-sightedness of the last Hasmonæan kings, who did not understand how to make use of the advantages within their grasp. Events were most favorable for Antigonus to acquire extended power. The Roman leaders were violently opposed to one another. The provinces in the east, unimportant in the eyes of Octavius, were looked upon by Antony as the abode of luxury and pomp rather than as an arena for warlike achievements. The soft arms of Cleopatra had made the rough couch of the war-goddess distasteful to him. The Parthians, who hated the greed of Rome, had valiantly repulsed her troops. Had Antigonus understood how to keep alive the hatred of the people towards the Idumæan house, the Romans themselves would have courted him as an ally instead of shunning him as an enemy, so eager were they for assistance in staying the progress of the Parthians. The mountain tribes of Galilee 85
had already declared in favor of Antigonus; and Sepphoris, one of their cities, had been converted into an arsenal; besides, the caves of Arbela sheltered numerous bands of freebooters, who might have proved dangerous to the enemy's rear. But Antigonus was neither a statesman nor a general. He did not know how to turn to account the varied material which he had at hand. The whole of his strength was frittered away upon trivial aims; his leading passion was the revenge which he meditated against Herod and his brothers, and this retarded instead of stimulating his activity. He did not know how to rise to the truly royal height whence he could look down with contempt instead of with hatred upon the Idumæan upstarts. During his reign, which lasted three years and a half (40–37), he undertook nothing great or decisive, although the Roman officers, who for the sake of appearances pretended to support Herod, in point of fact usually occupied a neutral position.

Even amongst his own people Antigonus did not know the secret of winning men of influence to his cause so that they would stand or fall with him. The very leaders of the Synhedrion, Shemaya and Abtalion, averse to Herod on account of his overwhelming audacity, were not partisans of Antigonus. It is somewhat difficult to understand entirely the reason of this aversion to the Hasmonæan king. Had Antigonus professed allegiance to Sadducæan principles, or was there personal jealousy between the representatives of the royal power and the teachers of the Law? We are led to believe from one circumstance, insignificant in itself, that the dislike originated from the latter cause. It happened once, upon the day of Atonement, that the entire congregation, according to custom, had followed the high priest, Antigonus, at the close of the divine service, from the Temple to his own residence. On the way they met the two Synhedrists, 86
Shemaya and Abtalion; they quitted their priest-king to form an escort for their beloved teachers of the Law. Antigonus, vexed at this apparent insult, expressed his displeasure to the Synhedrists by an ironical obeisance, which they returned in the same offensive way. This unfortunate variance with the most influential men, coupled with Antigonus's lack of generalship and statecraft, brought misfortune upon himself, his house and the nation.

His rival Herod, who possessed all those qualities in which he was deficient, was a man of a different stamp. When fortune frowned upon him for a time, he could always win back her smiles. His flight from Jerusalem had been so desperate for him that at one moment he contemplated suicide. His design to make an ally of the Nabathæan king failed. He wandered through the Judæan-Idumæan desert, an outcast and penniless, but yet unbroken, and revolving far-reaching schemes. He turned to Egypt; there Cleopatra offered to make him general of her army, but he refused, for he still clung to the hope of wearing the crown of Judæa. He took ship for Rome, and after being tempest-tossed and narrowly escaping shipwreck, he arrived at his destination at the favorable moment when Octavius and Antony had once more agreed upon the Brundisian treaty. He found no difficulty in persuading Antony that he could render him great service in repulsing the Parthians, and he convinced him that Antigonus, raised to the throne of Judæa by the Parthians, would always be an implacable enemy to the Romans. Antony was completely deceived by the craft and subtlety of Herod. He spoke favorably of him to Octavius, who dared not refuse him anything. Thus within seven days, Herod succeeded in having the Senate proclaim him King of Judæa, and Antigonus pronounced an enemy of Rome (40). This was the second death-blow 87
that Rome had dealt the Judæan nation, in delivering her up to the mercy of an alien, a half-Judæan, an Idumæan, who had his own personal insults to avenge. Judæa was forced to submit, and in addition to pay tribute-money to Rome.

Herod, seeing that his ambition was to be crowned with success, now left Antony (who had

loaded him with honors), in order to assume the royal title conferred upon him. He left Rome and arrived at Acco (39). He was supplied with sums of money by various friends, and especially by Saramalla, the richest Judæan in Antioch. With these moneys he hired mercenaries and subdued a great part of Galilee. He then hastened southwards, to relieve the fortress of Masada, where his brother Joseph was hard pressed by the friends of Antigonus. This struggle was of long duration, as the Romans were unwilling to take an active part in the contest. Herod felt the necessity of appearing in person in Antony's camp, which at that moment was pitched before Samosata, there to plead his own cause. Partly in return for the services he rendered to the Roman commander upon this occasion, and partly through his persuasive powers, he induced Antony to send Sosius, one of his generals, at the head of two legions, to resolutely carry on the contest against Antigonus, and to establish upon the throne the king selected by Rome.

This war was carried on by Herod with implacable severity. Five cities in the neighborhood of Jericho, with their inhabitants to the number of 2000, who had sided with Antigonus, he ordered to be burnt. In the following spring (37), he commenced the siege of Jerusalem. Previous to this, he celebrated in Samaria, with hands stained with the blood of its inhabitants, his nuptials with Mariamne, to whom he had now for several years been betrothed.

As soon as Sosius had advanced into Judæa with a large army of Roman infantry, cavalry and 88
Syrian mercenaries, the siege of Jerusalem was pressed. The besieging army numbered one hundred thousand men. They built ramparts, filled up the moats, and prepared their battering-rams. The besieged, though suffering from want of food, defended themselves heroically. They made occasional sorties, dispersed the workmen, destroyed the preparations for the siege, built up a new wall, and harassed the besiegers to such an extent that after one month's labor they had not advanced to any extent in their work. But the two Synhedrists, Shemaya and Abtalion, raised their voices against this opposition, and recommended their countrymen to open their gates to Herod.

This division of purpose amongst the besieged, combined with the attacks of the invaders, may have hastened the fall of the northern wall, which took place at the end of forty days. The besiegers rushed into the lower town and into the outworks of the Temple, while the besieged, with their king, fortified themselves in the upper town and on the Temple Mount. The Romans were occupied during another fortnight with the storming of the south wall. On a Sabbath evening, when the Judæan warriors were least expecting an attack, a portion of the wall was taken, and the Romans rushed like madmen into the old part of the city and into the Temple. There, without distinction of age or sex, they slaughtered all who came in their way, even the priest beside his sacrifice. By a strange fatality, Jerusalem fell on the anniversary of the day on which, twenty-seven years previously, the Temple had been taken by Pompey. It was hardly possible for Herod to restrain his savage soldiery from plundering and desecrating the holy spot, and it was only by giving costly gifts to each soldier that he prevented the entire destruction of Jerusalem. Antigonus was thrown into chains and sent to Antony, who, upon Herod's persistent 89
entreaties, and contrary to all custom and usage, had him tortured and then ignobly beheaded. This disgraceful treatment excited the opprobrium even of the Romans.

Herod, or, as the people called him, the Idumæan slave, had thus reached the goal of his lofty desires. His throne, it is true, rested upon ruins and upon the dead bodies of his subjects; but he felt that he had the power to maintain its dignity, even if it were necessary to carry a broad river of blood round its base. The bitter hatred of the Judæan people, whose ruler he had become without the slightest lawful title, was nothing to him as compared with the friendship of Rome and the smile of Antony. His line of action was clearly marked out for him by the situation of affairs: he had to cling to the Romans as a support against the ill-will of his people, and meet this ill-will by apparent concessions, or control it by unrelenting severity. This was the policy that he followed from the first moment of his victory until he drew his last breath. During all the thirty-four years of his reign he followed this line of policy, cold and heartless as fate, and entailing the most terrible consequences. Even in the first confusion attendant upon the conquest of the Temple Mount, he had not lost his coolness and vigilance, but had ordered his satellite Costobar to surround the exits of Jerusalem with his soldiery, and thus to prevent the escape of the unfortunate fugitives. The followers of Antigonus were slain in large numbers, many amongst them being of the most distinguished families. Herod did not forget old grievances. The Synhedrists, who twelve years previously had decreed his death, were killed to a man, with the exception of Abtalion and Shemaya, who had been hostile to Antigonus. He seized the property of 90
those whom he executed or otherwise condemned for the royal treasury; for this worthy pupil of Roman masters was fully alive to the advantages of proscription and confiscation. He passed over the Hasmonæan house in selecting a high priest, and chose a certain Ananel, a descendant of Aaron, but not of high-priestly family, for that office. He declared that his own was an old Judæan family which had returned from Babylonia, wishing in this way to obliterate the fact that he was descended from an Idumæan ancestor who had been forced to accept Judaism. The natives of Jerusalem, who had a good memory for his true extraction, did not indeed lend an ear to this invention, but foreign Judæans and heathens may perhaps have been deceived by it. His confidential friend and historian, Nicolaus of Damascus, relates this fiction as coming from his own lips. At the death of Shemaya and Abtalion, the presidents of the Synhedrion were chosen from a Babylonian-Judæan family, that of Bene Bathyra.

Two persons still existed who might prove dangerous to Herod: an old man and a youth—Hyrcanus, who had once worn the crown and the priestly diadem, and his grandson Aristobulus, Herod's brother-in-law, who had claims upon both the royal and the priestly dignity. Herod could not devote himself to the calm enjoyment of his conquest until these two should be powerless.

Hyrcanus, it was true, who had fallen captive to the Parthians, had been mutilated by them, and was therefore unfit to resume his priestly office; but his captors had generously granted him freedom, and the aged monarch had been joyfully and reverentially welcomed by the community of Babylonian Judæans. In spite of the devotion which he received from these people, Hyrcanus had an intense longing to return to his native land, and Herod was afraid that he might induce the Babylonian Judæans or the Parthians to take up his cause and help him regain his throne, 91
from which the latter had torn him. Anxious to avert this danger, Herod bethought himself of taking Hyrcanus from Parthian influence and of bringing him under his own power. It was thus that the aged monarch received a pressing invitation to Jerusalem to share the throne and the power of king Herod, and to receive the thanks of the Idumæan for past acts of kindness that Hyrcanus had shown him. Vainly did the Babylonian Judæans warn the credulous prince not to let himself be drawn a second time into the eddy of public life; he hurried to his doom. Herod received him with every mark of respect, and gave him the place of honor at his table and in the Council, masking his treachery so completely that Hyrcanus was entirely deceived. He was unarmed and powerless in a golden cage.

But more dangerous to Herod seemed his young brother-in-law Aristobulus, the only brother of Mariamne, who, on account of his lineage, his youth, and his surpassing beauty, had attracted the love and devotion of all his people. Herod, in debarring him from the dignity of high priest, imagined that he had successfully destroyed his influence. But this was not so. Alexandra, the mother of Mariamne and Aristobulus, as well versed in intrigue as Herod himself, had succeeded in obtaining Antony's favor for her son. She had sent the portraits of her children, the most beautiful of their race, to the Roman triumvir, believing his weak nature might be worked upon most favorably through the senses. Antony, in truth, struck by the portraits, requested to see Aristobulus. But Herod, in order that this meeting should not take place, suddenly proclaimed the young Hasmonæan high priest, and Ananel was deprived of this dignity. But Alexandra was far from being satisfied, for she was secretly determined that her son should also wear the crown which his ancestors had worn. Herod, fully alive to his peril, was all the more determined to rid 92
himself of this dangerous youth. Aristobulus had already gained the heart of the people, and whenever he appeared in the Temple, every eye hung upon his noble and perfect form, every glance seemed to avow that the Judæans were longing to see this last scion of the Hasmonæan house seated upon the royal throne. Herod durst not act with open violence against his rival, who was looked upon with special favor by Queen Cleopatra, but as usual he resorted to treachery. He invited Aristobulus to Jericho, and bade his followers dispatch the youth whilst he was disporting in the bath. Thus died, at the early age of seventeen, Aristobulus III., the last male representative of the Hasmonæan house. Herod then reappointed his puppet Ananel as high priest. It was vain for the Idumæan to affect deep grief at the death of his young brother-in-law, it was vain for him to throw sweet perfume upon his body; all the relations and friends of the murdered Hasmonæan accused Herod in their hearts of his death, although their lips gave no utterance to their thoughts.

But this crime brought its own bitter punishment with it, and made Herod's whole life one long tale of misery. The agony of remorse that might have wrought some change upon a less hardened nature was not felt, but only an ever-increasing suspicion towards those of his own household, which urged him to heap crime upon crime, to murder his nearest relatives, even his own children, until he became at last the most terrible example of a sin-laden existence. Alexandra, who had staked her ambitious hopes upon the coronation of her son, and who now found herself so cruelly deceived, did not hesitate to accuse Herod before Cleopatra of the murder of Aristobulus. This queen, whose passions were uncontrolled, and who looked with an envious eye upon Herod's newly acquired kingdom, took advantage of his crime to make its 93
author appear odious in the eyes of Antony. Herod was summoned to Laodicea. Trembling for his life, the vassal king obeyed the summons, but succeeded in ingratiating himself so thoroughly by costly gifts and by carefully chosen yet eloquent words, that not only was the death of Aristobulus overlooked, but he was distinguished by marks of esteem, and sent back to Jerusalem, full of happy self-confidence. He lost, however, one precious pearl from his crown. The far-famed district of Jericho, celebrated for its wealth of palm-trees and its highly-prized balsam, had been given by Antony to Cleopatra, and Herod was forced to accept two hundred talents in lieu as tribute-money from the queen. He could, however, rest well satisfied with this loss, when comparing it with the danger from which he had escaped.

On the threshold of his palace, however, the demon of discord awaited him, ready to fill his whole being with despair. On the eve of his departure he had entrusted his wife Mariamne to the care of Joseph, the husband of his sister Salome, and had given him the secret command that, in case of his falling a victim to Antony's displeasure, Joseph should murder both Mariamne and Alexandra. Love for his beautiful wife, whom he could not bear to think of as belonging to another, added to hatred of Alexandra, who should not triumph in his death, prompted this fiendish resolve. But Joseph had betrayed his secret mission to Mariamne, and had thus plunged another dagger into the heart of that unhappy queen. When a false report of Herod's death became current in Jerusalem, Mariamne and her mother prepared to put themselves under Roman protection. Herod's sister Salome, who hated both her husband Joseph and her sister-in-law Mariamne, made use of this fact to calumniate them upon her brother's return, accusing them of a mutual understanding and undue intimacy. Herod at first turned a deaf ear to this 94
calumny, but when Mariamne disclosed to her husband, amidst tears of indignation, that Joseph had confessed his secret mission to her, then the king's wrath knew no bounds. Declaring that he fully believed his sister's accusations, he beheaded Joseph, placed Alexandra in confinement, and would have had Mariamne slain, had not his love for his queen surpassed even his rage. From

that day, however, the seeds of distrust and hatred were sown in the palace, and they grew and spread until one member of the royal family after another met with an untimely and violent death.

Outwardly, however, fortune appeared to smile upon Herod, carrying him successfully over the most difficult obstacles in his path. Before the sixth year of his reign had ended, threatening clouds began to gather over his head. A surviving sister of the last Hasmonæan king Antigonus had arisen as the avenger of her brother and his race, and had, in some way or other, possessed herself of the fortress of Hyrcanion. Herod had hardly disarmed this female warrior before he was threatened by a more serious danger. Cleopatra, who had always hated the Judæans, and who had been most ungenerous to that community in Alexandria during a year of famine, had again attempted to effect Herod's ruin by awakening Antony's displeasure against him. Afraid of this violent and yet crafty queen, and alarmed at the hatred of his own people, who were longing for his downfall, Herod determined upon preparing some safe retreat, where his life would at all events be secure from his enemies. He chose for this purpose the fortress of Masada, which nature had rendered almost impregnable, and which he fortified still more strongly. But Cleopatra was already devising another scheme for the downfall of her enemy. She succeeded in entangling him in a war with Malich, the Nabathæan king, and thus endeavored to bring about the ruin of two equally hated monarchs. But Herod gained two decisive victories over the 95
Nabathæans, which alarmed Cleopatra, and caused her to send her general Athenion to the aid of Malich. The Judæan army sustained a terrible defeat, and Herod was beaten back across the Jordan. This disaster was followed by an earthquake, which alarmed and dispirited the Judæan troops to such an extent that they lost all courage and were almost powerless before the enemy. But Herod, with true genius, succeeded in rousing his people, and in leading them victoriously against the Nabathæans. Malich was forced to become the vassal of the Judæan king.

Hardly, however, was peace restored before a storm arose that threatened to shake the Roman world to its very depths and to destroy the favorite of the Roman generals. Ever since that day when Rome and her vast possessions lay at the feet of the triumvirs, who hated each other cordially, and each one of whom wished to be sole ruler of the state, the political atmosphere had been charged with destructive elements that threatened to explode at any given moment. Added to this, one of the three leaders was completely under the sway of the dissolute and devilish Queen Cleopatra, who had set her heart upon becoming mistress of Rome, even though this should entail the devastation of whole countries by fire and by sword.

It was during this highly excited period that a Judæan author foretold, in beautiful Greek verse, written in the form of a sibylline prophecy, the coming destruction of the Roman-Greek state, and the reign of Belial, who would decoy the unhappy ones to their final destruction; but this Judæo-Greek seer also heralded the coming of a glorious Messiah. An era of crime had certainly begun, and a Belial had appeared in the person of the half-Judæan Herod, but as yet no Messianic dawn of better things was apparent.

With the declaration of war between Octavius and Antony, a fierce strife broke out between 96
the Western and the Eastern provinces of Rome; it was Europe against Asia—a war of nations. But it came to a sudden end with the fall of Antony in the battle of Actium (31). This blow struck Herod severely; neither he nor his friends doubted for one moment that he would be submerged in the ruin of his protector, for he had been closely allied to Antony. He was prepared for the worst, but he determined not to be outlived by the aged Hyrcanus, by his wife Mariamne, or by his mother-in-law Alexandra. He accused Hyrcanus of having conspired with the Nabathæan king, and ordered the innocent monarch to be executed. Mariamne and Alexandra he placed under the guardianship of the Ithuræan Soem in the fortress of Alexandrion. Herod then prepared to present himself before the conqueror, Octavianus Cæsar, and if he met with his death, as was most probable, Mariamne and her mother were to be instantly murdered.

On the eve of Herod's departure, he found himself compelled to make some change in the Synhedrion, and to appoint the Babylonian Hillel, a man unknown until then, as one of the presidents. This gave a new direction to the spirit of Judaism, which has affected that faith down to the present. Hillel, born about the year 75, traced back his descent, on his mother's side, to the house of David. Although his lineage was a distinguished one, he was living in needy circumstances, and was supported by his rich brother, Shebna. He probably accompanied Hyrcanus on his return from Babylon to Jerusalem, and became one of the most devoted disciples of the Synhedrists, Shemaya and Abtalion, whose traditional lore he endeavored to transmit literally and faithfully.

Hillel was particularly distinguished for his winning, dove-like gentleness, his intense love of 97
humanity, which arose from his own humility, and from his deep faith in others, and lastly, for that perfect equanimity proceeding from his profound trust in God, that never wavered in the midst of trouble. In later ages he was revered as the ideal of modesty and gentleness. When he was once asked to express the essence of Judaism in one sentence, he uttered this golden maxim: "Do not unto others what thou wouldst not have done unto thyself. This is the principal commandment: all others are the development of that one." If strife and dissension arose, Hillel was invariably the peacemaker. His beneficence knew no bounds, and he had that rare delicacy of feeling which never humiliates the recipient by the gift, but which rather helps him to maintain his self-respect. His faith in God raised him triumphantly above every fear. All the members of his household were imbued through his example with the same faith; so much so that once, upon entering the town and hearing a cry of distress, he was able confidently to remark, "That cry cannot have proceeded from my house." Hillel has bequeathed a greater number of maxims to us than any of his predecessors. We read amongst them the following: "If I were not to care for

myself (my soul), who would do so for me? If I care for myself alone, what can I effect? If not now, when then?" "Be of the disciples of Aaron, love peace, seek peace, love mankind, thus lead them to the Law." Impressed by the sublime mission of Israel, that of maintaining and teaching the pure belief in one God, he exclaimed at one of the festivals in the Temple: "If I (Israel) am here, then is everything here; if I should be wanting, who would be here?" The doctrines of Judaism were so profoundly revered by him that his indignation was roused whenever they were used as stepping-stones to the schemes of the ambitious. "He who wishes to raise his name, lowers it; he who does not seek the Law, does not deserve to live. He who does not progress in learning, retrogrades; he who uses the crown of the Law for his own ends, perishes." 98

Hillel became in after years the very ideal of his co-religionists. The impetus given by him to the development of doctrinal Judaism marks an epoch in the history of that faith. He greatly enriched the mass of the traditional lore that he had imbibed from the Synhedrists, Shemaya and Abtalion. But far more important was his logical derivation of the statutes of the Law observed in his time. He traced them back to their first principles, and raised them out of the narrow circle of tradition and mere custom to the height of reason. The traditional law, according to Hillel, carries within itself its justification and binding power, it does not depend on authority alone. Thus, to a certain extent, he paved the way to a reconciliation between Pharisees and Sadducees by placing before them the principles common to both, from which neither of them could withhold their assent. On the one hand, Hillel agreed with the Sadducæan principle, that a law can only be valid if founded upon scriptural authority; but, on the other hand, he declared that this authority did not merely lie in the dead letter, but was also to be derived from the general spirit of the scriptural writings. After this demonstration by Hillel, no dispute amongst the schools could arise as to the binding power of traditional law. By the introduction of seven rules, or Middoth, the oral law could be imbued with the same weight and authority as that actually contained in the Scriptures. Through these seven rules the oral law assumed quite a different aspect; it lost its apparently arbitrary character; it became more universal and reasonable in its tendency, and might be looked upon as originating from Holy Writ itself.

These explanatory rules were, moreover, intended not only to justify the oral law, but also to lay down instructions how to amplify the laws, and how to meet unforeseen cases of difficulty. At 99
first they appear to have been unfavorably received. It is expressly narrated that Hillel introduced them at a council of the Bathyrene Synhedrion, but that assembly may either have misinterpreted them or have disputed their expediency. In the meantime an opportunity presented itself of having recourse to these explanatory rules, for a question was raised, the solution of which deeply excited the whole nation, and to this opportunity Hillel owed the dignified position of President of the Synhedrion. The eve of the festival on which the Paschal Lamb was to be sacrificed occurred on the Sabbath, a most unusual event at that time, and the Bathyrene Synhedrion could not throw any light upon the disputed question, whether it was permitted or not to sacrifice the Paschal Lamb on the Sabbath Day. Hillel, whose ability must have attracted the attention of the discerning before, had taken part in the discussion, and had proved that according to the explanatory rules, the Pesach, or Paschal Sacrifice, like every other whole offering, supersedes the Sabbath. The debate became heated, the mass of the people being warmly interested in the celebration of the festival. Expressions of approval and censure for Hillel were freely uttered. Some cried, "We have to look to the Babylonians for the best information"; others ironically asked, "What good can we expect from the Babylonians?"

From that day Hillel's name became so popular that the Bathyrene Synhedrists resigned their offices—whether of their own free will, or because they were forced to do so by the people, is not known—and conceded the Presidency to Hillel himself (about 30). Hillel, far from being proud of his exalted position, expressed himself as dissatisfied, and angrily reproved the Synhedrists. "Why is it," he asked, "that I, an insignificant Babylonian, became President of the Synhedrion? 100
Only because you have been too indolent to heed the teachings of Shemaya and Abtalion." Herod does not seem to have made any objection to the choice.

One of the statutes which Hillel had introduced was of general interest, and proved that he had true insight into affairs of life. In the Sabbatical year all debts were by law canceled. At the time when the state was a republic based upon moral laws, this was a wise measure for equalizing property; but at a later period, when capital became a power in itself, the rich were not willing to relieve their less wealthy neighbors from their difficulties by giving them loans. On this account Hillel, without entirely abrogating the law which already existed, ruled that the creditor should give over the debt in writing to the Court, so that the Court might collect it, and the creditor be relieved from the necessity of violating the law. This timely statute, equally advantageous to debtor and creditor, was called by the Greek word *Prosbol*, because the debt was given over to the Council of the Elders.

At Herod's particular desire, the second place of honor, that of Deputy of Hillel, was given to the Essene Menahem, to whom the king showed great partiality. The cause of this attachment was as follows (at least so the tale ran in later days): Menahem, by means of the prophetic power ascribed to the Essenes, had foretold during his childhood that Herod would one day be king in Jerusalem, and that his reign would be a brilliant one, but that he would fail in piety and justice. That which had appeared incredible to the youth recurred to the man when he wore the regal crown. But Menahem appears not to have found his office congenial, and soon withdrew in favor of Shammai, whose characteristics, opposed in many ways to those of Hillel, in reality supplemented them. Shammai was probably by birth a Palestinean, and therefore much 101
interested in all the political and religious controversies of his native land. His religious views were strict to a painful extreme. But Shammai was not of a gloomy or misanthropical disposition;

indeed, he encouraged friendliness in demeanor towards every one. This is indicated by the maxim which has come down to us, "Let your work in the Law be your principal occupation; speak little, but do much, and receive all men with a friendly countenance."

The two Synhedrists, Hillel and Shammai, founded two separate schools, opposed to each other in many religious, moral, and legal questions, which, with their different tendencies, exerted a powerful influence, during the subsequent unsettled and warlike times, upon events of historical importance. Herod had no conception of the forces antagonistic to his house that were quietly developing within the seclusion of these schools.

With a trembling heart he had presented himself at Rhodes before Octavianus Cæsar, who, since the defeat of Antony at Actium, was sole master of the Roman provinces. He, so haughty in his own country, appeared in meek and lowly guise at the footstool of the mighty ruler, yet not without a certain manly resolution. In his interview with Octavianus, Herod did not in any way conceal the position he had held with relation to Antony; but he took care to dwell upon the fact of his having refrained from aiding Antony after his defeat at Actium, thereby intimating to Octavianus what use he might make of the devotion and zeal which Herod was prepared to transfer from the cause of Antony to that of his conqueror. Octavianus was neither noble enough to despise so venal a man, nor did he feel secure enough to do without him.

So he graciously encouraged the pleading Herod, bade him array himself as before in royal robes, and sent him back to his own country laden with honors (30). Herod found no difficulty in 102
becoming as loyal a partisan of Octavianus as he had been for twelve long years of Antony. During the campaign of the second Cæsar against Egypt, he was met at Acco by Herod bearing rich presents, and the Judæan king supplied the Roman army with water and with wine during their march through an arid country. It is possible that Antony may have heard, before he put an end to his life, that Herod's loyalty was not founded on a rock. Herod had also the malicious joy of knowing that his persistent enemy, Cleopatra, who had failed to fascinate the conqueror by her attractions, had nothing left but to seek death. The Alexandrian Judæans, who had suffered from her hatred, shared Herod's feelings. For, but a short time previous to her death, this terrible woman had longed to assassinate with her own hands the Judæans who were living in the capital of Egypt, and who were devoted to the cause of Octavianus. The Egyptian Judæans were rewarded for their devotion by an official recognition of their equality with the rest of the inhabitants; in fact, Octavianus had such confidence in their loyalty that he placed the harbors of the Nile and of the sea under the control of the Judæan Alabarchs, who had held that office under former Egyptian monarchs. This was a special mark of favor, for the possession of Egypt, the Roman granary, and particularly of the harbor of Alexandria, was so precious to the first emperor of Rome that no Senator dared approach that country without the imperial permission. When the Alabarch who was then in office died, Octavianus allowed his successor to be chosen by the Alexandrian Judæans, and granted him all the rights of his predecessors. Whilst he governed the Greek Alexandrians with extreme severity on account of their depravity, their untrustworthiness and their love of sedition, and kept them strictly under his own rule, he appointed a Judæan 103
Council to assist the Alabarchs or Ethnarchs. The Judæan community was thus governed by one of its own race, who decided all the judicial questions and provided for the carrying out of all imperial commands and behests.

Octavianus also granted to the numerous Judæans who were settled in Rome, the Libertini, if not extraordinary privileges, at least the right of observing their own religious customs, and thus set a worthy example to his successors. The Judæans were allowed to build synagogues, where they worshiped according to their rites; they were also permitted to transmit their yearly contributions to the Temple in Jerusalem, although, in general, it was forbidden to send large sums out of Rome. The Roman Judæans also received their due portion of the grain that was distributed amongst the population. If the distribution happened to take place on a Sabbath, their portion was allotted to them on the following day. These were the orders of the emperor.

Octavianus made over to Herod the splendid body-guard of Cleopatra, numbering four hundred Gauls, and he placed under his jurisdiction several seaports that had been torn from Judæa, as well as the territory of Jericho. Samaria, as also Gadara and Hippos in trans-Jordanic territory, were also incorporated with Judæa. The area of the kingdom was now identical with what it had been before the civil war between the royal brothers and the first intervention of the Romans; but different, indeed, were the circumstances under which she had regained her possessions! Probably it was due to Herod's boundless sycophancy to Rome that sacrifices were now regularly offered up for the welfare of the Cæsars, Augustus and his consort presenting in return golden vessels for the use of the Temple.

Herod was now at the very zenith of his power; the untoward fortune that he had feared had not only been averted, but had actually assisted in exalting him. He was not, however, to enjoy 104
his good fortune; the terrible consequences of his crimes clung to his footsteps and changed his cup of happiness into one of gall. In the narrow circle of his own home a tragedy was about to be enacted, far more terrible than could have been conceived by the imagination of a poet. Mariamne, who, as well as her mother Alexandra, had been in close confinement during the king's absence, had elicited from her gaoler Soem the fact that she would not have been permitted to outlive Herod. Upon the king's return she made no secret of her hatred for him, and when he spoke to her in words of tenderness and affection, she taunted him with the murders of her brother, her grandfather and many others of her relatives. Herod's heart was torn by the love he bore to this beautiful woman and by the wrath he felt at her persistent enmity to his person and his power. Whilst still a prey to these conflicting feelings he was only too ready to lend a willing ear to the malicious inventions of his sister Salome, who assured him that his cup-bearer

had been bribed by Mariamne to poison him. During the investigation that ensued it transpired that Soem had disclosed his secret instructions to the queen, and this treachery on the part of a confidential servant let loose a host of wild passions within Herod's breast. Soem was decapitated on the spot. Whilst still moved by his ungovernable rage, Herod summoned a council, before whom he accused his wife of adultery and of an attempt to poison him. The judges passed the sentence of death upon her, and, wishing to curry favor with Herod, ordered the execution to take place forthwith. It was thus that the most beautiful woman in Judæa, the Hasmonæan princess, the pride of her people, was led to the scaffold. She went to her doom with remarkable fortitude, without the faintest tremor or the least display of feminine weakness, worthy of her heroic ancestry (29). We may take Mariamne as the symbol of Judæa, delivered up to the axe of the executioner by intrigue and passion. 105

But Mariamne's death did not quench Herod's thirst for revenge; on the contrary, it brought on still fiercer paroxysms of rage. He could not endure her loss, and became a prey to sickness and insanity. He would call frantically upon her name in a passion of sobs and tears; and he had her body embalmed in honey, so that he might keep it in his presence. It was whilst traveling in Samaria that he fell so dangerously ill that the doctors despaired of his life, and when this intelligence reached his capital, Alexandra proceeded to possess herself of Jerusalem. But the king's vitality returned upon the rumor of this sudden peril to his throne, and Alexandra fell a victim to her sedition. She was the very last who bore the Hasmonæan name, and she had lived long enough to witness the violent and disgraceful deaths of her father-in-law Aristobulus II, her husband Alexander, her brother-in-law Antigonus, her son Aristobulus III, her father Hyrcanus II, and her daughter Mariamne.

The remaining two-thirds of the Herodian reign are devoid of any real progress; the record of that time tells of cringing submission to Augustus and to Rome, of the erection of magnificent edifices, of the love of pomp and display, of deeply-rooted moral corruption, of unsuccessful conspiracies and court intrigues, leading to new crimes and further executions. In order to retain the favor of the all-powerful Augustus, Herod introduced into Jerusalem the celebration of the Actian games, occurring every fifth year, in remembrance of Augustus' victory over his rival, he also built theaters and arenas, where he organized combats between gladiators or wild beasts, thus arousing the displeasure of the national party, who rightly divined that it was intended that Judaism soon should be absorbed by a Pagan-Roman worship, and who recognized in the Roman trophies and eagles displayed in the theaters, the introduction of Roman deities. Herod gave his people another cause for umbrage, in the fact that he was not only ornamenting the hated city of Samaria, within a circumference of half a mile, with the most beautiful buildings, but that he also contemplated making that city the capital of his dominions, a dignity for which she was singularly adapted by her fortunate position. The newly-built Samaria was renamed Sebaste, just as the citadel Baris, the armory of the Hasmonæans in old days, on the northwest side of the Temple, had been called Antonia in honor of Antony. In fact, Judæa became crowded with cities and with monuments which bore the names of Herod's own family or those of his Roman protectors. The fortress of Straton on the sea was, by most lavish expenditure, converted into a beautiful city, with an extensive harbor, and received the name of Cæsarea, one of the towers on its walls being called Drusus, after the son of Augustus. Herod did not even hesitate to erect a Roman temple on the soil of the Holy Land. Two colossal figures were raised in Cæsarea, one of them representing, in gigantic proportions, the figure of Augustus as the Olympian Jupiter, and the other that of the city of Rome as the Argive Juno. At the splendid consecration of Cæsarea, the rebuilding of which had occupied twelve years, the inhabitants could have imagined themselves transported into a pagan city. On account of its name, its origin and its importance, the national party justly called it Little Rome. In later days it became the seat of the Roman governor, the rival of Jerusalem, and finally her conqueror. Whenever Cæsarea rejoiced, Jerusalem was sure to mourn. The harbor of Cæsarea, which grew in time to be a town itself, was called Sebastus. Herod had, without doubt, enhanced the beauty of Judæa, but, like a doomed victim, she was garlanded for the altar. His love of display found satisfaction in the magnificence of his edifices, but not his love of renown. Despairing of securing the affection of his own people, he resolved to compel the admiration of the stranger. He exhausted his people by taxation, redoubled his extortions, searched for hidden treasures in the ancient royal cemeteries, sold those who had been imprisoned for theft as slaves to neighboring countries, and then lavished all the funds he had gained by these practices upon the adornment of Syrian, Asiatic, and Greek cities. Huge were the sums of money that he withdrew from his own country for such enterprises. 106 107

Herod may possibly have secured the admiration and affection of the Greeks, the Romans and the Judæans outside of Palestine; but the people of Jerusalem felt nothing but aversion for this grasping upstart, who sought to estrange them from the customs of their fathers. In spite of his having shown himself to be their generous benefactor, upon the occasion of a great famine (24), the nation now only beheld in him the murderer of the Hasmonæans, the usurper of their throne, the destroyer of the noblest citizens, the suppressor of freedom. He had disgraced the three dignities of Monarch, High Priest, and Synhedrist. The first he had arrogated to himself; the second, which until his reign had, with very few exceptions, descended by right of inheritance from father to son, he had given away, according to his own pleasure or to attain his own ends; and the power of the third he had curtailed by allowing it hardly any scope for action. Joshua, of the family of Phabi, had, through Herod's instrumentality, succeeded Ananel as High Priest; but the king having been fascinated by the beauty of another Mariamne, the daughter of an inferior priest, Simon, he dispossessed Joshua of his dignity, and raised Simon to his office, in order that his future wife's rank be not too strikingly below his own.

This High Priest Simon was an Alexandrian, the son of Boëthus, and it was he who laid the 108

foundation-stone of the greatness of the house of Boëthus, from which several high priests descended. He appears to have been the founder of the sect of the Boëthuseans, who followed the teachings of the Sadducees, but who were better able to grasp and apply those teachings than the Sadducees themselves, thanks to their Alexandrian readiness and sophistry.

These despotic acts of Herod were not calculated to make him beloved by his people. He was perfectly aware of their ill-will towards him, but as he could not crush it, he at least sought to make it harmless. Thus he insisted upon all subjects taking an oath of allegiance, resolving to punish severely those who would refrain from doing so. The Essenes alone, who disapproved of oaths, were exempt; he had no cause for fear in their peaceful, contemplative lives; on the contrary, he warmly approved of such subjects, who would submit without murmuring to any law that he might choose to make. Those amongst the Pharisees who were the followers of the peace-loving Hillel seem to have taken the required oath without hesitation, but the followers of the sterner Shammai stubbornly refused to do so. Six thousand Pharisees in all refused to take the oath of allegiance, and to inflict corporal punishment upon so great a number appeared, even to Herod, a serious matter. So he heavily taxed the refractory, amongst whom was the wife of his brother Pheroras, an ardent devotee, strange to say, of strict Phariseeism.

But, in spite of all these precautionary measures, Herod did not trust his subjects, and employed a number of spies to watch them. He himself would often appear in disguise at their popular assemblies, and woe to the unfortunate individual who, at that moment, might be giving utterance to a complaint against the existing order of things; he was doomed to be imprisoned in 109
a fortress, or secretly despatched. But popularity is too sweet for the tyrant to forego it, and to Herod it was particularly important, as he wished to appear before the Romans in the character of a prince beloved by his people. This, besides his passion for building, was probably the motive that impelled him to convert the Temple, now five hundred years old, small and of an old fashion, into a magnificent edifice in a new style. The representatives of the nation, when he informed them of his plan, received the news with horror; they feared that Herod intended merely to destroy their old Temple, and that he would endlessly protract the work of the new building, thus robbing them entirely of their sanctuary. But he pacified them by the assurance that the old Temple should remain standing until all the workmen, with their material, were at hand for the construction of the new one. Thousands of carts, laden with quarry stone and marble, now appeared on the scene, and ten thousand skilled workmen were ready to commence operations. In the eighteenth year of Herod's reign (20) the building was begun, and in one year and a half (18) the inner part of the Temple was finished. The building of the outer walls, courts and galleries occupied a period of eight years, and long after this time, until just before the destruction, the workmen were still employed upon them.

The Herodian Temple was a magnificent production, the exquisite beauty of which those who witnessed it could not sufficiently admire. It differed from the uncompleted Temple of Zerubbabel in being of vaster dimensions and of richer and more ornate decoration. The whole circumference of the Temple Mount (Har-ha-bayith), which was surrounded by a lofty and strong wall, besides the fortress at Antonia, with which it was in communication, exceeded three-quarters of a mile, and the ground rose in terraces. Owing to this commanding position the Sanctuary could be seen 110
from afar. The long range of outer wall protected a series of courts and galleries, with their cedar ceilings and mosaic floorings. The first court was assigned as a place of assembly for the people, where the most important questions were discussed. Here the pagan and the unpurified were admitted; here Greek and Roman inscriptions, in large characters, and placed in prominent positions, caught the eye of him who entered. They ran as follows: "No foreigner is permitted to pass through this grating into the Sanctuary and its surroundings. If discovered there he has brought the punishment of death upon himself." The second court, which in former days had been protected by a wooden grating, was now shut in by a low wall. The internal arrangements of the Temple were but little changed, and consisted, as in the Temple of Zerubbabel, of three uncovered courts and of the Sanctuary, which was of a size to admit of the golden altar, the candlestick and the shewbread table, and, at the extreme end, of the Holy of Holies. But the outer parts of the Sanctuary vastly outshone those of the old Temple. Its walls were of snow-white marble, and as they rose on the highest summit of the Temple Mount, and towered above the outer walls and their fortifications, they presented a beautiful and striking appearance from all sides. The large space in front of the Sanctuary was partitioned into various smaller courts for the use of the women, the laymen, the priests, and for all those who were engaged in preparing the sacrifices for the altar. The space allotted to the female portion of the worshipers, whose visits to the Temple were now of frequent occurrence, was entirely shut off from the rest, and three large balconies were reserved for the use of the women, from which they were able to witness all celebrations of a public character. The gateway leading to this part of the Temple was 111
closed by a magnificent door, cast in Corinthian brass, the gift of a rich and pious Alexandrian, after whom it was named the Gate of Nicanor. Fifteen steps led thence to the laymen's quarters, which were reached by passing through a gateway, called, on account of its commanding position, the High Gate. The outer court was entirely open; but, on the other hand, the Sanctuary was shut off by a gateway higher and broader than any other, containing double folding doors, thickly covered with a layer of gold. This was the Great Gate or the Gate of the Sanctuary. The high roof of the Sanctuary rose at intervals into sharp gilded points, the object of which was to prevent the birds from building their nests on this consecrated place, but probably quite unintentionally on the part of the builder, they may also have served as lightning conductors.

The splendor of the dedication far exceeded that solemnized in King Solomon's time. Hecatombs upon hecatombs were offered up, and the whole nation was feasted. The celebration fell upon the very anniversary of the day when, twenty years previously, Herod, with blood-

stained hands, had made himself master of Jerusalem—a terrible reminiscence. The hands that built the Temple had already lighted the torch for its destruction. Herod placed it under the protection of Rome. To the horror of the pious Judæans, a golden eagle, the symbol of Roman might, was hung over the principal entrance. Herod, moreover, constructed a subterranean passage, leading from the fortress of Antonia to the east gate of the Temple, in order to control the egresses of the Sanctuary. His soul was filled with distrust of his people.

Towards the close of his reign the aged and sin-laden monarch was seized with a terrible malady. This threw him into a condition of such hopeless misery that one may say that all human feeling gave place to the fury of the wild beast. The corpses of his innocent victims rose up before 112
his excited imagination, and made his life one long torment. Vainly he sought for one loving heart, one faithful soul, who would comfort and guide him. But he believed that his own flesh and blood—his sister and brother, Salome and Pheroras, even his own children—were his enemies, and were conspiring against his peace and his life. This terrible state of mind made him more dangerous than ever to those who ventured within his presence. The chief cause of his frenzy was the death of his beloved Mariamne. Besides two daughters, she had left him two sons, Alexander and Aristobulus, who, as they grew to man's estate, took the death of their unfortunate mother deeply to heart, and could not conceal the aversion they felt for their father. As these princes were of Hasmonæan descent, Herod had decided upon making them his successors. He had sent them as youths to Rome, in order that they might gain the favor of Augustus, and be educated according to Roman fashion. He married the eldest, Alexander, to Glaphyra, the daughter of Archelaus, King of Cappadocia, and the younger, Aristobulus, to Salome's daughter, Berenice. He thought that by these means he could secure peace amongst the members of his own family. But his wishes were defeated by the hatred that the revengeful Salome and her brother Pheroras bore to the descendants of the Hasmonæan Mariamne. Herod was induced by his sister to take to his heart and to adopt as a royal prince the son of his first wife, Doris, whom together with her child he had repudiated upon his marriage with Mariamne.

Antipater, the son of Doris, had inherited all the malice, craft and cruelty of the Idumæans, and he spared neither his father nor his brothers. The three, Salome, Pheroras, and Antipater, although they hated one another mortally, were united in hatred against the sons of Mariamne. 113
The more these princes were indulged by their father, and the more they were beloved by the people as descendants from the Hasmonæans on their mother's side, the more did their bitter foes fear and detest them. Antipater accused Alexander and Aristobulus of wishing to avenge the death of their mother upon the person of their father. Imprudent expressions, hastily uttered in moments of irritation, may have given some show of reason to these accusations. Herod's suspicions dwelt eagerly upon this calumny. He began to hate his sons, and, as a mark of displeasure towards them, led Antipater to believe that he should share in their rights of succession. This determination of the king served to embitter the Hasmonæan princes still more, and drove them to the most unwise outbursts of anger against their father. Antipater succeeded at the same time in laying proofs of an attempted conspiracy of the two brothers against Herod before him. Their friends and their servants were, by the king's commands, put to the torture, and upon the strength of their confession, wrung from them under agony, Alexander and Aristobulus were condemned to death by a council numbering one hundred and fifty of Herod's friends. Herod himself hastened the execution, and ordered the two princes to be torn from Jerusalem and hurried to Samaria, and there, where thirty years previously their unnatural father had celebrated his marriage with their mother, her two sons were mercilessly beheaded.

However, the conspiracies against Herod's life did not cease with their death, but, on the contrary, acquired fresh vigor. Antipater, not feeling at all sure of his succession so long as his father was alive, actually conspired with Pheroras against the life of that father and benefactor. But his fiendish design came to light, and it was discovered that Antipater had undoubtedly intended poisoning his father. This disclosure was a terrible blow for Herod. The turmoil of his 114
outraged feelings cannot be described, and yet he had to control himself, and even to pretend great affection for Antipater, in order to induce that prince to leave Rome and return to Jerusalem. Upon Antipater's arrival, his father loaded him with reproaches, and accused him before a tribunal, which was under the presidency of the Roman governor Quintilius Varus, of fratricide and attempted parricide. Vainly did the prince plead innocence; Herod's friend, Nicolaus of Damascus, appeared as his merciless accuser. His death sentence was passed, and Herod begged of Augustus to ratify it.

Such constant and frequent alarms brought Herod, who had nearly reached his seventieth year, to his death-bed. All his hopes were frustrated; the result of so much labor, of so much guilt, of so much bloodshed, had become hateful to him. In which of his surviving sons could he have confidence? For the third time he altered the succession, and resolved that the throne should belong to his youngest son, Antipas I.

His miserable state of mind, which might have made him gentler and more merciful, only led him into still greater cruelty. An unimportant rising on the part of some hot-headed youths called forth from the aged monarch an act of retaliation as heartless and as severe as in the days when his heart beat high with young and ambitious hopes. The Pharisees were no friends of his, especially those who were the disciples of Shammai. He therefore kept a suspicious eye upon the members of the Pharisaic schools, and the Pharisees, on their side, continued to incite the youths of their following against their monarch, whom they termed the Idumæan and the Roman. This they were able to do without incurring any danger to themselves, for they clothed their words in a metaphorical garb, applying the denunciations of the Hebrew prophets of old to the Idumæan 115
nation, to express what they felt for Herod and his family.

Amongst the Pharisees who were most bitterly opposed to Herod and the Romans, Judah ben Zippori and Matthias ben Margalot were distinguished for their ardor and recklessness, and were endeared to their people by these very characteristics. Upon hearing of Herod's mortal illness, they incited some of their young disciples to put an end to the desecration of the Temple, by hurling the Roman eagle from the gateway. The rumors of Herod's death, that were credited in Jerusalem, favored this bold undertaking. A number of youths armed with axes rushed to the Temple Gate, scaled it by means of a rope-ladder, and cut down the eagle. At the news of this rebellious action, the captain of the Herodian guard sent his troops to the spot, and they succeeded in capturing the two ringleaders and forty of their followers. They were brought into the king's presence, and the sight of these new victims revived his exhausted vitality. At their trial, which was conducted in his presence, he was forced to hear much that proved how incapable he had been in breaking the stubborn will of his people. The prisoners fearlessly confessed what they had done, boasting proudly of their performance, and replying to the question as to who had incited them to such an action, "The Law." They were all burnt alive as "desecrators of the Temple."

But Herod was to be punished more effectually by eternal justice than would have been possible had he been arraigned before the severest earthly tribunal. Even the pleasure that was granted him before he entirely succumbed to his loathsome malady, the delight of being able to order the execution of his son, was soon followed by a paroxysm of pain in which he nearly caused his own destruction. His relative Achiab tore the knife from his hand, but the cry of horror 116
that arose from his palace in Jericho at this suicidal attempt, came to the ear of Antipater, a prisoner in the same palace. He began to hope that his life might yet be spared, and he besought his gaoler to release him. But the gaoler, who feared to risk his own life, hurried into the king's apartments, to see if the cruel monarch still lived. When Herod heard that Antipater yet hoped to outlive him, he ordered his instant assassination, and his orders were forthwith obeyed. Although Antipater deserved his death tenfold, yet there was a general feeling of horror at the idea of a father who could sentence his three sons to death. Even Augustus, who did not show any tenderly paternal feelings to his daughter Julia, could not help exclaiming at the news of Antipater's execution, that "he would rather be Herod's swine than his son." A legend of later date tells how Herod was not satisfied with shedding the blood of his own children, but how, in a passion, he ordered all children under two years of age in Bethlehem and the surrounding country to be massacred, because he had heard that the Messiah of the House of David had been born in that place! But Herod, criminal as he was, was innocent of this crime.

Herod's last thoughts dwelt, however, upon bloodshed. He insisted upon the most respected men of Judæa being brought to Jericho, and imprisoned in the great public arena, where they were closely guarded; he then left orders with his sister Salome and her husband that directly after his death had taken place they should be all massacred by his body-guard, so that the entire nation might be mourning their loved ones, and no one would have the heart to rejoice over his demise. Murder filled his thoughts from the first moment of his public life until he drew his last breath. He died five days after the execution of Antipater, in the sixty-ninth year of his life and 117
the thirty-seventh of his reign, in the spring of the year 4 B. C. His flatterers called him "Herod the Great," but the nation only knew him as "the Hasmonæan slave." Whilst his body was being taken in all pomp to its resting-place in Herodium, under the escort of the Thracian, German and Gallic body-guard, the nation joyfully celebrated the day as a semi-festival.

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CHAPTER V.

THE HERODIANS.

The Family of Herod—Partition of the Kingdom of Judæa—Revolt against Archelaus—Sabinus and Varus—The Adventurer-Chief, Judas the Galilæan—Confirmation of Herod's Will—Archelaus as Ruler—His brief Reign and his Banishment—Judæa becomes a Roman Province—The Revolt against the Census—The Schools of Hillel and Shammai—Judas Founder of the Party of Zealots—Onerous Taxation—Fresh Hostility of the Samaritans—Expulsion of the Judæans from Rome by Tiberius—Pontius Pilate.

3 B. C. E.—37 C. E.

However unfortunate the reign of Herod may have been, it yet contrasted favorably with that which followed. Herod's rule was at all events distinguished by external splendor, and by a certain amount of animation in the direction of public affairs. The boundaries of Judæa now extended far beyond the limits assigned to them in the most prosperous days of the Hasmonæans. Those tracts of land beyond the Jordan and the Hermon, which Aristobulus I and Alexander I had only partially conquered after years of useless fighting, fell into the possession of Herod merely by the stroke of a pen; but the new territories were less welcome, perhaps, on that account than if they had been won with toil and difficulty. The towns of Judæa had been restored with great magnificence, they were adorned with beautiful specimens of Greek sculpture and architecture; but the monuments which were erected perpetuated the fame of Roman dignitaries and the Herodian family, and not the greatness of the nation. The seaports, and especially the port of Cæsarea, were crowded with shipping, and trade was consequently encouraged, but the imports which naturally increased did not help to enrich the nation. The Temple was resplendent 119
in its renovated glory, and outwardly recalled the days of Solomon, but the priests were forced to offer sacrifices for the welfare of those whom they hated in their hearts. The country even enjoyed a certain amount of independence, for the Roman fetters were not visible at a superficial glance. All this outward show—because it was only outward show—disappeared with the death of the one man who knew how to make use of it. As soon as death had torn the reins from Herod's hands, public affairs fell into an unsettled and disjointed state, which was the beginning of more lasting misfortunes. The edifice, superficially constructed, soon gave way, burying among its ruins everything that remained in Judæa of freedom and national existence.

Herod had left several daughters and six sons. Some of them he favored in his will, others he slighted. The publication of this will (the contents of which were known to Ptolemy, the brother of the celebrated historian, Nicolaus of Damascus) proved how little he cared for the interests of Judæa, and how constantly he was actuated by the most selfish motives. Instead of keeping the unity of the country intact, he dismembered it, so as to subdivide it between three of his sons. The other three were not mentioned; these were—Herod, his son by the second Mariamne; another Herod, by Cleopatra of Jerusalem; and Phasael, by his wife Pallas. He bequeathed to his son Archelaus (whose mother was Malthace the Samaritan) the countries of Judæa and Samaria, with the title of sovereign. Herod Antipas (also the son of Malthace) became the possessor of the lands of Galilee and Peræa; Philip, the son of Cleopatra of Jerusalem, another tetrarchy—Gaulanitis, Batanæa, Trachonitis, and the country called Panias, which contained the source of the Jordan. He bequeathed to his sister Salome, as a reward for her faithfulness, the revenues of 120
the towns of Jamnia, Azotus, and Phasaelis (to the north of Jericho). However, these last bequests were only expressed in the form of wishes, for he left to the emperor Augustus the right of deciding whether they should be put into execution, or whether the land should be otherwise divided, and another successor appointed to the throne.

The sons, who had received but scanty proofs of affection from their father during his lifetime, were not united by any ties of brotherly love, and each envied the share which had fallen to his brother. Antipas grudged the large territories and the regal title of Archelaus, because in an earlier will he had been nominated as successor to the throne. Salome, in spite of her large possessions, was equally embittered against Archelaus, and did all in her power to dispute the succession. The discord which divided the house of Herod was handed down to their children and children's children. As the fulfilment of Herod's bequests depended on a higher authority, all the disputants tried to ingratiate themselves with the people, who, they hoped, would intercede in their favor with Augustus. Salome and her husband actually countermanded an order given by Herod for the execution of the imprisoned nobles, and persuaded the officers of the Herodian body-guard that Herod himself had disapproved of an execution on so large a scale.

Archelaus, who had still more causes for currying favor with the people, appeared in the Court of the Temple after the period of mourning had expired, and addressing the multitude from a throne erected for the occasion, promised to abolish all the unjust laws sanctioned in his father's reign, and to resettle public affairs, so as to promote general peace and well-being. Emboldened by so much condescension, the people would not rest contented with royal promises; they insisted upon stating their grievances in a definite form, and demanded speedy and certain 121
redress. There were five points on which the people were particularly resolute. They desired that the oppressive yearly taxes should be reduced, whilst the duties upon public sales and purchases should be completely taken off; that the prisoners who had languished for years in dungeons should be liberated; that the counselors who had voted the death-sentence when the Roman eagle had been destroyed be punished; and finally that the unpopular High Priest, Joaser, should be deposed, and one more worthy of his important office be named in his stead.

All this was really nothing short of demanding both a new and a popular form of government and a public condemnation of the Herodian tyranny. However little Archelaus cared at heart for the reputation of his father, he could not possibly agree to all these requests. Nevertheless, he assented to everything, but he could not promise that their wishes should be accomplished until Herod's will had received the imperial sanction. But the crowds of people, consisting of several thousands, who had congregated from every part of Judæa to celebrate the Feast of Passover, incited by the Pharisees, who worked upon their feelings by picturing to them the martyrdom of Judas and Matthias, the destroyers of the eagle, would not be put off, and came forward full of anger and defiance. What their intentions may have been is not known. Archelaus, who feared a revolt, sent a troop of soldiers to quell any disturbance, but they were assailed with stones and forced to take to flight. In the meantime midday approached, and the people allowed their anger to cool. They were occupied with the rites of the festivals, and made no preparations either for defense or for commencing hostilities. Archelaus took advantage of their inactivity; he commanded all the infantry in Jerusalem to fall upon the sacrificing multitude, and to hew them down; the cavalry were to remain in the open plains to arrest the fugitives. Three thousand were 122
killed on that day on the Mount of the Temple and in the surrounding country; those that escaped the sword of the enemy destroyed themselves. Heralds thereupon proclaimed to the whole town that Archelaus forbade the celebration of the Passover for that year, and no one was allowed to approach the Temple. This was the inauguration of the reign of Archelaus.

Although his relatives would probably not have acted with more humanity than he did, they cried out against his cruelty, and made use of it as a weapon with which to serve their own purposes when in the presence of Augustus. The whole house of Herod traveled to Rome to lay the land of Judæa at the feet of the emperor, and to petition, according to their respective interests, for the alteration or the confirmation of the will.

During their absence unexpected events took place, and the prize for which they were all contending very nearly escaped their possession altogether. Judæa became a huge battle-field, the arena of furious encounters. Men threw themselves into the affray, assuming the titles of kings or leaders of the people. The blood of the slain warriors, the groans of unarmed, wounded citizens, the smoke issuing from burning cities, filled every heart with dismay and with horrible forebodings of the downfall of Judæa. The tragical events which took place during the first year after the death of Herod are described in the Chronicle as the "War Period of Varus," the Governor of Syria.

At the desire of Archelaus, Quintilius Varus had remained in Jerusalem after the departure of the Herodian family, so as to crush any attempt at revolt which might occur during the absence of the princes. The task was an easy one, for the patriots who were hostile to the Herodians had no decided plan of action, were insufficiently armed, and allowed themselves to be led away by 123
their fierce hatred into unwise and useless demonstrations. Varus, seeing no further necessity for remaining in the Judæan capital, returned to Antioch, but he left a considerable number of troops to be in readiness in case of any signs of hostility.

As soon as the governor Varus had left Jerusalem another cause of annoyance was given to the people by the arrival of Sabinus, the treasurer of Augustus. He had been sent to claim the treasures of Herod, and probably also all those belonging to the Temple, as if the emperor had been the acknowledged heir to Herod's possessions. Sabinus must have had some malevolent intention, for he hastened his journey to Jerusalem, notwithstanding that he had promised Varus to remain at Cæsarea until the Herodian disputes were settled. He took advantage of the reluctance with which the custodians complied with his demands to create a disturbance among the people, and thus obtain a pretext for entering the city.

The Feast of Pentecost was drawing near, and, as usual, multitudes of people congregated from all parts of the country at Jerusalem. This time, the greater part of them were animated by hostile feelings against the Romans and the Herodians. The strife was not delayed. The people soon chose their leaders, and succeeded in occupying the Mount of the Temple and the Hippodrome, whence they defied the Romans, who had taken up their quarters in the palace of Herod. Sabinus, thinking himself lost, encouraged the Romans to besiege the Temple, and sent messages to Varus for more reinforcements. The Judæans, well protected behind the Temple walls, hurled their weapons and their huge stones down upon the Romans. Victory would have been theirs had not the enemy, with burning materials, set fire to the colonnade. The flames spread so rapidly that escape was impossible. Of the unfortunate combatants, some were victims 124
of the fire, others fell before the swords of the Romans, and many of them killed themselves in reckless despair.

As soon as the Temple was left unprotected, the Romans, tempted by the treasures which they knew it contained, rushed into the courts. Sabinus alone is said to have appropriated four hundred talents from the treasures of the Temple. The plunder of these treasures, the desecration of the Holy of Holies, and the destruction of the halls of the Temple, barely ten years after the sacred edifice had been completed, roused all the indignation and, at the same time, all the valor of the Judæans. Even a great part of the Herodian troops went over to the malcontents, and assisted them against the Romans. Thus strengthened, they besieged the palace of Herod, laid mines under the towers, and threatened the Romans with destruction if they did not retire immediately. Sabinus, anxiously awaiting the expected reinforcements, but vacillating between fear of the besiegers and a longing to obtain the mastery over them, remained for the time in the citadel of the palace.

Thus all the horrors of anarchy were let loose in Judæa. Had the insurgents found skilful and trustworthy leaders their united efforts might have brought about such momentous events that

the Herodian dispute would have come to a most unexpected termination. But there was no organization to give shape and purpose to all this patriotic fervor. It was nurtured by selfish adventurers, and was therefore hurtful to the country itself rather than dangerous to the enemy. Two thousand soldiers, probably Idumæans, whom Herod had dismissed shortly before his death, disturbed the regions of the south. A certain Simon, a slave of Herod, distinguished by great beauty and an imposing presence, collected a troop of malcontents, who hailed him as their king, 125
and, at his command, burned to the ground many royal castles in the country, including the royal palace at Jericho. The palace of Betharamata was destroyed by a band of men, the name of whose leader is unknown. A third adventurer was a shepherd named Athronges, a giant in strength and stature, who was accompanied into the field of battle by four brothers, all of the same colossal build. After assuming the royal title, he fell upon the Romans, cut off their retreat, and fought valiantly till, after a long and fierce struggle, he was forced to yield. There was but one leader of all these free troopers who had a decided aim in view, and who might have proved a formidable foe, both to Romans and Herodians, had fortune favored him, or his countrymen given him their cordial help. This was Judas, known by the name of "the Galilean," a native of Gamala in Gaulanitis, and a son of Ezekias, fighting against whom Herod had won his first laurels. Judas had been imbued, from his birth, with a passionate love for his country, and as passionate a hatred towards the Romans. He became the leader of a faction which gradually came to rule the country, and eventually gave the Romans more difficulties to contend with than even the Gauls and the Germans. Judas was at this period in the prime of life. His intense zeal proved contagious, and he gained a considerable number of partisans among the powerful Galileans. With their assistance he took possession of the arsenal in Sepphoris, the Galilean capital. He then armed his followers, gave them stipends from the money found in the arsenal, and soon became the terror of the Romans and of all those who were favorably disposed towards them.

Events in the region bordering on Syria were even more pressing than Sabinus in urging the governor to suppress the revolt, and to hasten to the rescue of the Roman troops. The terror of Varus himself was so great that he not only ordered all the Roman troops that were at his 126
disposal (over twenty thousand men) to march against the insurgents, but summoned the armies under the command of the neighboring princes. Aretas, the king of the Nabathæans, placed his troops at the command of the Roman general, and as they formed the vanguard of the Roman army, they burnt and plundered all the villages through which they passed. Varus sent one division of his troops to Galilee to commence operations against Judas. There seems to have been a severe struggle at the town of Sepphoris; ultimately Varus set fire to it and sold the inhabitants as slaves, but Judas escaped. The town of Emmaus, where Athronges had established himself, shared the same fate, though the inhabitants had taken to flight. On his arrival at Jerusalem, Varus found that his task had become a light one, for the besiegers were alarmed at the report of the approach of his army, and had abandoned their struggle against Sabinus. Notwithstanding this, two thousand prisoners were crucified at the command of Varus.

Such was the end of a revolt which had been fanned into existence by a natural feeling of anger and indignation, but had failed through the absence of wise and judicious guidance. It had only been successful in bringing the nation into a state of more humiliating dependence upon Rome, for a legion was retained to keep guard over the rebellious citizens of Jerusalem.

During all this time the Herodians were still discussing their claims to the sovereignty of Judæa before the throne of Augustus, and their servile behavior and mutual accusations only convinced the Emperor how unworthy one and all were of holding the reins of government. Before Augustus could come to any decision, a Judæan embassy arrived, consisting of fifty men of position and importance, whose mission had been approved by Varus. They brought accusations 127
against the Herodian government, and implored the Emperor to proclaim Judæa a Roman province in conjunction with Syria, but to grant the nation full liberty to conduct her own internal affairs. As the petition had the support of eight thousand Roman-Judæans, the Emperor was obliged to listen to it. However, after having heard both the demands of the embassy and the arguments of the pretenders to the throne, he decided upon confirming Herod's will, with this exception, that he did not grant the sovereignty immediately to Archelaus, but only recognized him as ruler (Ethnarch), promising him, however, that if he proved worthy of the royal title it should be granted to him eventually. Augustus could not entirely disregard the last wishes of a prince who had been his friend, and who had served the Romans with a devotion only equaled by the zeal with which he furthered his own egotistical ends. The imperial treasury suffered no diminution whether Judæa was called an ethnarchy or a province dependent upon Rome.

The reign of Archelaus was short and uneventful (4 B. C.–6 C. E.). Herod's children had inherited little of their father's disposition, excepting his fancy for building and his cringing policy towards Rome. In other respects they were insignificant, and there was something small and contemptible even in their tyranny. At first Archelaus (who appears also under the name of Herod) attempted to conciliate the discontented members of the community, whose indignation he had aroused at the assembly in the courts of the Temple. He gave way to the general desire to depose the unpopular High Priest Joasar, and appointed in his stead the latter's brother, Eleazer, who was soon succeeded by Joshua of the family of Sié or Seth. But he in turn was replaced by Joasar, and thus three High Priests followed one another in the short space of nine years. The 128
only war carried on by Archelaus was fought against Athronges, who had been able to hold his own for some time after the death of his four brothers; and such was the incapacity of Archelaus that he was long unable to subdue an adventurer, whose powers were almost exhausted, but who was still able to dictate the conditions of his own surrender.

Archelaus offended the feelings of the pious Judæans by his marriage with his sister-in-law

Glaphyra, the widow of Alexander, who had been executed. This daughter of the king of Cappadocia had had two sons; one of these, Tigranes, and his nephew of the same name, became, in later years, kings respectively of Greater and Lesser Armenia. Indifferent to the melancholy fate of her husband, she married, after his death, Juba, the king of Numidia; but was soon divorced from him, and contracted an alliance with Archelaus, the brother of her first husband, an alliance forbidden by Judæan laws. Little is known of the life of Archelaus; his acts of tyranny called forth the opprobrium of the Judæans and the Samaritans. He was taken before Augustus to answer for his misdeeds, but being unable to defend himself, he was dethroned and sent into exile among the Allobrogian races (6 C. E.). The principalities belonging to Herod Antipas and to Philip remained in their former condition, but the towns which had been in the possession of Salome came also under the Imperial sway, for Salome had bequeathed them at her death to the Empress Livia.

Thus after enjoying a hundred and fifty years of real or apparent independence, Judæa became entirely subjugated to Roman authority, and was united with the province of Syria. Matters remained in this condition, with the exception of a short interval, till the final revolt. The Imperial representative in Judæa, who henceforth received the title of Procurator, had his seat of 129
government in the seaport Cæsarea, which from that time became the hated rival of Jerusalem. The duties of the Procurator consisted in maintaining order in the country, and in enforcing the punctual payment of all taxes. He had even the power of pronouncing the death sentence, and also of supervising the Synhedrion's administration of the criminal law.

The authority of the Synhedrion became more and more limited, and the political importance of that assembly, which had considerably diminished during the reign of Herod, dwindled entirely away. The Romans interfered in all the functions of the Synhedrion, and also in the installations of the High Priests. The Procurator named and deposed the High Priests according to their friendly or unfavorable inclinations towards Rome; he took charge of the sacerdotal ornaments, and only gave them up on the chief festivals. The vestments of the High Priests were kept under lock and key in the fortress of Antonia; they were removed in time for the festival by the officials of the Temple, and returned to their place of preservation in the presence of a Roman overseer. A light was burning constantly before the case containing the priestly vestments.

The first Procurator whom Augustus sent to Judæa was the captain of the horse, Coponius. The Syrian Governor, Quirinius, came at the same time (6–7) to lay claim to the confiscated property of Archelaus. He was also instructed to take a census of the population, and to estimate the property of the country for the purpose of the new method of taxation. A tax was to be levied upon every individual, inclusive of women and slaves; however, female children under twelve and male children under fourteen years of age and very old people were to be exempt. Furthermore, an income tax was levied, and those who kept cattle were called upon to give up a part of their 130
herds. The taxes on the land were to be paid out of the produce of the harvest.

This method of levying imposts roused the indignation of all classes alike. Every one resented such interference in private as well as political affairs, and felt as if the land and property, and the very person of each individual were in the hands of the emperor, and made use of according to his pleasure. It is not surprising that, in their ignorance of the Roman constitution, the people should have looked upon the census as the herald of slavery, and anticipated with terror a repetition of the Babylonian captivity. Their dread of the census, exaggerated perhaps, but not wholly unjustifiable, caused greater agitation than any previous statute, and aroused new disputes, in which the old differences between Pharisee and Sadducee were entirely forgotten. New points of discussion were raised. The question of the supremacy of the oral law disappeared before the burning question of the day—whether the people should become slaves to the Romans, or whether they should offer stubborn and energetic resistance. This question brought dissension into the camp of the Pharisees. The new faction to which this discussion on the census had given rise sprang from the very center of the Synhedrion, and was connected with the names of Hillel, Shammai, and Judas of Galilee.

Hillel and Shammai did not live to see the catastrophe which made Judæa a province of Rome. Hillel's death caused wide-spread mourning, and the oration at his grave began with the sad cry: "O pious, O gentle, O worthy follower of Ezra." The people, in their great affection for him, continued to distinguish his descendants with their favor, and the presidency of the Synhedrion became hereditary in his family for more than four centuries. Of Hillel's son and successor, Simon I, nothing but his name has been preserved. All the greatness which encircled Hillel's 131
name was bequeathed to the school which he formed, and which inherited and faithfully preserved the spirit of its founder. The disciples of this school evinced in all their public dealings the peacefulness and gentleness, the conciliatory spirit which had distinguished their great master. They were guided and supported by these characteristic qualities during the political storms which long convulsed their unhappy country. There were about eighty members of this school who were most devotedly attached to Hillel, and were called the elders of the school. The names of only two of these have been recorded: Jonathan, the son of Uziel, and Jochanan ben Zaccai. The former is reputed, but without actual proof, to have been the author of a Chaldaic translation of the Prophets. He was disinherited by his father in favor of Shammai, probably from displeasure at his having joined the school of Hillel.

In the same way as the school of Hillel endeavored to preserve the characteristic gentleness of their master, the followers of Shammai emulated and even exceeded the stern severity of the founder of their school. It seemed impossible to the school of Shammai to be sufficiently stringent in religious prohibitions; the decisions which they arrived at, in their interpretations of the law, were so generally burdensome that those which were milder in character were treasured up as

rare exceptions. Thus, according to their opinion, no work should be attempted which, if commenced before the Sabbath, would, even without the aid of a Judæan, be completed on the Sabbath. It was prohibited on the Sabbath day to give sums of money for charitable purposes, to make arrangements for marriage contracts, to instruct children, to visit the sick, or even to bring comfort to the sorrowing. In their regulations concerning the purity of the Levites in their person 132
and apparel, their exaggerations brought them very near the excesses of the Essenes. They were equally severe concerning matrimonial laws, and only allowed divorce to be granted in the case of the unchastity of the wife.

In the school of Shammai, the Pharisaic principles were carried to the very extreme. It was only due to the yielding disposition of the followers of Hillel that peace was not disturbed, and that a friendly relationship existed between two schools of such opposite views and characters. The school of Shammai were not only severe in their explanations of the laws, but entertained very stern and rigid opinions on nearly all subjects; they were particularly harsh and repellant towards proselytes to Judaism. Any heathen who came to the school of Shammai, requesting to be received into the community might expect but a very cold and repellant reception. The school of Shammai cared not for proselytes. How dangerous to Judaism lukewarm proselytes may be, they had too often seen in the case of the converted Herodians. But in spite of their own rigid obedience to the Law, they did not exact the same obedience from the Judæan troops who were fighting against the national enemy. Originally there had been some hesitation about making war on the Sabbath, but now the school of Shammai were unreservedly in favor thereof; the siege of a hostile city, commenced before the Sabbath, was not to be raised, in spite of the transgressing of the Sabbath law, until the fortress surrendered. These ordinances were instituted by Shammai himself, in whom hatred of the heathen was even greater than religious devotion. The school of Shammai had a large number of adherents in the Synhedrion, as well as among the people. Their religious austerity, and their hatred of the heathens, found more sympathizers than the moderation and peacefulness of the followers of Hillel. They consequently formed the majority, 133
and were able to carry all their resolutions. Among the followers of Shammai, several names have been preserved—Baba ben Buta, Dostai from Itome, and Zadok.

It is possible that this Zadok may be the same of whom it is related that, excited by a fanatical hatred of the Romans, he joined with Judas the Galilean, and placed himself at the head of a religious republican faction who called themselves the *Zealots* (Kannaim). The members of this faction were also called the Galileans. The watchword which Judas gave the party of the Zealots, and which was eagerly endorsed by Zadok, was that obedience to the Roman law was disregard of the Divine law, for God alone was ruler, and could alone demand obedience; that it became, therefore, a clear and solemn duty to strain every nerve, and sacrifice property, and life, and family in this struggle against the usurper, who exacted submission due to God alone. And they set up as an exemplar Phineas, the slayer of the chief Zimri, the only one who, in the presence of a neglectful tribe and a slothful nation, had served his God with zeal. Furthermore, Judas proclaimed that the Judæan state must be a republic, recognizing God alone as sovereign and His laws as supreme. This teaching found favor all the more readily as the Roman yoke was becoming more and more intolerable. The great purpose they had in view—the recovery of their freedom—electrified young and old, and the Zealots, a faction which at first only comprised followers of Shammai, soon included a great number of Judæans, who chafed indignantly under the weight of the Roman fetters.

As soon as the law was passed that every one should give an accurate description of his family, his lands and his property, Zadok and Judas gave the signal for energetic resistance. In some places a conflict seems to have ensued. The more moderate, however, including the High 134
Priest Joasar, tried to pacify the malcontents by explaining that the census would not be the precursor of slavery or of the confiscation of property, but was simply necessary in order to control the arrangements for taxation. It was useless, and the census was regarded with such suspicion and dislike that every fine was now called census (Kenas). Even the moderate party, although they endeavored to stem the agitation, were indignant at the encroachments made upon their liberties. The school of Hillel considered the taxation so unjustifiable that, conscientious as they were, they acceded to all measures by which it might be escaped.

Such was the general abhorrence for this system of taxation, that all those who were officially occupied in carrying it out, whether as tax-collector (Moches) or as treasurer (Gabbai), were looked upon as dishonorable men; they were not tolerated in the higher ranks of the community, and their testimony as witnesses was discredited. Only mercenary motives and utter indifference to public opinion could induce any one to undertake the despised office. The designations of tax-gatherer and overseer became henceforth terms of opprobrium.

Another change also originated with the Roman occupation of Judæa. All public documents, deeds of divorce, etc., were now to be dated according to the year of the reign of the Roman Emperor, and not, as formerly, that of the Judæan rulers. The Zealots were much annoyed at this innovation, and they accused the more moderate Pharisees, who had yielded to it, of indifference in matters of religion. "How could such an ignominy be perpetrated as to write the words, 'according to the laws of Moses and Israel'" (the usual formula in the separation deeds) "next to the name of the heathen ruler, and thus permit the holy name of the greatest prophet to be placed by the side of the name of the heathen ruler." In one matter Quirinius was forced to yield 135
to the wishes of the people. He deposed the unpopular High Priest Joasar, and named in his stead Anan of the family of Seth, whose four sons also became high priests.

Under Coponius, who entered upon his office of Procurator when Quirinius left, the old enmity between the Judæans and Samaritans revived. Several days before the Feast of Passover,

the doors of the Temple were thrown open at midnight, on account of the great number of offerings which took place during that time. A few Samaritans stole into the first outer court, and threw some human bones in among the pillars, with the object of polluting the Temple. Henceforth the hatred between these two races became fiercer than ever, and the guards of the Temple, who were under the charge of the Levites, were strengthened, so as to prevent the recurrence of such a desecration. Not long after these events Coponius was recalled. He was followed by Marcus Ambivius, who in a short time was also recalled, and was succeeded by Annius Rufus. Thus there were three overseers in the short space of seven years (7–14), a disastrous circumstance, as each one was intent upon draining, as far as possible, all the wealth from the nation.

The death of Augustus brought little change to Judæa; the latter simply became, with other provinces, the possession of Tiberius. Outwardly, these provinces may not have suffered under the new emperor's reign, for he was just to the people, though antagonistic to the aristocracy, which he endeavored to suppress. He listened to the complaints of the Judæans, and lightened the burdens of their almost unendurable taxation. He appointed as procurator Valerius Gratus, who occupied this post for eleven years (15–26) In reality, however, the antipathy of Tiberius to the Judæans was even greater than that of his predecessor and adopted father; it would seem as 136
if the representative of imperialism in Rome had a foreboding of the mortal blow which Rome was destined to receive from Judaism. This antipathy had probably been stimulated by the fact that the Romans, and particularly the Roman women, had a leaning towards Judaism. The enthusiasm of the Judæans for their religion presented a striking contrast to the indifference with which the Romans, both the priests and the laity, regarded their national worship. The loss of freedom in imperial Rome had carried away with it that ideality which inspires highly-gifted souls; ardent and emotional minds sought in vain for some lofty interest to satisfy their longings. Several Roman proselytes, during the reign of Tiberius, gave evidence of their religious enthusiasm by sending offerings to the Temple at Jerusalem. It may have been a feeling of superstition, rather than conviction, which gave rise to conversions; for from the converts gained for the cult of Isis in Rome, it was evident that the unknown, the strange, the mystical exercised a strong fascination over those from whose lives all idealism was banished.

The displeasure of Tiberius was incurred by the Roman proselytes for the first time under the following circumstances:—Fulvia, the wife of a very highly respected senator, had been converted to Judaism, and had sent offerings to the Temple through the agency of her teachers, who, however, had retained these offerings for themselves. As soon as these facts came to the ears of Tiberius, he presented a law against Judæans to the Senate. That body consequently resolved that Judæans must leave the city of Rome, on pain of becoming slaves for life, unless they abjured Judaism within a given time. This measure is said to have been urgently recommended by the minister Sejanus, who exercised a most powerful influence over Tiberius. Thousands of Judæan youths were, then and there, banished to Sardinia, to fight against the hordes of brigands that 137
infested that island. Banishment to so uncongenial a climate was almost certain to be fatal to the unfortunate youths; but this consideration did not lead the Emperor, as hard-hearted as his senators, to take a milder course. The Judæans throughout Italy were threatened with banishment if they did not forsake their religious observances; all young men, in the prime of life, were forced to come armed into the camp on the Sabbath-day; severe punishment followed if religious scruples dictated a refusal. This was the first time that the Judæans had suffered religious persecution in Rome—their first martyrdom—destined to be the precursor of countless others.

The Procurator Gratus, whom Tiberius had appointed, took as active a part as his predecessors in the internal affairs of Judæa. During the eleven years that he occupied his post he installed as many as five high priests, of whom some only retained their office during one year. These changes were sometimes due to the unpopularity of the high priests, but were far more often the result of bribery or of wanton arbitrariness.

Although Judæa and the neighboring lands of Idumæa and Samaria were ruled by Procurators, the tetrarchy of Galilee and Peræa enjoyed a semblance of independence under the reign of Herod Antipas, and the lands of Batanæa and Trachonitis under that of Philip. These two princes were distinguished only for their passion for building and their submissiveness to Rome. Herod Antipas had at first made Sepphoris the capital of his tetrarchy, but as soon as Tiberius became emperor he built a new city in the lovely neighborhood of the lake of Gennesareth, which he named Tiberias, and where he established his court (24–26). But the pious Judæans objected to living in this new city; it had probably been built upon a site which had once served as a battle- 138
field, as a quantity of human bones were discovered there. The inhabitants were consequently prevented by the strict Levitical regulations from visiting the Temple, and performing various religious observances. Antipas induced the Judæans to settle there only by holding out the most tempting offers and by using force; and a century actually elapsed before the more conscientious members of the people consented to take up their abode in the city of Tiberias.

The town of Beth-Ramatha, in a situation similar to that of Jericho, and also rich in the produce of balsam plants, was renamed Livia, in honor of the wife of Augustus. Philip, whose revenue from the country only amounted to one hundred talents, also built two cities. One of these he built in the beautiful district near the source of the Jordan, and named it Cæsarea Philippi, to distinguish it from the seaport town of Cæsarea; the other, to the northeast of the Lake of Gennesareth, he named Julias, after the daughter of Augustus. Indeed, Judæa teemed with monuments erected in honor of the Cæsars. Philip's disposition was gentle, and seemingly unmarred by fierce passions, and his reign, which lasted seven-and-thirty years (4 B. C.–33 A. C.),

was quiet and uneventful. Antipas, on the contrary, had inherited some of his father's wild and bloodthirsty nature.

The successor to the Governor Valerius Gratus was Pontius Pilate, whose tenure of office (26–36) embraced a decade memorable in the history of the world. As soon as he was in power, he showed the determination to subject the Judæans to further humiliation, and to convince them that they must drink the cup of suffering to the dregs. The mere facts that Pilate was the creature of the deceitful minister Sejanus, before whom emperor and senate trembled alike, and that he was sent by him to Judæa, would suffice to describe his disposition. Pilate was worthy of his 139
master; he certainly went far beyond any of his predecessors in wounding the susceptibilities of the Judæan nation. He attacked their religious scruples by endeavoring to induce them to pay homage to the emblems and insignia of imperialism. Till now the leaders of Roman troops had respected the aversion with which the Judæans were known to regard all images, and on entering Jerusalem the obnoxious emblems had always been removed from the Roman standards. Herod and his sons had never failed to observe this practice. Although Pilate well knew that the feelings of Judæans had never before been outraged on this subject, he paid no heed to them. It is not known whether he had received secret injunctions on this point from Sejanus, or whether he acted on his own authority, with the anticipation of a satisfactory bribe. He sent privately for all the imperial emblems in order to replace them upon the standards which were in Jerusalem. The command that these representations of human beings were to be worshiped as deities caused the deepest indignation throughout the land. Delegates from the people, who were even joined by members of the Herodian family, hastened to the Procurator at Cæsarea, and implored him to command the removal of the hated images.

During five days the petitioners remained before the palace of the Procurator, sending up ceaseless supplications. On the sixth day Pilate attempted to terrify them, and threatened that they should be cut down by his legions if they did not immediately disperse. However, when he found that the Judæans were determined to sacrifice their lives, if necessary, rather than their religious convictions, and perhaps afraid of the disapproval of Tiberius, he at last gave way, and issued a command that the cause of their anger should be removed. But he provoked the indignation of the inhabitants of Jerusalem against himself a short time after. He purposed 140
making an aqueduct from a spring at a distance of four geographical miles from the town of Jerusalem. In order to meet the necessary expenses, he possessed himself of the treasures in the Temple (the korban). He was in Jerusalem at the time, and was surrounded by an angry populace, who assailed him with execrations. He did not venture to call out his legions, but ordered a number of soldiers to disguise themselves in the Judæan dress, and to mingle with the crowd and attack them. The multitudes rapidly dispersed, but not before great numbers of them had been killed and wounded.

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CHAPTER VI.

MESSIANIC EXPECTATIONS AND ORIGIN OF CHRISTIANITY.

The Messianic Hope—Various Conceptions of the Expected Messiah—The Essene Idea of the Kingdom of Heaven—John the Baptist, his Work and Imprisonment—Jesus of Nazareth continues John's Labors—Story of his Birth—His Success—His Relations to Judaism and the Sects—His Miraculous Healing of the Sick and Exorcism of Demons—His Secret Appearance as the Messiah—His Journey to Judæa—Accusations against him, and his Condemnation—The First Christian Community and its Chiefs—The Ebionites—Removal of Pilate from Judæa—Vitellius, Governor of Syria, favors the Judæans.

28–37 C. E.

While Judæa was still trembling in fear of some new act of violence on the part of the governor, Pontius Pilate, which would again afflict the country with disturbances and troubles, a strange event occurred. At first but little heeded, it soon acquired, through the singularity of its origin and many favorable attendant circumstances, a considerable degree of notoriety. So great were the strides this movement rapidly made to influence and power, that radical changes were produced by it and new paths opened in the history of the world. The time had come when the fundamental truths of Judaism, till then thoroughly known and rightly appreciated only by profound thinkers, were to burst their shackles and go freely forth among all the people of the earth. Sublime and lofty views of God and of holy living for the individual as well as for the state, which form the kernel of Judaism, were now to be disseminated among other nations and to bring them a rich and beneficent harvest. Israel was now to commence in earnest his sacred mission; he was to become the teacher of nations. The ancient teaching about God and religious morality 142
was to be introduced by him unto a godless and immoral world. Judaism, however, could gain admission into the hearts of the heathens only by taking another name and assuming new forms, for with its old designation and distinctive features it was not generally popular.

It was due to the strange movement which arose under the governorship of Pilate that the teachings of Judaism won the sympathy of the heathen world. But this new form of Judaism, altered by foreign elements, became estranged from and placed itself in harsh antagonism to the parent source. Judaism, which had given birth to this new manifestation, could take no pleasure in her offspring, which soon turned coldly from her and struck out into strange, divergent paths. This new power, this old doctrine in a new garb, or rather this Essenism intermingled with foreign elements, is Christianity, whose advent and earliest course belong to the Judæan history of this epoch.

Christianity owed its origin to an overpowering, mysterious feeling which reigned among the better classes of the Judæan nation, and which became daily stronger as their political position became more and more intolerable. The ever-recurring evils brought on them by the rapacity of their Roman rulers, the shamelessness of the Herodian princes, the cowardice and servility of the Judæan aristocracy, the debasement of the high priests and their families, and the dissensions of rival parties, had raised the longing for the deliverer announced in the prophetical writings—the Messiah—to so great a pitch that any highly-gifted individual, possessed of outward charm or imbued with moral and religious grace, would readily have found disciples, and believers in his Messianic mission. The most earnest thinkers of that time had long regarded the political condition of the Judæans since their return from the Babylonian exile as a temporary or 143
preparatory state, which would only continue until the true prophet arose, and Elijah turned the hearts of the fathers to the children, and restored the tribes of Jacob. When the people, with solemn rites, elected the Hasmonæan Simon as their prince, they decreed that he and his descendants should hold that position only until the True Prophet appeared to assume the royal dignity, and it was only to a scion of the House of David, the Anointed that, according to prophecy, this dignity by right belonged.

When, consequent upon the wars undertaken by the three powerful leaders, Octavius, Antony, and Lepidus, ostensibly to punish Cæsar's murderers, in reality to introduce a new form of government, the great political convulsion took place in the Roman Empire, and three divisions of the world were laid waste, a Judæan poet in Egypt was foretelling a far different outcome—the destruction of the whole heathen world and the dawn of the "Kingdom of God." In that kingdom a holy king—the Messiah—would hold the scepter. "When Rome shall vanquish Egypt, and govern her, then shall the greatest in the kingdom, the immortal King, arise in the world, and a holy King will come to rule over all the nations of the earth during all time." The Messiah, so confidently expected, was to bring forth quite a new state of things—a new heaven and a new earth. At the coming of Elijah, who was to be the precursor of the Messiah, the resurrection of the dead would take place, and a future world be revealed.

This ardent longing for the Messiah, and the belief in his advent, swayed all classes of the Judæan nation, excepting the aristocracy and those who clung to Rome. These were satisfied with the present, and anticipated harm rather than benefit from any change. During the short space of thirty years a great number of enthusiastic mystics appeared, who, without any intention to 144
deceive, and bent upon removing the load of care and sorrow that weighed so heavily upon the people, assumed the character of prophet or Messiah, and found disciples, who followed their banner faithfully unto death. But though it appears that every Messiah attracted ready believers, no one was acknowledged as such by the whole nation. The incessant friction between the various communities, and the deep study of the holy books, had awakened a critical spirit difficult

to satisfy. The nation was also split into many parties, each entertaining a different idea of the future savior, and rendering it, therefore, impossible that any one aspirant should receive general recognition as the Messiah. The republican zealots, the disciples of Judas of Galilee, pictured the Messiah as delivering Israel from his enemies by the breath of his mouth, destroying the Roman Empire, and restoring the golden era of David's kingdom. The school of Shammai added to this representation of the Messiah the attributes of ardent religious zeal and perfect moral purity. The followers of Hillel, less swayed by fanaticism or political views, expected a prince of peace, who would bring tranquillity to the country itself, and introduce harmony into its relations with all its neighboring states. On one point, however, all agreed: the Messiah must spring from the branch of David; and thus, in the course of time, the expression "Ben David"—the son of David—became identical with the Messiah. According to the prevailing belief, the fulfillment of the Messianic prophecies required the return of the scattered tribes of Israel, richly laden with presents, expiatory offerings from the nations by which they had so long been oppressed. Even the most educated classes, who had felt the influence of Grecian culture, and were represented by Philo, the Judæan Plato, fully believed that the Messianic age was to be ushered in, and 145
pictured it as an epoch of miracles. A heavenly apparition, only visible to the righteous, would lead back from Greece and barbarous lands the exiled and repentant Israelites. The latter would be found prepared for the Messianic time, following the holy life of the patriarchs, and imbued with a sublime and pious spirit, which would prevent them from falling into their old sins, and would surely call down upon them the full grace of God. Then would the streams of former happiness be again replenished from the eternal spring of Divine grace: the ruined cities would arise, the desert become a blooming land, and the prayers of the living would have the power of awakening the dead.

It was the sect of Essenes that pictured the Messiah and the Messianic time in the most idealistic manner. The great object of their asceticism was to advance the kingdom of heaven (Malchuth Shamayim) and the coming era (Olam-ha-Ba). Their adherence would be granted alone to him who led a pure and spotless life, who renounced the world and its vanities, and gave proofs that the Holy Spirit (Ruach ha-Kodesh) dwelt within him. He must also have power over demons, reject Mammon, and inaugurate a system of community of goods, in which poverty and self-renunciation would be the ornaments of mankind.

It was from the Essenes that for the first time the cry went forth, "The Messiah is coming! The kingdom of heaven is near!" He who first raised his voice in the desert little thought it would re-echo far away over land and sea, and that it would be answered by the nations of the earth flocking together round the banner of a Messiah. In announcing the kingdom of heaven, he only meant to invite the sinners among the Judæan people to penitence and reformation. The Essene who sent forth this call to the Israelites was John the Baptist (his name doubtless meaning the Essene, he who daily bathed and cleansed both body and soul in spring water). But few accounts 146
have reached us of John the Baptist. He led the same life as the Essenes, fed upon locusts and wild honey, and wore the garb of the prophets of old, a cloak of camel-hair fastened by a leather girdle. John appears to have fully entertained the belief, that if only the whole Judæan nation would bathe in the river Jordan, acknowledge their sins, and adopt the strict rules of the Essenes, the promised Messianic time could be no longer deferred. He therefore called upon the people to come and receive baptism in the Jordan, to confess and renounce their sins, and thus prepare for the advent of the kingdom of heaven.

John dwelt with other Essenes in the desert, in the vicinity of the Dead Sea, presumably in order to be ever at hand to teach the repentant sinners the deep moral signification of baptism. Bound up with that rite was doubtless the adoption of the rule of life of the Essenes. There were certainly many, imbued with an enthusiastic spirit, and saddened by the evils and the distress they witnessed, who eagerly responded to the cry of the Essene Baptist. Who would not gladly, were it only in his power to do so, further the great work of the Redemption, and help to advance the kingdom of heaven? Did the baptized persons return improved by their immersion in the waters of the Jordan? Was any great moral influence the result of this symbolical act? History tells us not; but our knowledge of the state of Judæa at that time can easily supply us with an answer to the question. The Judæan people did not as a whole, especially among the middle-class citizens, require this violent shock as a means of improvement; they were neither vicious nor depraved, and their form of public religious worship was sufficient to keep them in the right paths. By two sets of people, however, the call of John to repentance might have been heeded—it 147
might have had a beneficial influence upon the higher and lower classes, upon the aristocracy and wealthy, who had been corrupted by Rome, and upon the miserable peasantry, brutalized by constant warfare. But the rich only laughed at the high-souled enthusiast, who taught that baptism in the water of the Jordan would bring about the miraculous Messianic era, and the sons of the soil were too obtuse and ignorant to heed the Baptist's earnest cry.

His appeal, on the other hand, had nothing in its tenor and character to offend the Pharisees, or arouse any opposition among the ranks of that ruling party. John's disciples, those who were bound closest to him, and who carried out his mode of living, kept strictly to the words of the Law, and observed all its prescribed fasts. If the Pharisees, comprising at that time the schools of Hillel and of Shammai, did not greatly favor the enthusiasm and extravagance of the Essenes, they placed themselves in no direct antagonism to the Baptists.

From their side, John would have met with no hindrance to his work, but the Herodians were suspicious of a man who drew such throngs around him, whose burning words moved the hearts of his hearers in their very depths, and could carry away the multitude to the performance of any enterprise he chose to undertake. Herod Antipas, governor of the province in which the Baptist

dwelt, gave his soldiers orders to seize and imprison him. How long a time he was kept in confinement, and whether he was still alive when one of his disciples was being proclaimed as the Messiah, must, on account of the untrustworthiness of the sources from which our information is derived, remain doubtful. It is authentic, however, that he was beheaded by the order of Antipas, whilst the story of the young daughter of Herodias bringing to her mother the bloody head of the Baptist upon a platter is a mere legend.

After the imprisonment of the Baptist, his work was carried on by some of his disciples, among whom no one exerted so powerful an influence as Jesus of Galilee. Jesus (short for Joshua), born in Nazareth, a small town in Lower Galilee, to the south of Sepphoris, was the eldest son of an otherwise unknown carpenter, Joseph, and of his wife Miriam or Mary, who bore him four more sons, Jacob, Josê, Judah, and Simon, and several daughters. Whether Joseph or Mary, the father and mother of Jesus, belonged to the family of David cannot be proved. The measure of his mental culture can only be surmised from that existing in his native province. Galilee, at a distance from the capital and the Temple, was far behind Judæa in mental attainments and knowledge of the Law. The lively interchange of religious thought, and the discussions upon the Law, which made its writings and teachings the common property of all who sought the Temple, were naturally wanting in Galilee. The country, which, at a later period, after the destruction of the Temple, contained the great schools of Uscha, Sepphoris, and Tiberias, was at that time very poor in seats of learning. But, on the other hand, morality was stricter in Galilee, and the observance of laws and customs more rigidly enforced. The slightest infringement was not allowed, and what the Judæans permitted themselves, the Galilæans would by no means consent to. They were also looked upon as fanatical dogmatists. 148

Through their vicinity to the heathen Syrians, the Galilæans had adopted many superstitions, and, owing to their ignorance of the nature of disease, the sick were often thought to be possessed by demons, and various forms of illness were ascribed to the influence of evil spirits. The language of the Galilæans had also become corrupted by their Syrian neighbors, and was marred by the introduction of Aramaic forms and words. The Galilæans could not pronounce Hebrew with purity. They exchanged, and sometimes omitted, the guttural sounds, and thus often incurred the ridicule of the Judæans, who thought a great deal of correct articulation. The first word he spoke revealed the Galilæan, and, as his language provoked laughter, he was not often allowed to lead in the recital of the prayers. The birthplace of Jesus, Nazareth, offered no particular attraction; it was a small mountain-town, not more fertile than the other parts of Galilee, and bearing no comparison to the richly-watered Shechem. 149

On account of his Galilæan origin, Jesus could not have stood high in that knowledge of the Law which, through the schools of Shammai and Hillel, had become prevalent in Judæa. His small stock of learning and his corrupt half-Aramaic language pointed unmistakably to his birthplace in Galilee. His deficiency in knowledge, however, was fully compensated for by his intensely sympathetic character. High-minded earnestness and spotless moral purity were his undeniable attributes; they stand out in all the authentic accounts of his life that have reached us, and appear even in those garbled teachings which his followers placed in his mouth. The gentle disposition and the humility of Jesus remind one of Hillel, whom he seems, indeed, to have taken as his particular model, and whose golden rule, "What you wish not to be done to yourself, do not unto others," he adopted as the starting-point of his moral code. Like Hillel, Jesus looked upon the promotion of peace and the forgiveness of injuries as the highest forms of virtue. His whole being was permeated by that deeper religiousness which consecrates to God not only the hour of prayer, a day of penitence, and longer or shorter periods of devotional exercise, but every step in the journey of life, which turns every aspiration of the soul towards Him, subjects everything to His will, and, with child-like trust, commits everything to His keeping. He was filled with tender brotherly love, which Judaism also teaches towards an enemy, and had reached the ideal of the passive virtues which the Pharisees inculcated: "Count yourself among the oppressed and not among the oppressors, receive abuse and return it not; do all from love to God, and rejoice in suffering." Jesus doubtless possessed warm sympathies and a winning manner, which caused his words to produce a deep and lasting effect. 150

Jesus must, from the idiosyncrasies of his nature, have been powerfully attracted by the Essenes, who led a contemplative life apart from the world and its vanities. When John the Baptist—or more correctly the Essene—invited all to come and receive baptism in the Jordan, to repent and prepare for the Kingdom of Heaven, Jesus hastened to obey the call, and was baptized by him. Although it cannot be proved that Jesus was formally admitted into the order of the Essenes, much in his life and work can only be explained by the supposition that he had adopted their fundamental principles. Like the Essenes, Jesus highly esteemed self-inflicted poverty, and despised the mammon of riches. The following proverbs, ascribed to him, appear to bear his stamp: "Blessed are ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of heaven" (Luke vi. 20). "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God" (Matthew xix. 24). "No man can serve two masters, ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Matthew vi. 24). Jesus shared the aversion of the Essenes to marriage: "It is not good to marry" (Matthew xix. 11). Community of goods, a peculiar doctrine of the Essenes, was not only approved of, but positively enjoined by Jesus; like them, he also reprobated every form of oath. "Swear not at all" (so Jesus taught), "neither by heaven nor by the earth, nor by your head—but let your yea be yea, and your nay be nay" (James v. 12). Miraculous cures, said to have been performed by him—such as the exorcism of demons from those who believed themselves to be possessed—were often made by the Essenes, so to say, in a professional capacity. 151

After John had been taken and imprisoned by Herod Antipas, Jesus thought simply of

continuing his master's work; like him, he preached "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," without perhaps having then a suspicion of the part he was afterwards to play in that kingdom of heaven looked forward to in the approaching Messianic time. Jesus apparently felt that if his appeal was not to be lost in the desert like that of the Baptist, but, on the contrary, bring forth lasting results, it must not be addressed to the whole nation, but to a particular class of the Judæans. The middle classes, the inhabitants of towns of greater or lesser importance, were not wanting in godliness, piety and morality, and consequently a call to them to repent and forsake their sins would have been meaningless. The declaration made to Jesus by the young man who was seeking the way of eternal life, "From my youth upwards, I have kept the laws of God; I have not committed murder, nor adultery, nor have I stolen, nor borne false witness; I have honored my father and mother, and loved my neighbor like myself,"—this declaration might have been made by the greater number of the middle-class Judæans of that time. The disciples of Shammai and Hillel, the followers of the zealot Judas, the bitter foes of the Herodians and of Rome, were not morally sick, and were not in need of the physician's art. They were ever ready for self-sacrifice, and Jesus wisely refrained from turning to them. Still less was he inclined to attempt to reform the rich, and he was repelled by the higher classes of Judæans. From these, the warning of the simple, unlearned moralist and preacher, his reproof of their pride, their 152
venality and inconstancy, would only have elicited mockery and derision. With right judgment, therefore, Jesus determined upon seeking out those who did not belong to, or had been expelled from the community for their religious offenses, and who had either not been allowed or had not desired to return to it. They were publicans and tax-gatherers, shunned by the patriots, as promoters of Roman interests, who turned their backs upon the Law, and led a wild, unshackled life, heedless alike of the past and of the future. There existed in Judæa many who had no knowledge of the great healing truths of Judaism, who were ignorant of its laws, and indifferent as to the glorious history of its past or its possible future. These were known as transgressors of the Law (Abrianim), or sinners as they were called, the friends of Herod and of Rome. There were also ignorant, poor handicraftsmen and menials (Am ha-Arez), who were seldom able to visit the Judæan capital, or listen to Judæan teachings, which, indeed, they would probably not have understood. It was not for them that Sinai had flamed, or the prophets had uttered their cry of warning; for the teachers of the Law, more intent upon expounding doctrine than upon reforming their hearers, failed to make the Law and the prophets intelligible to those classes, and consequently did not draw them within their fold. It was to these outcasts that Jesus turned, to snatch them out of their torpor, their ignorance and ungodliness. He felt within himself the call to save "the lost sheep of the house of Israel." "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick" (Matthew ix. 12).

Intent upon the lofty mission which he had undertaken—to turn the ignorant and the godless, the sinner and the publican to repentance, and by virtue of the Essene mode of living to prepare 153
them for the approaching Messianic time—Jesus first sought his native town of Nazareth. But there, where he had been known from his infancy, and where the carpenter's son was not considered to possess superior sanctity but only inferior knowledge, he was met with derision and contempt. When, on the Sabbath, he spoke in the synagogue about repentance, the listeners said to each other, "Is that not the son of Joseph the carpenter, and his mother and sisters, are they not all with us?" and they said to him, "Physician, heal thyself," and listened not to him. The ignominious treatment he received in his own birthplace caused him to utter the proverb, "The preacher is least regarded in his own country." He left Nazareth, never to return.

A better result followed the teaching of Jesus in the town of Capernaum (Kefar Nahum), which was situated on the western coast of the Sea of Tiberias. The inhabitants of that delightfully situated town differed as much from the Nazarenes as their mild, fertile land from a rough and wild mountain gorge. In Capernaum there were doubtless a greater number of men steeped in effeminacy and vice, and there existed, probably, a wider gap between the rich and the poor. But just on that account Jesus had more scope to work there, and an easier access was found for the earnest, penetrating words which he poured forth from the depths of his soul. Many belonging to the lowest classes attached themselves to Jesus and followed him. Among his first disciples in Capernaum were Simon, called Kephas or Petrus (rock), and his brother Andrew, the sons of Jonah, both fishermen, the first, in some degree, a law-breaker, and also the two sons of a certain Zebedee, Jacob and John. He was also followed by a rich publican, called sometimes Matthew, sometimes Levi, in whose house Jesus often tarried, bringing with him companions from the classes then looked down upon with the greatest contempt. Women likewise of doubtful repute 154
were among his followers, the most conspicuous of the number being a native of the town of Magdala, near Tiberias, Mary Magdalene, from whom seven devils (according to the language of the time) had to be driven out. Jesus converted these abandoned sinners into remorseful penitents. It was, doubtless, an unheard-of thing at that time for a teacher of Judaism to hold intercourse with women at all, more especially with any of that description.

He, however, by word and example raised the sinner and the publican, and filled the hearts of those poor, neglected, thoughtless beings with the love of God, transforming them into dutiful children of their heavenly Father. He animated them with his own piety and fervor, and improved their conduct by the hope he gave them of being able to enter the kingdom of heaven. That was the greatest miracle that Jesus performed. Above all things, he taught his male and female disciples the Essene virtues of self-abnegation and humility, of the contempt of riches, of charity and the love of peace. He said to his followers, "Provide neither gold nor silver nor brass for your purses, neither two coats, neither shoes" (Matthew x. 9). He bade them become sinless as little children, and declared they must be as if born again if they would become members of the approaching kingdom of heaven. The law of brotherly love and forbearance he carried to the

extent of self-immolation. "If you receive a blow on one cheek, turn the other one likewise, and if one takes your cloak, give him likewise your shirt." He taught the poor that they should not take heed for meat or drink or raiment, but pointed to the birds in the air and the lilies in the fields that were fed and clothed yet "they toil not, neither do they spin." He taught the rich how to distribute alms—"Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." He admonished the hypocrite, and bade him pray in the secrecy of his closet, placing before him a short form of prayer—"Our Father which art in heaven," which may possibly have been in use among the Essenes.

Jesus made no attack upon Judaism itself, he had no idea of becoming the reformer of Jewish doctrine or the propounder of a new law; he sought merely to redeem the sinner, to call him to a good and holy life, to teach him that he is a child of God, and to prepare him for the approaching Messianic time. He insisted upon the unity of God, and was far from attempting to change in the slightest degree the Jewish conception of the Deity. To the question once put to him by an expounder of the Law, "What is the essence of Judaism?" he replied, "'Hear, O Israel, our God is one' and 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.' These are the chief commandments" (Mark xii. 28). His disciples, who had remained true to Judaism, promulgated the declaration of their Master—"I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill; till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the Law till all be fulfilled" (Matthew v. 17). He must have kept the Sabbath holy, for those of his followers who were attached to Judaism strictly observed the Sabbath, which they would not have done had their master disregarded it. It was only the Shammaitic strictness in the observance of the Sabbath, which forbade even the healing of the sick on that day, that Jesus protested against, declaring that it was lawful to do good on the Sabbath. Jesus made no objection to the existing custom of sacrifice, he merely demanded—and in this the Pharisees agreed with him—that reconciliation with one's fellow-man should precede any act of religious atonement. Even fasting found no opponent in him, so far as it was practised without ostentation or hypocrisy. He wore on his garments the fringes ordered by the Law, and he belonged so thoroughly to Judaism that he shared the narrow views held by the Judæans at that period, and thoroughly despised the heathen world. He was animated by that feeling when he said, "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet and turn again and rend you."

The merit of Jesus consists especially in his efforts to impart greater inner force to the precepts of Judaism, in the enthusiasm with which he obeyed them himself, in his ardor to make the Judæans turn to God with filial love as children to their father, in his fervent upholding of the brotherhood of men, in his insistence that moral laws be placed in the foreground, and in his endeavors to have them accepted by those who had been hitherto regarded as the lowest and most degraded of human beings.

It was not to be expected, however, that through his teaching alone Jesus could attract devoted followers, or achieve great results; something more was required—something strange and wonderful to startle and inflame. His appearance, his mystical character, his earnest zeal produced, doubtless, a powerful effect, but to awaken in the dull and cold a lasting enthusiasm, to gain the confidence of the masses and to kindle their faith, it was necessary to appeal to their imagination by strange circumstances and marvelous surroundings. The Christian chronicles abound in extraordinary events and descriptions of miraculous cures performed by Jesus. Though these stories may in part be due to an inclination to exaggerate and idealize, they must doubtless have had some foundation in fact. Miraculous cures—such, for example, as the exorcism of those possessed by demons—belonged so completely to the personality of Jesus that his followers boasted more of the exercise of that power than of the purity and holiness of their conduct. If we are to credit the historical accounts of that period, the people also admired Jesus more for the command he displayed over demons and Satan than for his moral greatness. It was indeed on account of the possession of such power that he was first considered a supernatural being by the uncultured masses.

Encouraged by the great effect he produced in Capernaum, where he found his first circle of disciples, Jesus wandered about in the towns of Galilee, remaining some time in its second capital, Bethsaida, in Magdala, and in Chorazin, where he gained many followers. His presence, however, in Bethsaida and Chorazin could not have produced any lasting result, as he bewailed—according to the words placed in his mouth, "Woe unto thee, Chorazin, woe unto thee, Bethsaida"—the spirit of opposition and indocility of their inhabitants. Like Sodom and Gomorrah, they were accursed. Still he had many faithful disciples, both men and women, who followed him everywhere, and obeyed him in all things. They renounced not only their former immoral and irreligious life, but also gave up all their possessions, carrying out the doctrine of the community of goods. The repasts they took in common formed, as it were, the connecting link which attached the followers of Jesus to one another, and the alms distributed by the rich publicans relieved the poor disciples of the fear of hunger, and thus bound them still more closely to Jesus.

Among his followers Jesus selected as his peculiar confidants those who, distinguished by their superior intelligence or greater steadfastness of character, seemed best calculated to forward the aims he had in view. The number of these trusted disciples was not known, but tradition mentions twelve, and calls them the twelve apostles—representatives, as it were, of the twelve tribes of Israel.

His great design, the secret desire of his heart, Jesus disclosed on one occasion to the most intimate circle of his disciples. He led them to a retired spot at the foot of Mount Hermon, not far from Cæsarea Philippi, the capital of the Tetrarch Philip, where the Jordan rushes forth from

mighty rocks, and in that remote solitude he revealed to them the hidden object of his thoughts. But he contrived his discourse in such a manner that it appeared to be his disciples who at last elicited from him the revelation that he considered himself the expected Messiah. He asked his followers, "Who do men say that I, the son of man, am?" Some replied that he was thought to be Elijah, the expected forerunner of the Messiah; others, again, that he was the prophet whose advent Moses had predicted; upon which Jesus asked them, "But whom say ye that I am?" Simon Peter answered and said, "Thou art the Christ." Jesus praised Peter's discernment and admitted that he was the Messiah, but forbade his disciples from divulging the truth, or, for the present, from speaking about it at all. Such was the mysteriously-veiled birth of Christianity. When, a few days later, the most trusted of his disciples, Simon Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, James and John, timidly suggested that Elijah must precede the Messiah, Jesus declared that Elijah had already appeared, though unrecognized, in the person of the Baptist. Had Jesus from the very commencement of his career nourished these thoughts in the depths of his soul, or had they first taken shape when the many followers he had gained seemed to make their realization possible? Jesus never publicly called himself the Messiah, but made use of other expressions which were doubtless current among the Essenes. He spoke of himself as "the son of man," alluding probably 159
to Daniel vii. 13, "One like the son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days," a verse which referred probably to the whole people and its Messianic future, but which at that time was made to point to the Messiah himself. There was yet one other name which Jesus applied to himself in his Messianic character—the mysterious words "Son of God," probably taken from the seventh verse of the second Psalm, "The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee." Was this expression used by Jesus figuratively, or did he wish it to be taken in a literal sense? As far as we know, he never explained himself clearly on that subject, not even at a later date, when it was on account of the meaning attached to those words that he was undergoing his trial. His followers afterwards disagreed among themselves upon that matter, and the various ways in which they interpreted that ambiguous expression divided them into different sects, among which a new form of idolatry unfolded itself.

When Jesus made himself known as the Messiah to his disciples, enjoining secrecy, he consoled them for the present silence imposed on them by the assurance that a time would come, when "What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light, and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the house-tops." What occurred was doubtless contrary to what Jesus and his disciples expected, for as soon as it was known (the disciples having probably not kept the secret) that Jesus of Nazareth not only came to preach the Kingdom of Heaven, but was proclaimed as the expected Messiah, the public sentiment rose against him. Proofs and signs of his being the Messiah were asked, which he was not able to give, and he thus was forced to evade the questions addressed to him. Many of his followers seem to have been repelled by his assumption 160
of the Messianic character, and so left him at once. "From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him" (John vi. 66). In order not to be discredited in the eyes of his disciples, it was essential that he should perform some miracle that would crown his work or seal it with his death. It was expected that he would now appear in Jerusalem before the whole nation in the character of the Messiah, and it is stated that his own brothers entreated of him to go there, so that his achievements might at last become visible to his disciples. "For there is no man that doeth anything in secret and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, show thyself to the world" (John vii. 4). Jesus thus found himself almost obliged to enter upon the path of danger. He was, moreover, no longer safe in Galilee, and appears to have been tracked and pursued from place to place by the servants of the Tetrarch Herod Antipas. It was at that time that Jesus said to one of his followers who clung to him in his distress, "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head" (Matthew viii. 20). He wished to prevent any misconception as to his desire to alter the Law, and his reply to the Pharisee who asked what would be required of him if he became his disciple was, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments, sell what thou hast and give to the poor." When he had passed Jericho and was approaching Jerusalem, Jesus took up his abode near the walls of the capital, in the village of Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, where the lepers who were obliged to avoid the city had their settlement. It was in the house of one of these that shelter was given him. The other disciples whom he found at Bethany belonged also to the lower orders. They were Lazarus and his sisters, Mary and Martha. Only one resident of wealth and position in Jerusalem, Joseph of Arimathea, is said to have become a disciple of Jesus.

The entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem and his appearance in the Temple have been glorified by 161
a halo of legends which contain but little historical truth. They show us Jesus accompanied in triumph by the people singing hosannas, the same people who a few days later were to demand his death. Both reports were inventions: the first was designed to prove that he was recognized as the Messiah by the people; the second, to throw the guilt of his execution upon all Israel. Equally unhistorical is the account of Jesus entering the Temple by force, throwing down the tables of the money-changers, and chasing away those who were selling doves. An act that must have given rise to intense excitement would not have been omitted from other chronicles of that period. It is not mentioned in any other writings of that time that the stalls of money-changers and dealers in doves had a place in the Temple.

It is just the most important facts of the life of Jesus—the account of the attitude he assumed at Jerusalem before the people, the Synhedrion and the different sects, the announcement of himself as the Messiah, and the manner in which that announcement was received—that are represented in such various ways in the chronicles that it is impossible to separate the historical kernel from its legendary exaggerations and embellishments. Prejudice certainly existed against him in the capital. The educated classes could not imagine the Messiah's saving work to be

performed by an unlearned Galilæan; indeed, the idea that the Messiah, who was expected to come from Bethlehem, out of the branch of David, should belong to Galilee, overthrew the long-cherished conviction of centuries. It is probably from this time that the proverb arose: "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" (John i. 46). The devout took offense at his going about eating and drinking with sinners, publicans, and women of a degraded class. Even the Essenes, 162
John's disciples, were displeased at his infringement of rules and customs. The Shammaites were scandalized at his healing the sick on the Sabbath day, and could not recognize the Messiah in one who desecrated the Sabbath. He also roused the opposition of the Pharisees by the disapproval he expressed here and there of their interpretations of the laws, and of the conclusions they drew from them. From Jesus the zealots could not look for deeds of heroism, for, instead of inspiring his followers with hatred of Rome, he advocated peace, and in his contempt for mammon admonished them to submit willingly to the Roman tax-gatherers. "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things which are God's" (Matt. xxii. 21). These startling peculiarities, which seemed to contradict the preconceived idea of the Messianic character, caused the higher and the learned classes to be coldly indifferent to him, and it is certain that he met with no friendly reception in Jerusalem. These various objections, however, to the mode of life and the tenets of Jesus afforded no ground for any legal accusation against him. Freedom of speech had, owing to the frequent debates in the schools of Shammai and Hillel, become so firmly established a right that no one could be attacked for expressing religious opinions, unless indeed he controverted any received dogma or rejected the conception of the Divinity peculiar to Judaism. It was just in this particular that Jesus laid himself open to accusation. The report had spread that he had called himself the Son of God—words which, if taken literally, wounded the religious feelings of the Judæan nation too deeply to allow him who had uttered them to pass unscathed. But how was it possible to ascertain the truth, to learn whether Jesus had really called himself the Son of God, and to know what meaning he attached to these words? How was it possible to discover what was the secret of his sect? To bring that to 163
light it was necessary to seek a traitor among his immediate followers, and that traitor was found in Judas Iscariot, who, as it is related, incited by avarice, delivered up to the judges the man whom he had before honored as the Messiah. One Judæan account, derived from what appears a trustworthy source, seems to place in the true light the use made of this traitor. In order to be able to arraign Jesus either as a false prophet or a seducer of the people, the Law demanded that two witnesses had heard him utter the dangerous language of which he was accused, and Judas was consequently required to induce him to speak whilst two hidden witnesses might hear and report his words. According to the Christian writings, the treachery of Judas manifested itself in pointing out Jesus through the kiss of homage that he gave his master as he was standing among his disciples, surrounded by the people and the soldiers. No sooner had Jesus been seized by the latter than his disciples left him and sought safety in flight, Simon Peter alone following him at some distance. At dawn of day on the 14th of Nissan, the Feast of the Passover, that is to say, on the eve of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Jesus was led, not before the great Synhedrion, but before the smaller court of justice, composed of twenty-three members, over which the High Priest, Joseph Caiaphas, presided. The trial was to determine whether Jesus had really claimed to be, as the two witnesses testified, the Son of God; for one cannot believe that he was arraigned before that tribunal because he had boasted that it was in his power to destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days. Such a declaration, if really uttered by him, could not have been made a cause of complaint. The accusation doubtless pointed to the sin of blasphemy, and to the supposed affirmation of Jesus that he was the Son of God. Upon the question being put to him on 164
that score, Jesus was silent and gave no answer. When the presiding judge, however, asked him again if he were the Son of God, he is said to have replied, "Thou hast said it," and to have added, "hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of Heaven." If these words were really spoken by Jesus, the judges could infer that he looked upon himself as the Son of God. The High Priest rent his garments at the impious assertion, and the court declared him guilty of blasphemy. From the account of the proceedings given by Christian authorities, there is no proof that, according to the existing penal laws, the judges had pronounced an unjust verdict. All appearances were against Jesus. The Synhedrion received the sanction of the death-warrant, or rather the permission to execute it, from the governor, Pontius Pilate, who was just then present for the festival at Jerusalem.

Pilate, before whom Jesus was brought, entering into the political side of the question, asked him if he declared himself to be not only the Messiah but the King of the Judæans, and as Jesus answered evasively, "Thou hast said it," he likewise decreed his execution, which he indeed alone had the power to enforce. That Pilate on the contrary found Jesus innocent and wished to save him, while the Judæans had determined upon putting him to death, is unhistorical and merely legendary. When Jesus was scoffed at and obliged to wear the crown of thorns in ironical allusion to the Messianic and royal dignity he had assumed, it was not the Judæans who inflicted those indignities upon him, but the Roman soldiers, who sought through him to deride the Judæan nation. Among the Judæans who had condemned him there was, on the contrary, so little of personal hatred that he was treated exactly like any other criminal, and was given the cup of wine and frankincense to render him insensible to the pains of death. That Jesus was scourged 165
before his execution proves that he was treated according to the Roman penal laws; for by the Judæan code no one sentenced to death could suffer flagellation. It was consequently the Roman lictors who maliciously scourged with fagots or ropes the self-styled King of the Judæans. They also caused Jesus (by the order of Pilate) to be nailed to the cross, and to suffer the shameful death awarded by the law of Rome. For after the verdict of death was pronounced by the Roman authorities, the condemned prisoner belonged no more to his own nation, but to the Roman state. It was not the Synhedrion but Pilate that gave the order for the execution of one who was

regarded as a State criminal and a cause of disturbance and agitation. The Christian authorities state that Jesus was nailed on the cross at nine o'clock in the morning, and that he expired at three o'clock in the afternoon. His last words were taken from a psalm, and spoken in the Aramaic tongue—"God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" (Eli, eli, lama shebaktani.) The Roman soldiers placed in mockery the following inscription upon the cross: "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Judæans." The cross had been erected and the body was probably buried outside the town, on a spot which was the graveyard of condemned criminals. It was called Golgotha, the place of skulls. Such was the end of the man who had devoted himself to the improvement of the most neglected, miserable, and abandoned members of his people, and who, perhaps, fell a victim to a misunderstanding. How great was the woe caused by that one execution! How many deaths and sufferings of every description has it not caused among the children of Israel! Millions of broken hearts and tragic fates have not yet atoned for his death. He is the only mortal of whom one can say without exaggeration that his death was more effective than his life. Golgotha, the 166
place of skulls, became to the civilized world a new Sinai. Strange, that events fraught with so vast an import should have created so little stir at the time of their occurrence at Jerusalem, that the Judæan historians, Justus of Tiberias and Josephus, who relate, to the very smallest minutiae, everything which took place under Pilate, do not mention the life and death of Jesus.

When the disciples of Jesus had somewhat recovered from the panic which came upon them at the time he was seized and executed, they re-assembled to mourn together over the death of their beloved Master. The followers of Jesus then in Jerusalem did not amount to more than one hundred and twenty, and if all who believed in him in Galilee had been numbered, they would not have exceeded five hundred. Still, the effect that Jesus produced upon the unenlightened masses must have been very powerful; for their faith in him, far from fading away like a dream, became more and more intense, their adoration of Jesus rising to the highest pitch of enthusiasm. The only stumbling-block to their belief lay in the fact that the Messiah who came to deliver Israel and bring to light the glory of the kingdom of heaven, endured a shameful death. How could the Messiah be subject to pain? A suffering Messiah staggered them considerably, and this stumbling-block had to be overcome before a perfect and joyful belief could be reposed in him. It was at that moment probably that some writer relieved his own perplexities and quelled their doubts by referring to a prophecy in Isaiah, that "He will be taken from the land of the living, and will be wounded for the sins of his people." The humble, wavering disciples of Jesus were helped over their greatest difficulty by the Pharisees, who were in the habit of explaining the new or the marvelous by interpretations of Scripture. By this means they afforded indirectly a solution and
support to Christianity, and thus belief was given to the most senseless and absurd doctrines, and 167
the incredible was made to appear certain and necessary. Without some support, however feeble, from Holy Writ, nothing new would have been received or could have kept its ground. By its help everything that happened was shown to have been inevitable. Even that Jesus should have been executed as a malefactor appeared pregnant with meaning, as it fulfilled the literal prophecy concerning the Messiah. Was it not written that he should be judged among the evil-doers? His disciples declared they had heard Jesus say that he would be persecuted even unto death. Thus his sufferings and death were evident proofs that he was the Messiah. His followers examined his life, and found in every trivial circumstance a deeper Messianic significance; even the fact that he was not born in Bethlehem, but in Nazareth, appeared to be the fulfillment of a prophecy. Thus he might therefore be called a Nazarene (Nazarite?), and thus were his followers persuaded that Jesus, the Nazarene, was Christ (the Messiah). When the faithful were satisfied on that point, it was not difficult to answer the other question which naturally offered itself—When would the promised kingdom of heaven appear, since he who was to have brought it had died on the cross? Hope replied that the Messiah would return in all his glory, with the angels of heaven, and then every one would be rewarded according to his deeds. They believed that some then alive would not taste death until they had seen the Son of Man enter his kingdom. His disciples were hourly expecting the return of Jesus, and only differed from the Judæans in so far as they thought that the Messiah had already appeared in human form and character.

This kingdom was to last a thousand years: the Sabbath year of jubilee, after the six thousand years of the world, would be founded by Jesus when he returned to the earth, bringing the
blessing of peace and perfect happiness to the faithful. This belief required the further conviction 168
that Jesus had not fallen a prey to death, but that he would rise again. It may have been the biblical story of Jonah's entombment for three days in the bowels of a fish which gave rise to the legend that Jesus after the same interval came forth from his sepulcher, which was found to be empty. Many of his disciples declared they had seen him after his death, now in one place, now in another; that they had spoken to him, had marked his wounds, and had even partaken of fish and honey with him. Nothing seemed to stagger their faith in the Messianic character of Jesus; but greatly as they venerated and glorified him, they had not yet raised him above humanity; in spite of the enthusiasm with which he inspired them, they could not look upon him as God. They regarded him only as a highly gifted man who, having obeyed the Law more completely than any other human being, had been found worthy to be the Messiah of the Lord.

They deviated in no degree from the precepts of Judaism, observing the Sabbath, the rite of circumcision, and the dietary laws, whilst they also reverenced Jerusalem and the Temple as holy places. They were, however, distinguished from the other Judæans in some peculiarities besides the belief they cherished that the Messiah had already appeared. The poverty which they willingly embraced in accordance with the teaching of Jesus was a remarkable trait in them. From this self-imposed poverty they were called Ebionites (poor), a name they either gave themselves or received from those who had not joined them. They lived together, and each new disciple was required to sell his goods and chattels and to pour the produce into the common

purse.

To this class belonged the early Christians, or Judæan Christians, who were called Nazarenes, and not, according to their origin, Essenes. Seven administrators were appointed, as was usual among the Judæans, to manage the expenditure of the community, and to provide for their common repasts. They abstained from meat, and followed the way of the Essenes, whom they also resembled in their practice of celibacy, in their disuse of oil and superfluous garments, a single one of white linen being all each possessed. It is related of James, the brother of Jesus, who, on account of his near relationship to the founder, was chosen leader of the early Christian community, and was revered as an example, that he drank no wine or intoxicating beverages, that he never ate meat, allowed no scissors to touch his hair, wore no woolen material, and had only one linen garment. He lived strictly according to the Law, and was indignant when the Christians allowed themselves to transgress it. Next to him at the head of the community of Ebionites stood Simon Kephas or Petrus, the son of Jonas, and John the son of Zebedee, who became the pillars of Christianity. Simon Peter was the most energetic of all the disciples of Jesus, and was zealous in his endeavors to enroll new followers under the banner of Christianity. In spite of the energy he thus displayed, he is described as being of a vacillating character. The Christian chronicles state that when Jesus was seized and imprisoned he denied him three times, and was called by his master "him of little faith." He averred, with the other disciples, that they had received from Jesus the mission of preaching to the lost children of the house of Israel the doctrine of the brotherhood of man and the community of goods; like Jesus and John the Baptist, they were also to announce the approaching kingdom of heaven. Christianity, only just born, went instantly forth upon her career of conquest and proselytism. The disciples asserted that 169
Jesus had imparted to them the power of healing the sick, of awakening the dead, and of casting 170
out evil spirits. With them the practice of exorcism became common, and thus the belief in the power of Satan and demons, brought from Galilee, first took form and root. In Judaism itself the belief in demons was of a harmless nature, without any religious significance. Christianity first raised it to be an article of faith, to which hecatombs of human beings were sacrificed. The early Christians used, or rather misused, the name of Jesus for purposes of incantation. All those who believed in Jesus boasted that it was given to them to drive away evil spirits, to charm snakes, to cure the sick by the laying on of their hands, and to partake of deadly poisons without injury to themselves. Exorcism became by degrees a constant practice among Christians; the reception of a new member was preceded by exorcism, as though the novice had till then been possessed by the devil. It was, therefore, not surprising that the Christians should have been looked upon by Judæans and heathens as conjurors and magicians. In the first century, however, Christians attracted but little attention in Judæan circles, escaping observation on account of the humble class to which they belonged. They formed a sect of their own, and were classed with the Essenes, to whom, in many points, they bore so great a resemblance. They might probably have dwindled away altogether had it not been for one who appeared later in their midst, who gave publicity to the sect, and raised it to such a pinnacle of fame that it became a ruling power in the world.

An evil star seems to have shone over the Judæan people during the hundred years which had elapsed since the civil wars under the last Hasmonæans, which had subjected Judæa to Rome. Every new event appeared to bring with it some new misfortune. The comforting proverb of Ecclesiastes, that there is nothing new under the sun, in this instance proved false. The Messianic vision which had indistinctly floated in the minds of the people, but which had now 171
taken a tangible form, was certainly something new; and this novel apparition, with its mask of death, was to inflict new and painful wounds upon the nation.

Christianity, which came from Nazareth, was really an offshoot of the sect of the Essenes, and inherited the aversion of that sect for the Pharisaic laws by which the life of the people was regulated. This aversion rose to hatred in the followers, stimulated by grief at the death of their founder. Pontius Pilate had greatly contributed to increasing of the enmity of the Christians against their own flesh and blood. He it was who added mockery and scorn to the punishment of death; he had bound their Messiah to the cross like the most abject slave, and in derision of his assumed royalty had placed the crown of thorns on his head. The picture of Jesus nailed to the cross, crowned with thorns, the blood streaming from his wounds, was ever present to his followers, filling their hearts with bitter thoughts of revenge. Instead of turning their wrath against cruel Rome, they made the representatives of the Judæan people, and by degrees the whole nation, responsible for inhuman deeds. They either intentionally deceived themselves, or in time really forgot that Pilate was the murderer of their master, and placed the crime upon the heads of all the children of Israel.

At about this period the anger of Pilate was kindled against a Samaritan self-styled Messiah or prophet, who called his believers together in a village, promising to show them on Mount Gerizim the holy vessels used in the time of Moses. The Governor, who looked with suspicion upon every gathering of the people, and regarded every exciting incident as fraught with possible rebellion against the Roman Empire, led his troops against the Samaritans, and ordered the ringleaders, who had been caught in their flight, to be cruelly executed. Judæans and Samaritans jointly 172
denounced his barbarity to Vitellius, the Governor of Syria, and Pilate was summoned to Rome to justify himself. The degree of favor shown to the Judæans by Tiberius after the fall of Sejanus, explains the otherwise surprising leniency evinced towards the Judæan nation at that time. The Judæans had found an advocate at court in Antonia, the sister-in-law of Tiberius. The latter, who was the friend of a patriotic prince of the house of Herod, had revealed to Tiberius the plot framed against him by Sejanus, and in grateful recognition Tiberius repealed the act of outlawry against the Judæans. Vitellius, the Governor of Syria, was graciously inclined towards the

Judæans, and not only inquired into their complaints, but befriended them in every way, showing a degree of indulgence and forbearance most unusual in a Roman, in those subjects on which they were peculiarly sensitive. When, on the occasion of the Feast of Passover, Vitellius repaired to Jerusalem in order to make himself acquainted with all that was going on there, he sought to lighten as much as possible the Roman yoke. He remitted the tax on the fruits of the market, and as the capital was mainly dependent upon that market for its requirements, a heavy burden was thus removed from the inhabitants of Jerusalem. He further withdrew the pontifical robes from behind the lock and bolts of the fort of Antonia, and gave them over to the care of the College of Priests, who kept them for some time. The right of appointing the High Priest was considered too important to the interests of Rome to be relinquished, and Vitellius himself made use of it to install Jonathan, the son of Anan, in the place of Joseph Caiaphas. Caiaphas had acted in concert with Pilate during all the time he had governed, and from his good understanding with the latter had doubtless become distasteful to the Judæan nation. The favor granted to the Judæans by 173
Vitellius was in accordance with the wishes of the Emperor, who commanded him to aid the nation with all the available Roman forces in an unjust cause—that of Herod Antipas against King Aretas. Antipas, who was married to the daughter of Aretas, king of the Nabathæans, had nevertheless fallen in love with Herodias, the wife of his half-brother Herod, who, disinherited by his father Herod I., led a private life, probably in Cæsarea. During a journey to Rome, Antipas became acquainted with Herodias, who, doubtless repining at her obscure position, abandoned her husband, and after the birth of a daughter contracted an illegal marriage with his brother. Antipas' first wife, justly exasperated at his shameless infidelity, had fled to her father Aretas, and urged him to make war upon her faithless husband. Antipas suffered a great defeat, which was no sooner made known to the Emperor than he gave Vitellius orders instantly to undertake his defense against the king of the Nabathæans. As Vitellius was about to conduct two legions from Ptolemais through Judæa, the people took offense at the pictures of the Emperor which the soldiers bore on their standards, and which were to have been carried to Jerusalem, but out of regard to the scruples of the Judæans, Vitellius, instead of leading his army through Judæa, conveyed it along the farther side of the Jordan. Vitellius himself was received with the greatest favor in Jerusalem, and offered sacrifices in the Temple. Of all the Roman governors he was the one who had shown most kindness to the Judæans.

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CHAPTER VII.

AGRIPPA I. HEROD II.

Character of Agrippa—Envy of the Alexandrian Greeks towards the Judæans—Anti-Judæan Literature—Apion—Measures against the Judæans in Alexandria—Flaccus—Judæan Embassy to Rome—Philo—Caligula's Decision against the Judæan Embassy—Caligula orders his Statue to be placed in the Temple—The Death of Caligula relieves the Judæans—Agrippa's Advance under Claudius—His Reign—Gamaliel the Elder and his Administration—Death of Agrippa—Herod II—The False Messiah, Theudas—Death of Herod II.

37–49 C. E.

After the murder of the Roman Emperor Tiberius, when the Senate indulged for the moment in the sweet dream of regaining its liberty, Rome could have had no forebodings that an enemy was born to her in Jerusalem, in the half-fledged Christian community, which would in time to come displace her authority, trample upon her gods, shatter her power, and bring about a gradual decadence, ending in complete decay. An idea, conceived and brought forth by one of Judæan birth and developed by a despised class of society, was to tread the power and glory of Rome in the dust. The third Roman Emperor, Caius Caligula Germanicus, was himself instrumental in delivering up to national contempt the Roman deities, in a sense the corner-stone of the Roman Empire. The throne of the Cæsars had been alternately in the power of men actuated by cruel cowardice and strange frenzy. None of the nations tributary to Rome suffered more deeply from this continual change in her masters than did the Judæans. Every change in the great offices of state affected Judæa, at times favorably, but more often unfavorably. The first years of Caligula's reign appeared to be auspicious for Judæa. Caligula specially distinguished 175
one of the Judæan princes, Agrippa, with marks of his favor, thus holding out the prospect of a milder rule. But it was soon evident that this kindness, this good-will and favor, were but momentary caprices, to be followed by others of a far different and of a terrible character, which threw the Judæans of the Roman Empire into a state of fear and terror.

Agrippa (born 10 B. C. E., died 44 C. E.) was the son of the prince Aristobulus who had been assassinated by Herod, and grandson of the Hasmonæan princess Mariamne; thus in his veins ran the blood of the Hasmonæans and Idumæans, and these two hostile elements appeared to fight for the mastery over his actions, until at last the nobler was victorious. Educated in Rome, in the companionship of Drusus, the son of Tiberius, the Herodian element in Agrippa was the first to develop. As a Roman courtier, intent upon purchasing Roman favor, he dissipated his fortune and fell into debt. Forced to quit Rome for Judæa, after the death of his friend Drusus, he was reduced to such distress that he, who was accustomed to live with the Cæsars, had to hide in a remote part of Idumæa. It was then that he contemplated suicide. But his high-spirited wife, Cypros, who was resolved to save him from despair, appealed to his sister Herodias, Princess of Galilee, for instant help. And it was through the influence of Antipas, the husband of this princess, that Agrippa was appointed overseer of the markets of Tiberias. Impatient of this dependent condition, he suddenly resigned this office and became courtier to Flaccus, governor of Syria. From this very doubtful position he was driven by the jealousy of his own brother Aristobulus. Seemingly abandoned by all his friends, Agrippa determined upon once more trying his fortune in Rome. The richest and most distinguished Judæans of the Alexandrian community, the Alabarch, Alexander Lysimachus, with whom he had taken refuge, provided him with the 176
necessary means for his journey. This noblest Judæan of his age, guardian of the property of the young Antonia, the daughter of the triumvir, had evidently rendered such services to the imperial family that he had been adopted into it, and was allowed to add their names to his own—Tiberius Julius Alexander, son of Lysimachus. He possessed, without doubt, the fine Greek culture of his age, for his brother Philo was a man of the most exquisite taste in Greek letters. But none the less did the Alabarch Alexander cling warmly to his people and to his Temple. Resolved to save Agrippa from ruin, but distrustful of his extravagant character, he insisted that his wife Cypros should become hostage for him.

A new life of adventure now commenced in Rome for Agrippa. He was met on the Isle of Capri by the Emperor Tiberius, who, in remembrance of Agrippa's close connection with the son he had lost, received him most kindly. But upon hearing of the enormous sum of money that Agrippa still owed to the Roman treasury, Tiberius allowed him to fall into disgrace. He was saved, however, by his patroness Antonia, the sister-in-law of the emperor, who maintained a friendly remembrance of Agrippa's mother Berenice. By her mediation he was raised to new honors, and became the trusted friend of the heir to the throne, Caius Caligula. But, as though Agrippa were destined to be the toy of every caprice of fortune, he was soon torn from his intercourse with the future emperor and thrown into prison. In order to flatter Caligula, Agrippa once expressed the wish, "Would that Tiberius would soon expire and leave his throne to one worthier of it." This was repeated by a slave to the emperor, and Agrippa expiated his heedlessness by an imprisonment of six months, from which the death of Tiberius at last set him free (37).

With the accession to the throne of his friend and patron, Caligula, his star rose upon the 177
horizon. When the young emperor opened the prison-door to Agrippa he presented him with a golden chain, in exchange for the iron one that he had been forced to wear on his account, and placed the royal diadem upon his head, giving him the principality of Philip, that had fallen to the Empire of Rome. By decree of the Roman Senate he also received the title of Prætor. So devoted

was Caligula to Agrippa that, during the first year of his reign, the Roman emperor would not hear of his quitting Rome, and when at length Agrippa was permitted to take possession of his own kingdom, he had to give his solemn promise that he would soon return to his imperial friend.

When Agrippa made his entry into Judæa as monarch and favorite of the Roman emperor, poor and deeply in debt though he had been when he left it, his wonderful change of fortune excited the envy of his sister Herodias. Stung by ambition, she implored of her husband also to repair to Rome and to obtain from the generous young emperor at least another kingdom. Once more the painful want of family affection, common to all the Herodians, was brought to light in all its baseness. Alarmed that Antipas might succeed in winning Caligula's favor, or indignant at the envious feelings betrayed by his sister, Agrippa accused Antipas before the emperor of treachery to the Roman Empire. The unfortunate Antipas was instantly deprived of his principality and banished to Lyons, whither he was followed by his faithful and true-hearted wife. Herod's last son, Herod Antipas, and his granddaughter, Herodias, died in exile. Agrippa, by imperial favor, became the heir of his brother-in-law, and the provinces of Galilee and Peræa were added to his other possessions.

178 The favor evinced by Caligula towards Agrippa, which might naturally be extended to the Judæan people, awakened the envy of the heathens, and brought the hatred of the Alexandrian Greeks to a crisis. Indeed, the whole of the Roman Empire harbored secret and public enemies of the Judæans. Hatred of their race and of their creed was intensified by a lurking fear that this despised yet proud nation might one day attain to supreme power. But the hostile feeling against the Judæans reached its climax amongst the restless, sarcastic and pleasure-loving Greek inhabitants of Alexandria. They looked unfavorably upon the industry and prosperity of their Judæan neighbors, by whom they were surpassed in both these respects, and whom they did not excel even in artistic and philosophical attainments. These feelings of hatred dated from the time when the Egyptian queen entrusted Judæan generals with the management of the foreign affairs of her country, and they increased in intensity when the Roman emperors placed more confidence in the reliable Judæans than in the frivolous Greeks. Slanderous writers nourished this hatred, and in their endeavors to throw contempt upon the Judæans they falsified the history of which the Judæans were justly proud.

The Stoic philosopher Posidonius circulated false legends about the origin and the nature of the divine worship of the Judæans, which legends had been originally invented by the courtiers of Antiochus Epiphanes. The disgraceful story of the worship of an ass in the Temple of Jerusalem, besides other tales as untrue and absurd, added to the assertion that the Judæans hated all Gentiles, found ready belief in a younger, contemporary writer, Apollonius Malo, with whom Posidonius had become acquainted in the island of Rhodes, and by whom they were widely circulated. Malo gave a new account of the history of the Judæan exodus, which he declared was
179 occasioned by some enormity on the part of the Judæans; he described Moses as a criminal, and the Mosaic Law as containing the most abominable precepts. He declared that the Judæans were atheists, that they hated mankind in general; he accused them of alternate acts of cowardice and temerity, and maintained that they were the most uncultured people amongst the barbarians, and could not lay claim to the invention of any one thing which had benefited humanity. It was from these two Rhodian authors that the spiteful and venom-tongued Cicero culled his unworthy attack upon the Judæan race and the Judæan Law. In this respect he differed from Julius Cæsar, who, in spite of his associations with Posidonius and Malo, was entirely free from all prejudice against the Judæans.

The Alexandrian Greeks devoured these calumnies with avidity, exaggerated them, and gave them still wider circulation. Only three Greek authors mentioned the Judæans favorably—Alexander Polyhistor, Nicolaus of Damascus, the confidant of Herod, and, lastly, Strabo, the most remarkable geographer of ancient times, who devoted a fine passage in his geographical and historical work to Judaism. Although he mentions the Judæans as having originated from Egypt, he does not repeat the legend that their expulsion was occasioned by some fault of their own. Far otherwise he explains the Exodus, affirming that the Egyptian mode of life, with its unworthy idolatry, had driven Moses and his followers from the shores of the Nile. He writes in praise of the Mosaic teaching relative to the unity of God, as opposed to the Egyptian plurality of deities, and of the spiritual, imageless worship of the Judæans in contrast to the animal worship of the Egyptians, and to the investing of the divinity with a human form among the Greeks. "How can any sensible man," he exclaims, "dare make an image of the Heavenly King?" Widely opposed to 180
the calumniators of Judaism, Strabo teaches that the Mosaic Law was the great mainstay of righteousness, for it holds out the divine blessing to all those whose lives are pure. For some time after the death of their great lawgiver, Strabo maintains that the Judæans acted in conformity with the Law, doing right and fearing God. Of the sanctuary in Jerusalem he speaks with veneration, for, although the Judæan kings were often faithless to the Law of Moses and to their subjects, yet the capital of the Judæans was invested with its own dignity, and the people, far from looking upon it as the seat of despotism, revered and honored it as the Temple of God.

One author exceeded all the other hostile writers in the outrageous nature of his calumnies; this was the Egyptian Apion, who was filled with burning envy at the prosperous condition of the Judæans. He gave a new and exaggerated account of all the old stories of his predecessors, and gained the ear of the credulous multitude by the readiness and fluency of his pen. Apion was one of those charlatans whose conduct is based on the assumption that the world wishes to be deceived, and therefore it shall be deceived. As expounder of the Homeric songs, he traveled through Greece and Asia Minor, and invented legends so flattering to the early Greeks that he became the hero of their descendants. He declared that he had witnessed most things of which

he wrote, or that he had been instructed in them by the most reliable people; and even affirmed that Homer's shade had appeared to him, and had divulged which Grecian town had given birth to the oldest of Greek bards, but that he dared not publish that secret. On account of his intense vanity he was called the trumpet of his own fame, for he assured the Alexandrians that they were fortunate in being able to claim him as a citizen. It is not astonishing that so unscrupulous a man should have made use of the hatred they bore to the Judæans to do the latter all the injury in his power. 181

But the hostility of the Alexandrians, based on envy and religious and racial antipathy, was suppressed under the reign of Augustus and Tiberius, when the imperial governors of Egypt sternly reprimanded all those who might have become disturbers of the peace. Affairs changed, however, when Caligula came to the throne, for the Alexandrians were then aware that the governor Flaccus, who had been a friend of Tiberius, was unfavorably looked upon by his successor, who was ready to lend a willing ear to any accusation against him. Flaccus, afraid of drawing the attention of the revengeful emperor upon himself, was cowed into submission by the Alexandrians, and became a mere tool in their hands. At the news of Agrippa's accession to the throne, they were filled with burning envy, and the delight of the Alexandrian Judæans, with whom Agrippa came into contact through the Alabarch Alexander, only incensed them still more and roused them to action.

Two most abject beings were the originators and leaders of this anti-Judæan demonstration; a venal clerk of the court of justice, Isidorus, who was called by the popular wits, the Pen of Blood, because his pettifoggery had robbed many of their life, and Lampo, one of those unprincipled profligates that are brought forth by a burning climate and an immoral city. These two agitators ruled, on the one hand, the weak and helpless governor, and, on the other, they led the dregs of the people, who were prepared to give vent to their feelings of hatred towards the Judæans upon a sign from their leaders.

Unfortunately, Agrippa, whose change of fortune had been an offense in the eyes of the Alexandrians, touched at their capital upon his return from Rome to Judæa (July, 38), and his presence roused the enemies of the Judæans to fresh conspiracies. These began with a farce, but ended for the Judæans in terrible earnest. At first Agrippa and his race were insultingly jeered at. A harmless fool, Carabas, was tricked out in a crown of papyrus and a cloak of plaited rushes; a whip was given him for a scepter, and he was placed on an eminence for a throne, where he was saluted by all passers-by as Marin (which, in the Chaldaic tongue, denotes "our master"). This was followed by the excitable mob's rushing at the dawn of the next day into the synagogues, carrying with them busts of the emperor, with the pretext of dedicating these places of worship to Caligula. In addition to this, at the importunate instance of the conspirators, the governor, Flaccus, was induced to withdraw from the Judæan inhabitants of Alexandria what they had held so gratefully from the first emperors—the right of citizenship. This was a terrible blow to the Judæans of Alexandria, proud as they were of their privileges, and justly entitled to the credit of having enriched this metropolis by their learning, their wealth, their love of art and their spirit of commerce equally with the Greeks. They were cruelly driven out of the principal parts of the city of Alexandria, and were forced to congregate in the Delta, or harbor of the town. The mob, greedy for spoil, dashed into the deserted houses and work-shops, and plundered, destroyed and annihilated what had been gathered together by the industry of centuries. 182

After committing these acts of depredation, the infuriated Alexandrians surrounded the Delta, under the idea that the unfortunate Judæans would be driven to open resistance by the pangs of hunger or by the suffocating heat they were enduring in their close confinement. When at last the scarcity of provisions impelled some of the besieged to venture out of their miserable quarters, they were cruelly ill-treated by the enemy, tortured, and either burnt alive or crucified. This state of things lasted for a month. The governor went so far as to arrest thirty-eight members of the Great Council, to throw them into prison and publicly to scourge them. Even the female sex was not spared. If any maidens or women crossed the enemy's path they were offered pig's flesh as food, and upon their refusing to eat it they were cruelly tortured. Not satisfied with all these barbarities, Flaccus ordered his soldiers to search the houses of the Judæans for any weapons that might be concealed there, and they were told to leave not even the chambers of modest maidens unsearched. This reign of terror continued until the middle of September. At that time an imperial envoy appeared to depose Flaccus and to summon him to Rome, not on account of his abominable conduct towards the Judæans, but because he was hated by the emperor. His sentence was exile and he was eventually killed. 183

The emperor alone could have settled the vexed question as to whether the Judæans had the right of equal citizenship with the Greeks in Alexandria; but he was then in Germany or in Gaul celebrating childish triumphs, or in Britain gathering shells on the seashore. When he returned to Rome (August, 40) with the absurd idea of allowing himself to be worshiped as a god, and of raising temples and statues to his own honor, the heathen Greeks justly imagined that their cause against the Judæans was won. They restored the imperial statues in the Alexandrian synagogues, convinced that in the face of so great a sacrilege the Judæans would rebel and thereby arouse the emperor's wrath. This was actually the cause of a fresh disturbance, for the new governor of Alexandria took part against the Judæans, courting in this way the imperial favor. He insisted that the unhappy people should show divine honors to the images of the emperor, and when they refused on the ground that such an act was contrary to their Law, he forbade their observance of the Sabbath day. In the following words he addressed the most distinguished of their race: "How would it be if you were suddenly overwhelmed by a host of enemies, or by a tremendous inundation, or by a raging fire; if famine, pestilence or an earthquake were to overtake you upon 184

the Sabbath day? Would you sit idly in your synagogues, reading the Law and expounding difficult passages? Would you not rather think of the safety of parents and children, of your property and possessions, would you not fight for your lives? Now behold, if you do not obey my commands, I will be all that to you, the invasion of the enemy, the terrible inundation, the raging fire, famine, pestilence, earthquake, the visible embodiment of relentless fate." But neither the rich nor the poor allowed themselves to be coerced by these words; they remained true to their faith, and prepared to undergo any penalties that might be inflicted upon them. Some few appear to have embraced paganism out of fear or from worldly motives. The Judæan philosopher, Philo, gives some account of the renegades of his time and his community, whom he designates as frivolous, immoral, and utterly unworthy. Amongst them may be mentioned the son of the Alabarch Alexander, Tiberius Julius Alexander, who forsook Judaism, and was consequently raised to high honors in the Roman State.

Meanwhile, the Judæans determined upon pleading their cause before the emperor. Three men (who were specially adapted for their mission) were selected to be sent as envoys to Rome. One of these, the Judæan philosopher, Philo, was so far distinguished through birth, social standing, profound culture, and brilliant eloquence, that no better pleader for the cause of justice could have been found. Through the medium of his powerful writings Philo has so largely influenced not only his contemporaries but also those who came after him, both within and 185
without the Judæan community, that the scanty accounts of his life must not be passed over. As brother of the Alabarch Alexander, Philo belonged to the most distinguished and wealthy family of the Alexandrian community. He received in his youth the usual education which all well-born parents held as necessary for their sons. Possessed of unquenchable love for learning, he obtained complete mastery over his studies. His taste for metaphysical research was developed at a very early age, and he devoted himself to it untiringly for a time, taking delight in that alone. He affirms enthusiastically that he had no desire for honors, wealth, or material pleasures, so long as he could revel in ethereal realms, in company with the heavenly bodies. He belonged to the few elect who do not creep on the earth's surface, but who free themselves from all earthly bondage in the sublime flight of thought. He rejoiced in being exempt from cares and occupations. But though he gloried in philosophy, Judaism, which he termed the "true wisdom," was still dearer to his heart. When he gathered the beautiful blossoms of Grecian learning, it was to twine them into a garland with which to adorn Judaism. Philo had been leading the retired life of a student for some time, when, as he bitterly remarked, an event drew him unmercifully into the whirlpool of political troubles: the miserable condition of his people had probably disturbed his contemplative life. In later years he looked back with longing upon his former occupation, and lamented that practical life had obscured his vision for intellectual things, and had materially interfered with his range of thought; but he consoled himself with the knowledge that in undisturbed hours he was still able to lift his mind to noble objects. Philo's philosophical researches not only furnished food for his intellect, but helped to inspire him with true nobility of 186
character, developing in him a nature that regarded all acts of human folly, vulgarity, and vice as so many enigmas which he could not solve.

His wife, who was justly proud of him, emulated him in the simplicity of her life. When asked by some of her brilliantly attired friends why she, who was so rich, should disdain to wear gold ornaments, she is said to have answered, "The virtue of the husband is adornment enough for the wife." Philo's contemporaries were never weary of praising his style; so forcibly indeed did it remind them of Plato's beautiful diction that they would observe, "Plato writes like Philo, or Philo like Plato." Philo's principal aim was to harmonize the spirit of Judaism with that of the philosophy of the age, or, more rightly speaking, to show that Judaism is the truest philosophy. And this was not merely to be an intellectual exercise, but to him it was a sacred mission. He was so completely absorbed in these ideas that, as he relates of himself, he often fell into trances, when he fancied that revelations were vouchsafed to him which he could not have grasped at ordinary times.

This was the man who was to present himself before the emperor, as the representative of the Alexandrian Judæan community. The heathen Alexandrians also sent a deputation, headed by Apion, to which also belonged the venom-tongued Isidorus. Not only were the envoys concerned with the privileges of the community they represented, but they were pledged to raise their voices against the cruel persecution of their race. For the first time in history were Judaism and Paganism confronted in the lists, each of them being represented by men of Greek culture and learning. Had the two forms of faith and civilization been judged by their exponents, the decision for Judaism would not have been doubtful. Philo, dignified and earnest, seemed in himself to 187
embody faithful search after truth, and the purest moral idealism; whilst Apion, frivolous and sarcastic, was the very incarnation of smooth-tongued vainglory, and bore the stamp of the vanity and self-conceit of fallen Greece. But the outcome of this contest remains doubtful. Caligula was too passionate a partisan to be a just umpire. He hated the Judæans because they would not recognize and worship him as their deity, and his hatred was fanned by two contemptible creatures, whom he had dragged from the mire and had attached to himself—the Egyptian Helicon and Apelles of Ascalon.

The Judæan envoys were hardly permitted to speak when they were admitted to the imperial presence, and Caligula's first word was one of jarring reproof: "So you are the despisers of God, who will not recognize me as the deity, but who prefer worshiping a nameless one, whilst all my other subjects have accepted me as their god." The Judæan envoys declared that they had offered up three successive offerings in honor of Caligula: the first upon his accession to the throne; the second upon his recovery from a severe illness; and the third after his so-called victory over the Teutons. "That may be," answered Caligula, "but the offerings were made *for me* and *not to me*;

for such I do not care. And how is it," he continued, awakening the ribald merriment of his pagan audience, "how is it that you do not eat pig's flesh, and upon what grounds do you hold your right of equality with the Alexandrians?" Without waiting for a reply, he turned his attention to something else. Later on when he dismissed the Judæan envoys, he remarked that they seemed less wicked than stupid in not being willing to acknowledge his divinity.

Whilst the unfortunate ambassadors were vainly seeking to gain ground with the emperor, they were suddenly overwhelmed with tidings that struck terror into their hearts. One of their 188
own race burst into their presence, exclaiming, amidst uncontrollable sobs, that the Temple in the holy city had been profaned by Caligula. For not only were the imperial statues to be erected in the synagogues, but also in the Temple of Jerusalem. The governor of Syria, Petronius, had received orders to enter Judæa with his legions and to turn the Sanctuary into a pagan temple. It is easy to conceive the mortal anguish of the Judæan nation when these orders became known to them. On the eve of the Feast of Tabernacles a messenger appeared in Jerusalem, who converted this feast of rejoicing into mourning. Petronius and his legions were at Accho, on the outskirts of Jerusalem, but, as the rainy season was at hand, and as obstinate resistance was expected, the Roman commander resolved to await the spring before commencing active operations. Thousands of Judæans hastened to appear before Petronius, declaring that they would rather suffer the penalty of death than allow their Temple to be desecrated. Petronius, perplexed as to how he should carry out this mad scheme of Caligula's, consulted the members of the Royal Council, entreating of them to influence the people in his favor. But the Judæan aristocracy, and even Agrippa's own brother Aristobulus, held with the people. Petronius then sent a true statement of the case to the emperor, hoping that he might be induced to abandon his scheme. Meanwhile he pacified the people by telling them that nothing could be effected until fresh edicts arrived from Rome, and begged of them to return to their agricultural duties, and thus to avert the possibility of a year of famine.

But before Petronius' letter was in the hands of the emperor, Caligula's intentions had been frustrated by Agrippa. The Judæan king had acquired so extraordinary an influence over Caligula 189
that the Romans called him and Antiochus of Commagene, his teachers in tyranny. Agrippa, who was living at that time near the person of the emperor, could not have been indifferent to the desecration of the Temple, but he was too accomplished a courtier openly to oppose this imperial caprice. On the contrary, he seemed dead to the cry of anguish that arose from his people, and only occupied in preparing, with the most lavish expenditure, a magnificent feast for the emperor and his favorites. But under this garb of indifference he was really working for his people's cause. Caligula, flattered by the attentions that were lavished upon him, bade Agrippa demand a boon, which should be instantly granted. His astonishment was indeed boundless when the Judæan monarch begged for the repeal of the imperial edict concerning images. He had little thought that his refined courtier would prove so unselfish a man, so pious, and so thoroughly independent of the will of the emperor. Cunning as he was, Caligula was helplessly entrapped, for he could not retract his pledged word. Thus he was forced to write to Petronius annulling his former decree. Meanwhile he received Petronius' letter, in which the governor detailed what difficulties he would encounter, were he to attempt to execute the orders of his master. More than this was not required to lash Caligula's passionate and excitable nature into a fury. A new and stringent order was given to proceed with the introduction of the statues into the Temple of Jerusalem. But before this order, terrible to the Judæans and full of danger to Petronius himself, had arrived in Jerusalem, it was announced that the insane Caligula had met with his death at the hands of the Prætorian Tribune Chereas (24 Jan., 41). These tidings came to Jerusalem on the 22d of Shebat (March, 41), and the day was afterwards celebrated as one of great rejoicing.

Caligula's successor upon the throne of the Cæsars was Claudius, a learned pedant and a fool. 190
He owed his crown to chance, and to the diplomacy of King Agrippa, who had induced the reluctant Senate to accept the choice of the Prætorians. Rome must indeed have fallen low when a somewhat insignificant Judæan prince was allowed to speak in the Senate House, and, in some measure, to have influence in the choice of her ruler. Claudius was not ungrateful to his ally; he lauded him before the assembled Senate, raised him to the dignity of consul, and made him king of all Palestine, for Judæa and Samaria were incorporated with the monarchy.

As a remembrance of these events, the emperor ordered an inscription to be engraved on tablets of bronze, in pedantic imitation of the classical age, and coins to be struck, bearing on one side two clasped hands, with these words, "Friendship and comradeship of King Agrippa with the Senate and the Roman people." On the other side was the emperor between two figures, and the inscription: "King Agrippa, friend of the emperor." The kingdom of Judæa had thus recovered its full extent; indeed, it had acquired even a greater area than it possessed formerly under the Hasmonæans and Herod I.

Herod II., brother and son-in-law of King Agrippa, received from Claudius the rank of Prætor, and was made prince of Chalcis, in Lebanon. The Alexandrian Judæans greatly benefited by the new order of things which was brought about in the vast Roman Empire by the death of Caligula. The emperor Claudius freed the Alabarch Alexander, with whom he was on friendly terms, from the imprisonment into which his predecessor had thrown him, and settled the disputes of the Alexandrians in favor of the Judæans. Caligula's prejudice against that unfortunate community had developed their independence, and their strength was far from being broken. Their rights 191
and privileges were fully re-established by an edict of the new emperor, and they were placed on an equal footing with the Greek inhabitants of Egypt. The dignity of the Alabarch was restored by the emperor, and this was most important to the Judæans, for it assured them of the leadership of one of their own race, and made them independent of the Roman officials. It was during this

reign that Philo gave the wealth of his learning to a wide circle of readers, and was instrumental in bringing Judæan-Greek culture to its zenith. Claudius extended his goodwill to the Judæans of the entire Roman Empire, granting them complete religious freedom, and protecting them from the interference of the pagans.

When Agrippa, laden with honors, left Rome for Judæa to take possession of his kingdom, his subjects remarked that some great change was manifest in him, and that the stirring revolution in Rome, by which a headstrong emperor had been dethroned in favor of a weak one, had deeply impressed their own monarch. The frivolous Agrippa returned an earnest-minded man; the courtier had given place to the patriot; the pleasure-loving prince to the conscientious monarch, who was fully aware of what he owed his nation. The Herodian nature had, in fact, been entirely subdued by the Hasmonæan. For the last time, Judæa enjoyed under his reign a short span of undisturbed happiness; and his subjects, won by his generous affection, which even risked forfeiting the good will of Rome in their cause, repaid him with untiring devotion, the bitterest enemies of his scepter becoming his ardent supporters. Historians do not weary of praising Agrippa's loving adherence to Judaism; it seemed as if he were endeavoring to rebuild what had been cast down by Herod. He mixed freely with the people when they carried the first fruits into 192
the Temple, and bore his own offering of fruit or grain to the Sanctuary. He re-established the old law that obliged the king to read the book of Deuteronomy in the Court of the Temple at the close of each year of release. Facing the congregation, Agrippa performed this act for the first time in the autumn of the year 42, and when he came to the verse, "From amongst your brethren shall you choose a king," he burst into a passion of tears, for he was painfully aware of his Idumæan descent, and knew that he was unworthy of being a king of Judæa. But the assembled multitude, and even the Pharisees, exclaimed with enthusiasm: "Thou art our brother; thou art our brother!"

Agrippa's careful government made itself felt throughout the entire community. Without doubt the Synhedrion, under the presidency of Gamaliel I. (ha-Zaken, the elder), the worthy grandson of Hillel, was permitted to take the management of home affairs into its own hands. The presidency acquired greater importance under Gamaliel than it had enjoyed before; for the Synhedrion, modeled upon the political constitution of the country, partook somewhat of a monarchical character. The consent of the president was required for the interpolation of a leap year, and all letters or mandates addressed to near or distant communities were sent in his name. The formulæ of these letters, which have in some instances been handed down to us, are extremely interesting, both in contents and form, for they prove that all Judæan communities, as well as their representatives, acknowledged the supreme authority of the Synhedrion. Gamaliel would address a foreign community through the pen of his accomplished secretary, Jochanan, in these terms: "To our brethren in Upper and Lower Galilee, greeting: We make known to you that the time has arrived for the ingathering of the tithes of your olive yards." "To our brethren, the exiles in Babylon, Media, Greece (Ionia), and to all other exiles, greeting: We make known to you 193
that as in this season the lambs are still very small, and the doves have not yet their full-grown wings, the spring being very backward this season, it pleases me and my colleagues to prolong the year by thirty days."

Many excellent laws emanated from Gamaliel; they were principally directed against the abuses that had crept in, or were aimed at promoting the welfare of the whole community. It was the true spirit of Hillel that pervaded the laws framed by Gamaliel for the intercourse between the Judæans and the heathens. The heathen poor were permitted to glean the fields in the wake of the reapers, and were treated exactly like the Judæan poor, and the pagans were given the peace greetings upon their own festivals when they were following their own rites. The poor in all towns of mixed population received equal treatment; they were helped in time of distress, their sick were nursed, their dead were honorably treated, their sorrowing ones were comforted, whether they were pagans or Judæans. In these ordinances, so full of kindly feeling towards the heathen, the influence of Agrippa is plainly visible. Rome and Judæa had for the moment laid aside their mutual antipathy, and their intercourse was characterized by love and forbearance. The generosity of the emperor towards the Judæans went so far that he severely punished some thoughtless Greek youths in the town of Dora for attempting to introduce his statues into the synagogues. The governor Petronius was ordered to be strict in the prevention of such desecration.

Agrippa had inherited from his grandfather Herod the wish to be popular among the Greeks. As Herod had sent presents to Athens and other Greek and Ionian towns, so his grandson conferred a great benefit upon the degenerate city, once mother of the arts, a benefit which her 194
citizens did not easily forget. He also showered favors upon the inhabitants of Cæsarea, the city that Herod had raised as a rival of Jerusalem, and upon the Greeks of the seaboard Sebaste, who lived in their own special quarter. These recipients of his benefits exerted themselves to give proofs of their gratitude. The people of Sebaste raised statues to his three daughters, and struck coins in his honor, bearing the inscription—"To the great king Agrippa, friend of the emperor." The last years of this monarch's reign were happy for his nation, both within and without the kingdom of Judæa. They were like the rosy flush in the evening sky that precedes, not the dawn of day, but the blackness of night. In some respects they call to mind the reign of King Josiah in the earlier history of the nation, when the kingdom enjoyed tranquillity at home and independence abroad, with no dearth of intellectual activity.

Philo visited Jerusalem during Agrippa's reign, and was able to take part in the people's joy at the revocation of Caligula's edicts. Never before had the first fruits been carried into the Temple with greater solemnity or with more heartfelt rejoicing. To the bright strains of musical instruments the people streamed into the Sanctuary with their offerings, where they were

received by the most distinguished of their race. A psalm was then chanted, which described how the worshipers had passed from sorrow into gladness.

It was at this time that a great queen, followed by her numerous retinue, arrived in Jerusalem, she having renounced paganism for Judaism, thus filling to the brim the cup of gladness of the once persecuted but now honored race.

The happy era of Agrippa's reign was, however, not to be of long duration. Although he had gained the complete confidence of the emperor, the Roman dignitaries looked upon him with suspicion, and beheld in each step made by the Judæan king some traces of disaffection; and they 195
were not far wrong. For, however much Agrippa might coquet with Rome, he was yet determined to make Judæa capable of resisting that great power, should an encounter, which he deemed inevitable, occur between the two. His people should not be dependent upon the caprice of one individual. Thus he resolved to strengthen Jerusalem. He chose for this purpose the suburb of Bezetha, to the northeast of the city, and there he ordered powerful fortifications to be built. They were to constitute a defense for the fortress of Antonia, which lay between Bezetha and Jerusalem. He applied to Rome for the necessary permission, which was readily granted by Claudius, who could deny him nothing, and the Roman favorites who would have opposed him were silenced by gifts. The fortifications were commenced, but their completion was interrupted by the governor of Syria, Vibius Marsus. He saw through Agrippa's scheme, plainly told the emperor of the dangers that would surely menace Rome if Jerusalem could safely set her at defiance, and succeeded in wringing from Claudius the revocation of his permission. Agrippa was forced to obey, not being in the position to openly offer resistance. But at heart he determined upon weakening the Roman sway in Judæa. To attain these ends, he allied himself secretly with those princes with whom he was connected by marriage or on terms of friendly relationship, and invited them to a conference at Tiberias, under the pretext of meeting for general amusement and relaxation. There came at his call to the Galilean capital Antiochus, king of Commagene, whose son Epiphanes was affianced to Agrippa's youngest daughter; Samsigeranus, king of Emesa, whose daughter Jatape was married to Agrippa's brother Aristobulus; then Cotys, king of Armenia Minor, Polemon, prince of Cilicia, and lastly, Herod, Agrippa's brother, prince of Chalcis. 196
All these princes owed their positions to Agrippa, and were therefore liable to lose them at the accession of the next emperor or at the instigation of some influential person at the court of Claudius. But Marsus, suspicious of this understanding between so many rulers, and distrustful of the cause that brought them together, suddenly presented himself in their midst, and, with the ancient Roman bluntness, bade them return each man to his own city. So tremendous was the power of Rome, that at one word from an underling of the emperor the meeting was annulled. But the energy and perseverance of Agrippa would probably have spared Judæa from any possible humiliation, and assured her future safety, had his life been prolonged; he met, however, with an unexpected death at the age of fifty-four. Judæa's star sank with that monarch, who died, like Josiah, the last great king of the pre-exilian age, a quarter of a century before the destruction of his State.

It soon became evident that the Greek inhabitants of Palestine had but dissembled their true feelings in regard to King Agrippa. Forgetful of that monarch's benefits, the Syrians and Greeks of the city of Cæsarea, and of the seaboard of Sebaste, solaced themselves by heaping abuse upon his memory, and by offering up thank-offerings to Charon for his death. The Roman soldiery quartered in those towns made common cause with the Greeks, and carried the statues of Agrippa's daughters into brothels.

Claudius was not indifferent to the insults offered to his dead friend's memory. He was, on the contrary, anxious to raise Agrippa's son, Agrippa II., to the throne of Judæa. But in this he was opposed by his two all-powerful favorites, Pallas and Narcissus, on the plea of the prince's youth (he was seventeen years of age), and Judæa was thus allowed to sink once more into a Roman 197
province.

However, out of affection and respect to the dead king, the emperor gave the Judæan governor Cuspius Fadus a somewhat independent position in regard to the Syrian governor Vibius Marsus, who had always been hostile to Agrippa and the Judæans. It was his soldiery who had insulted the memory of the Judæan monarch, and for this cowardly action they were to be punished and exiled to Pontus. They managed, however, to extort a pardon from the emperor, and remained in Judæa, a circumstance which contributed not a little to excite the bitterest feelings of the national party, which they fully returned. They could ill control their hatred of the Judæans, stinging the latter into retaliation. Companies of freebooters under daring leaders prepared, as after the death of Herod, to free their country from the yoke of Rome. But Fadus was prepared for this rising. It was his desire to strengthen the Roman rule in Judæa, and to give it the same importance that it had had before the reign of Agrippa; and to this end he attempted to keep the selection of the high priest and the sacred robes in his own hands. But in this he met resistance both in the person of the high priest and at the hands of Agrippa's brother, Herod II.

Jerusalem was so greatly excited by these proceedings that not only did the governor Fadus appear within the city, but he was accompanied by Caius Cassius Longinus at the head of his troops. Herod and his brother Aristobulus begged for a truce of hostilities, as they were anxious to send envoys to Rome. This they were allowed to do, only on the condition that they surrendered themselves as hostages for the preservation of peace. Having willingly complied, an embassy, consisting of four men—Cornelius, Tryphon, Dorotheus, and John—started for Rome. 198
When they arrived in that city they were introduced to the emperor by the young Agrippa. Claudius, still faithful to his old affection for the Herodians, granted the Judæans full right to follow their own laws, and gave Herod permission to choose the high priest of the Sanctuary.

Taking instant advantage of this permission, Herod raised Joseph, of the house of Camith, to the high priesthood in the place of Elionai, his brother's choice. To a certain extent Herod II. may be regarded as king of Judæa, but he exerted no influence upon the course of political events. All legal power was vested in the hands of the governor; the Synhedrion lost, under the sway of his successor, the power which it had regained under Agrippa.

Fadus was confronted with a rising of another nature during his governorship. A certain Theudas appeared as prophet or messiah, and was followed by four hundred disciples, for the messianic redemption was quickly growing into a necessity for the nation. To give proof of his power he declared that he would divide the waters of the Jordan, and would lead his followers safe across the bed of the river. But when his band of disciples approached the riverside, carrying with them much of their worldly possessions, they were confronted by a troop of Fadus's cavalry soldiers, who slew some, made others prisoners, and decapitated their leader.

Shortly after these events Fadus was recalled from Jerusalem, and his place was taken by Tiberius Julius Alexander, son of the Alabarch Alexander, nephew of the Judæan philosopher Philo. Tiberius, who had espoused paganism, bore already the dignity of a Roman knight. The Emperor believed doubtless that in naming a Judæan of a distinguished house as governor over the land, he was giving proof of his friendliness to the nation. He did not imagine that their sensitive natures would be violently opposed to the fact of being governed by a renegade. The people seem indeed to have been most uncomfortable under the rule of Tiberius; the zealots lifted up their heads and excited an insurrection. They were led by Jacob and Simon and the sons of the zealot Judah, but no details of this revolt are extant. To judge by the severity of the sentence passed upon the ringleaders by the governor, it must have been of a grave character, for the two brothers suffered crucifixion, the most degrading form of capital punishment amongst the Romans. Tiberius Alexander remained only two years at his post. He was afterwards named governor of Egypt, and exercised considerable influence in the choice of the emperor.

Herod II., king of Chalcis, titular king of Judæa, died at this time (48), and with him the third generation of Herodians sank into the grave.

CHAPTER VIII.

SPREAD OF THE JUDÆAN RACE, AND OF JUDAISM.

Distribution of the Judæans in the Roman Empire and in Parthia—Relations of the various Judæan Colonies to the Synhedrion—Judæan Bandits in Naarda—Heathen Attacks upon Judaism—Counter Attacks upon Heathenism by Judæan Writers—The Judæan Sibyls—The Anti-heathen Literature—The Book of Wisdom—The Allegorists—Philo's Aims and Philosophical System—Proselytes—The Royal House of Adiabene—The Proselyte Queen Helen—The Apostle Paul—His Character—Change in his Attitude towards the Pharisees—His Activity as a Conversionist—His Treatment of the Law of Moses—The Doctrines of Peter—Judaic-Christians and Heathen-Christians.

40–49 C. E.

Round the very cradle of the Judæan race there had rung prophetic strains, telling of endless wanderings and dispersions. No other people had ever heard such alarming predictions, and they were being fulfilled in all their literal horror. There was hardly a corner in the two great predominant kingdoms of that time, the Roman and the Parthian, in which Judæans were not living, and where they had not formed themselves into a religious community. The shores of the great midland sea, and the outlets of all the principal rivers of the old world, of the Nile, the Euphrates, the Tigris, and the Danube, were peopled with Judæans. A cruel destiny seemed to be ever thrusting them away from their central home. Yet this dispersion was the work of Providence and was to prove a blessing. The continuance of the Judæan race was thus assured. Down-trodden and persecuted in one country, they fled to another, where the old faith, which became ever dearer to them, found a new home. Seeds were scattered here and there, destined to carry far and wide the knowledge of God and the teachings of pure morality. Just as the Greek 201
colonies kindled in various nations the love of art and culture, and the Roman settlements gave rise in many lands to communities governed by law, so had the far wider dispersion of the oldest civilized people contributed to overthrow the errors and combat the sensual vices of the heathen world. In spite of being thus scattered, the members of the Judæan people were not completely divided from one another; they had a common center of union in the Temple of Jerusalem and in the Synhedrion which met in the hall of hewn stone, and to these the dispersed communities clung with loving hearts. Towards them their looks were ever fondly directed, and by sending their gifts to the Temple they continued to participate, at least by their contributions, in the sacrificial worship. From the Synhedrion they received their code of laws, which they followed the more willingly as it was not forced upon them. The Synhedrion, from time to time, sent deputations to the different communities, both far and near, to acquaint them with the most important decisions.

The visits paid to the Temple by the Judæans who lived out of Palestine, strengthened the bond of unity, and these visits must have been of frequent occurrence, for they necessitated the creation of many places of worship in Jerusalem where the various foreign Judæans met for prayer. The capital contained synagogues of the Alexandrians, Cyrenians, Libertines, Elymæans, and Asiatics. One can form some idea of the vast numbers of Judæans existing at that period if one considers that Egypt alone, from the Mediterranean to the Ethiopian boundary, contained nearly a million. In the neighboring country of Cyrenaica, there were likewise many Judæans, some having been forcibly transplanted thither from Egypt, whilst others were voluntary emigrants. In many parts of Syria, and especially in its capital, Antioch, the Judæans formed a considerable portion of the population. The kings of Syria who succeeded Antiochus Epiphanes 202
had reinstated them in all their rights, of which the half-insane Epiphanes had robbed them. One of these kings had even given them some of the utensils taken from the Temple, and these were preserved in their synagogue. About ten thousand Judæans lived at Damascus, and one of their nobles was made ethnarch over them by the Nabathæan king, Aretas Philodemus, just as in Alexandria one of their most distinguished members was elected chief of the community. To the great capital of the world, Rome, the point of attraction for the ambitious and the grasping, the discontented and the visionaries, the Judæans returned in such masses after their expulsion by Tiberius, that when the Emperor Claudius determined, from some unknown cause, upon expelling them again, he was only deterred, by fear of their great numbers, from endeavoring to carry out his intention. Meanwhile he forbade their religious meetings. Towards the end of his reign, however, on account of some disturbances occasioned by a certain Christian apostle, Chrestus, they were probably, but only in part, banished from Rome.

Even greater than in Europe, Syria and Africa was the number of Judæans in the Parthian Empire. They were the descendants of former exiles, who owned large tracts of country in Mesopotamia and Babylonia. Two youths from Naarda (Nahardea on the Euphrates) called Asinaï (Chasinaï) and Anilaï (Chanilaï) founded in the vicinity of that town a robber settlement, which spread terror along the bordering countries. Just as Naarda and Nisibis became the central points for the countries of the Euphrates, there arose in every land a central nucleus from which Judæan colonies spread themselves out into neighboring lands, from Asia Minor on the one side, towards the Black Sea on the other, towards Greece and the Islands. Athens, Corinth, 203
Thessalonica, and Philippi contained Judæan communities. There is no doubt that from Rome Judæan colonies went forth westward to the south of France and Spain.

The effect produced by the Judæans upon the heathens was at first repellent. Their peculiar mode of living, their dress and their religious views, caused them to be considered as strange,

enigmatical, mysterious beings, who at one moment inspired awe, and at another derision and contempt. So thorough was the opposition between the Judæans and the heathens that it manifested itself in all their actions. Everything that was holy in the eyes of the heathens was looked upon with horror by the Judæans, whilst objects of indifference to the former were considered sacred by the latter. The withdrawal of the Judæans from the repasts enjoyed in common by their fellow-citizens, their repugnance to intermarriages with the heathens, their abhorrence of the flesh of swine, and their abstinence from warm food on the Sabbath, were considered as the outcome of a perverse nature, whilst their keeping aloof from intimate intercourse with any but their own coreligionists was deemed a proof of their enmity towards mankind in general. The serious nature of the Judæans, which prevented their participation in childish amusements and mimic combats, appeared to those around them the sign of a gloomy disposition, which could find no pleasure in the bright and the beautiful. Superficial persons, therefore, regarded Judaism only as a barbarous superstition, which instilled hatred towards the generality of men, whilst the more thoughtful and discerning were filled with admiration by the pure and spiritual worship of one God, by the affection and sympathy which bound the Judæans together, and by the virtues of chastity, temperance and fortitude which characterized them.

Paganism, with the immoral life which sprang from it, stood revealed in all its nakedness to 204
the keen sight of the Judæans. The dreary idolatry of the heathen, with its fabulous mythology which made divine nature even lower than the human, the madness which allowed wicked emperors to be worshiped as gods, the sensuality which had prevailed since the fall of Greece and the closer connection of the Romans with demoralized nations, the daily spectacle of evil lives and broken marriage vows, the bacchanalian intoxication of superstition, unbelief, and bestialities, fostered the pride of the Judæans in their own spiritual and intellectual possessions, and urged them to make the superiority of Judaism over heathenism manifest. In places where the Grecian language facilitated exchange of thought, as in Egypt, Asia Minor and Greece, there was considerable mental friction between the Judæans and the heathens. Judaism, as it were, summoned paganism to appear before the tribunal of truth, and there placed its own sublime faith beside the low, degrading forms of belief of its adversary.

The Judæans were deeply anxious to impart the burning convictions that filled their hearts to the blind, deluded heathens, and to attain that object, their religion being hated by the latter, some of the most cultivated among the Judæans had recourse to a sort of pious fraud, by which heathen poets and soothsayers were made to bear witness to the beauty and grandeur of Judaism. Skilful imitations in verse, enunciating Judæan doctrines, were placed by Judæan-Grecian writers in the mouth of the mist-shrouded singer Orpheus, and introduced among the strains of Sophocles, the tragic poet who had celebrated the all-powerful gods. When Rome had extended her empire far and wide, and the legends of the prophetic Sibyls had become known through many lands, Judæan poets hastened to make the latter stand sponsors to tenets and
views which they durst not proclaim themselves, or which, if given in their own name, would have 205
obtained no hearing. In an oracular form the Sibyl was made to reveal the deep meaning of Judaism, to stir the hearts of the people by pictures of the awful result of infidelity to God, and to offer to nations engaged in bloody conflict the olive branch of peaceful amity, opening out to them bright prospects of the happier times, predicted by the Seers, to those who believed in the eternal God of Judaism; and the Sibyl spoke in prophetic strains of the glorious future, when all the nations of the earth would rejoice in the blessings of the Messianic kingdom.

> "Unhappy Greece, cease proudly to exalt thyself; offer prayers for help to the immortal and lofty One, and take heed of thy ways. Serve the mighty God, so that thou also mayest find thy portion among the good when the end will have come and the day of judgment, according to the will of God, will rise up before man. Then will the teeming earth give abundantly to mortals the fairest fruits of the vine and the olive and choicest nourishing seeds. Also sweet honey dropping from heaven, and trees with their fruit, and fat sheep. Likewise oxen and lambs and the kids of the goat. For them rivers of milk will flow, sweet and white. The cities will be filled with merchandise, the earth will be rich, and there will be no more war or fearful sound of fighting. Nor will the earth, loud groaning, quake and be rent. War will cease, and there will be no drought upon the lands, no more famine or fruit-destroying hail. But great peace will reign over all the world, and to the end of time each king will be the other's friend, and under one law will the people of the whole world be governed by the Eternal God, enthroned in the starry heavens—one law for all weak, pitiable men; for He is one God, and there is no other, and the wicked He will cast into the flames."

The aim of a long series of prose writings of the Judæan-Grecian school was to set forth the futility and defects of paganism on the one hand, and on the other to display Judaism in its most favorable light, and thus to induce the heathen to become acquainted with the tenets of the latter. Heathen kings who had been convinced that idolatry was empty and vain, and that by Judaism, on the contrary, truth was revealed were pointed out as examples.

"The Book of Wisdom" was even more decided and vigorous in its denunciations of paganism
than the Sibylline writings. Its unknown author gave with philosophical acumen, but in a poetical 206
garb, a truthful exposition of idolatry, showed it to be the cause of vice and immorality, and then, in marked contrast to these dark shadows, made Judaism shine with increased purity and luster. It was the wisdom of Judaism, embodied, as it were, in the wise King Solomon, that presented these views, and in his name, turning to the monarchs of the earth (the Roman governors), rebukes their shameless self-deification. "Love righteousness, ye rulers of the earth," exclaims the Wisdom of Solomon, "recognize the Lord in goodness, and seek Him in simplicity of heart"

(Book of Wisdom, i. 1). According to this author, the invention of idols was the cause of lasciviousness, and leads to the destruction of life. Idolatry did not exist from the beginning, neither will it last forever. It arose through the vanity and ignorance of man, and would endure but a short time. A father, suddenly plunged into deepest grief by the death of a child, perhaps made for himself an image of the latter; by degrees he worshiped the lifeless figure as a god, and insisted upon the observance by his dependants of mystical rites in its honor. In the course of time this godless practice became law, and images, by the order of despots, received the worship of the people. In the absence of the monarch, when he could not be personally adored by his subjects, the tyrant was flattered by the incense offered to his image. The ambition of the artist also fostered the growth of idolatry among the ignorant masses. To please the potentates of the earth he strove to make his images as beautiful as possible, and the public, dazzled by the splendor and grace of the work, worshiped as gods those whom they previously reverenced as men. Such beautiful productions of art became a snare to those whom misfortune or tyranny had enslaved, and induced them to deify carved stone and wood, and to bestow on them the 207
uncommunicable name of God. Not alone do the people err in their religious creed, but they live in constant strife with one another and call it peace; infanticide is celebrated as a rite, they observe dark, mysterious ceremonies, and are guilty of unchastity. Each one plays the part of spy on the other, or wounds his friend in his dearest honor. All, without distinction, thirst for blood, love plunder, and practice cunning, perjury, deceit, ingratitude, and every description of impurity. For the worship of vain idols is the beginning, cause, and end of every evil thing. "For health he calleth upon that which is weak, for life prayeth to that which is dead, for aid humbly beseecheth that which hath least means to help" (Book of Wisdom, xiii. 18).

After the author has thus shown the vanity of idolatry, he attempts to describe the fundamental truths of Judaism:

> "There is no God but Him whom the Jews adore. Divine wisdom preserved the first-born, saved the righteous (Noah) from the flood, upheld the righteous (Abraham) in innocence before God, delivered the holy seed (the Judæan people) from the oppression of the nations, filled the soul of the servant of God (Moses), who appeared before kings with terrible signs and wonders. Israel is the upright one whom God has chosen. He possesses the knowledge of the Divine Being, and may call himself the Son of God, who in His mercy sustains and upholds him."

These righteous ones will have eternal life. When Israel is persecuted by the rulers of the earth, because his path lies apart from theirs, and he condemns their godless ways, turns from them as unclean, and calls God his Father; when the nations of the earth torture him and put him to a shameful death—these are only trials imposed by God on His chosen one, to prove him and make him worthy of His grace. He tries him like gold in the furnace, and accepts him as a pure offering. Israel shall judge the nations, and have dominion over the people, and their God shall reign forever.

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> "Then will the upright one stand firmly before his oppressors. They will be troubled with great fear; they will be amazed at his glorious salvation, and repenting they will say, 'This was he whom we had in derision, and of whom we made a laughing-stock. Ignorantly we accounted his life madness, and his end to be without honor. And now he is numbered among the children of God and his lot is among the saints. We strayed from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness did not shine for us.' Israel was the instrument through which God gave the world the undying light of the law. In all things did the Lord magnify His people and glorify them; He abandoned them not, but assisted them in every time and place." (Book of Wisdom.)

Like the Babylonian Isaiah, the Alexandrian-Judæan sage contemplated his ideal in Israel, of whom a noble mission was required, and who would hereafter shine in glory.

Whilst the Alexandrian Judæans were absorbed in Grecian literature and philosophy, and were using that melodious language as a weapon against paganism and the immorality it fostered, they were carried beyond the object they had in view. Their desire was to make Judaism acceptable to the cultivated Greeks, but in following out that design it was, in some degree, lost to themselves. Greek conceptions had so completely taken possession of their thoughts that at last they came to find in the teachings of Judaism the current speculations of the Greeks. The faith that they had inherited was, however, still dear to them, and they managed, through sophistical means, to deceive themselves into a belief of the genuineness of their exposition. The Holy Scripture could not, indeed, always offer apposite passages to the prevailing philosophy, but the Judæan-Alexandrian authors knew how to help themselves out of that difficulty. They followed the example of Greek writers, who found their own views of the world in the poems of Homer, or put them there, and to accomplish that feat, employed a peculiar kind of sophistical word-pictures. Thus the Judæan thinkers of that period, in their interpretations of the Holy Scriptures, had recourse to allegory, and instead of the plain, natural meaning of a work, often 209
gave it a different and seemingly higher import. Starting with the assumption that the Scriptures cannot always receive a literal explanation without the divine glory's being tarnished and many biblical characters being degraded, they resorted to the arts of allegory and metaphor. This method became so general that even the masses lost all pleasure in the simple stories of the Holy Scriptures, and took more delight in artificial explanations than in the plain lessons and sublime laws of their sacred books. The pious men, who were wont to explain the Scriptures on the Sabbath, were obliged, in compliance with the taste of the time, to allegorize both the history and

the lessons contained in them. One result of this method was the indifference that manifested itself among the cultivated Judæans of Alexandria to the practice of the religion of their fathers. Allegory undermined the ramparts that fenced the Law. If the latter was only the garment in which philosophical ideas were robed, if the Sabbath was merely intended to record the power of uncreated divinity, and the rite of circumcision was only meant to show the necessity of placing a curb on the passions, it would be sufficient to understand and adopt the ideas underlying those forms. Of what use would be the practice of the latter? From indifference to the practice of the laws to the desertion of Judaism itself there was only one step, and thus can be explained the apostasy to paganism of some Judæans who were unable to withstand the difficulties and constant pressure they had to encounter. It was also among the Alexandrian Judæans that the conflict between science and faith first appeared.

The indifference towards Judaism was combated, indeed, by many who had not wholly given themselves up to Greek culture. Philo, the greatest genius which Alexandrian Judaism produced, 210
opposed the lukewarm spirit and the feelings of contempt which had grown up against the practice of the Law. In his elevated and inspired diction he urged the obligation of adhering to the letter of the Law, and induced his co-religionists to regard it again with love and reverence. Philo indeed shared some of the errors and prejudices of his contemporaries, but with his clear intelligence, he soared above the mists which enthroned them. He likewise made exaggerated use of the allegorical method employed by his predecessors, and agreed with them in applying it to the entire Pentateuch, or at least to the greater part of its history and laws. To carry out this metaphorical line of scriptural interpretation he devised symbolic numbers, explained Hebrew by Greek words, and from one and the same sentence deduced different and opposite conclusions. To Philo allegorical exposition became almost a necessity. Had he not already found it in use, he would doubtless have invented it.

He wished to give the sanction of Holy Writ to the great thoughts which were partly the productions of his own rich mind, partly adopted from the philosophical schools of the Academy, the Stoics and the Neo-Pythagoreans. Sharing, and indeed, surpassing in perversity the allegorical explanations he found in vogue, he departed from them just in that essential point which told against the necessity of the practice of the Law, and in that lay his chief importance. He expresses himself with decision and force against those who, satisfied with the spiritual meaning contained in the Law, are indifferent to the Law itself. He calls them superficial and thoughtless, acting as though they lived in a desert, or as incorporeal beings who knew neither of town nor village nor dwelling, or who, in fact, entertained no intercourse with human beings, despising what is dear to mankind, and seeking only abstract spiritual truths. The holy word, 211
however, while teaching us to seek out diligently the deepest spiritual meaning of the Law, does not cancel our obligation of adhering to customs introduced by inspired men who were in all things infinitely greater than ourselves. Shall we, because we know the spiritual meaning of the Sabbath, neglect its prescribed observance? "Shall we," he exclaims, "make use of fire on the Sabbath, till the ground, carry burdens, plead in courts of justice, enforce the payment of debts, and, in fact, transact all our usual daily business? Shall we, because a festival symbolizes the peace of the soul, and is intended as an expression of gratitude to God, cease to observe the festival itself? Or shall we give up the rite of circumcision now that we are acquainted with its symbolic significance? In that case we should likewise renounce our reverence for the sanctity of the Temple and abandon many religious observances. But, on the contrary, both the inner truth contained in the Law, and the Law itself, should be equally prized—the one as the soul, the other as the body. Just as we take care of the body, looking upon it as the habitation of the soul, so also should we value the letter of the Law. By strict observance of the Law we shall attain a clearer insight into its deepest meaning, and shall likewise escape the remarks and reproaches of the people."

It is in the Hebrew Scriptures, according to Philo, that the most profound wisdom is contained. All that is taught by the sublimest philosophy the Judæans found in their precepts and customs—the knowledge of the eternal God, the vanity of idols, and the universal laws of humanity and kindness. "Is not the highest honor due," he exclaims, "to those laws which teach the rich to share their wealth with the needy, which console the poor by enabling them to look forward to the time when they will no longer beg at the rich man's door, but will have recovered 212
their alienated property; for, at the opening of the seventh year, prosperity would return again to the widow and the orphan, and would restore to well-being those whom fortune had disinherited?"

In opposition to the abuse hurled against Judaism by a Lysimachus and an Apion, Philo brings forward the spirit of humanity which breathes through the Judæan Law, and which affects even the treatment of animals and plants. "And yet, though Judaism is founded in truth on love, these miserable sycophants accuse it of misanthropy and egotism." In order to ensure a better comprehension of the Judæan ethics by the cynics and lawbreakers of his own race, as also by the Greeks, who had only a false conception of Judaism, Philo arranged his writings so that they should form a kind of philosophical commentary on the Pentateuch, with the further object that the truths of Judaism might be brought within the province of philosophy.

But if, on the one hand, Philo stood firmly on Judæan ground, on the other he was no less imbued with the dogmas of the Grecian schools, which ran counter to the former, and he seems to have been equally swayed by the spirit of Judaism and that of Greece. Vainly he attempted to bring the contradictory ideas into harmony. They were so completely opposed from their very inception that they could not be reconciled. To solve the difficulty between the conflicting views of a creating God and a perfect deity who does not come into contact with matter, Philo's system

takes a middle course. God created first the spiritual world of ideas, which were not merely the archetypes of all future creations, but at the same time active powers which formed the latter. Through these spiritual powers which surround God like a train of servitors, He works indirectly in the world. Spiritual power acting, as it were, intermediately between God and the world is, 213
according to Philo, the Logos, or creative reason, the divine wisdom, the spirit of God, the source of all strength. In Philo's more mystical than philosophical description, the Logos is the first-born son of God, who, standing on the border-land of the finite and infinite, links both together. He is neither uncreated like God, nor created like the things that are finite. The Logos is the prototype of the universe, the delegate of God, whose behests it communicates to the world, the interpreter who reveals His will and constantly accomplishes it, the archangel who shows forth his works, the high priest and intercessor between the world and God. Early Christianity made use of this doctrine of the Logos in order to assume a philosophic aspect.

The princely philosopher of the house of the Alabarchs combated the Greek and Roman paganism, steeped in vice and bestiality. His exposition of the Judæan Law was designed to darken still more, by comparison with the pure light of Judaism, the shadows of idolatry, the sexual looseness, frivolity, vanity and corruption which existed in the Grecian-Roman world. He tried to show how false were the accusations hurled against Judaism, and to make known the sublime grandeur and beauty of its tenets. His principal works were written for his own people and co-religionists, though he frequently addressed those who stood outside that circle. Against the few laws of humanity which the Greeks boasted to have possessed from ancient times, as, for example that of granting fuel to any one requiring it, or of showing a wayfarer the right path, Philo could have no difficulty in enumerating a long array of benevolent duties contained in Scripture or transmitted by word of mouth. At the head of unwritten laws he placed Hillel's golden saying, "What is hateful to yourself do not unto others." Judaism does not merely forbid any one to refuse fire or water, but commands that what the poor and feeble require shall be 214
given to them. It prohibits the use of false weights and measures, the coinage of false money. It does not allow children to be taken from their parents, or wives to be separated from their husbands, even when they have been legally acquired as slaves. Even towards animals the duty of mercy is impressed upon man. "What, in comparison to these," he cries to the Greeks, "are the few laws descending from primeval times, of which you boast so much?"

In the following tone of mockery Philo answered malicious accusations against the Lawgiver:

> "Yes, verily, Moses must have been a sorcerer, not only to have preserved a whole people, and supplied them abundantly whilst they were journeying through many nations, exposed to the danger of hunger and thirst, and ignorant of the way they were pursuing, but likewise to have made them, in spite of their mutinous spirit, which often broke out against himself, docile and pliant."

Of the three great moralists who followed each other within a century, Hillel the Babylonian, Jesus of Nazareth, and Philo the Alexandrian, it was the last who in all things, great and small, upheld most strenuously the glory of Judaism. He was superior to them likewise in beauty of style and in depth of thought, whilst he was animated with equally fervent convictions. The first two simply created an impulse, but it was through their disciples that their ideas, variously transformed, were introduced into a larger circle; whereas Philo, by his own eloquent writings, made an important and lasting effect. His works were perhaps read by cultivated heathens even more than by Judæans, though all were affected by the warmth and glow which pervaded everything he wrote about God, Moses, and the spirit of the Law.

Philo and the Alexandrian sages continued to promote the great work of the prophets Isaiah, Habakkuk and Jeremiah, and laid bare all the unreasonableness, the instability, the perversion and immorality of the heathen religions. The transparent, shimmering ether with which the 215
Greeks invested Olympus, these writers resolved into mists and vapors. Greeks and Romans, who felt deeply on the subject, were moved to turn with contempt from a religion which not only gave so unworthy a representation of the Divinity, but actually seemed to sanctify immorality by the example set before them in the history of their deities. Like most oriental people, the heathens felt the need of religion, and those who were searching for true and elevated teaching embraced Judaism, which was daily being brought more and more home to them in the Greek translations of Judæan writings through Greek-Alexandrine literature, and also through intercourse with cultivated Judæans.

During the last ten years which preceded the destruction of the Judæan State, there were more proselytes than there had been at any other time. Philo relates from his own experience that in his native country many heathens, when they embraced Judaism, not only changed their faith but their lives, which were henceforth conspicuous by the practice of the virtues of moderation, gentleness and humanity. "Those who left the teachings in which they had been educated, because they were replete with lying inventions and vanities, became sincere worshipers of the truth, and gave themselves up to the practice of the purest piety." Above all, the women, whose gentle feelings were offended by the impurity of the mythological stories, seemed attracted towards the childlike and sublime scenes in Biblical history. The greater part of the women in Damascus were converted to Judaism, and it is related that in Asia Minor there were also many female proselytes. Some over-eager Judæans may have traveled with the intention of making converts, as was proved in the story of the Roman patrician Fulvia.

It was by similar zeal for conversion that the Judæan faith was introduced into an Asiatic 216
court, the members of which remained steadfast adherents to Judaism during several generations. Adiabene, a province on the banks of the Tigris, situated where once lay the

Assyrian kingdom, was governed by a royal pair, Monobaz and Helen. It was a small, but not unimportant state, and although it touched the great domains of Rome and Parthia, it had been able to hold its independence during some centuries. Monobaz had many children, the offspring both of Helen and of other wives, but the youngest of all, Izates, was the favorite of both parents. In order that he should not suffer from the jealousy which that favoritism had caused among the elder brothers, Monobaz sent him to the court of a neighboring king, of the name of Abinerglus (Abennerig), who was so greatly pleased with the young prince confided to his care, that he gave him his daughter in marriage. A Judæan merchant by the name of Anania traded at this court, and whilst he showed his merchandise to the princesses, he dilated at the same time upon the tenets of Judaism with such success that he converted them to his faith. Izates, whose wife, Samach, was one of the converts, became interested in Anania, discoursed with him, and became a sincere adherent of Judaism, which he openly embraced in the year 18 C. E. His mother, the queen Helen, had also, without the knowledge of her son, been won over to Judaism. The deep impression which the Judæan precepts had made upon the royal converts was proved when the throne became vacant. The dying Monobaz passed over his eldest sons and named Izates as his successor. When Helen related her husband's wishes to the nobles of Adiabene, they suggested that the elder brothers should be put to death, and thus prevent a civil war, to which their hatred and jealousy might not improbably give rise. But Helen, softened by her conversion to Judaism, 217
would not follow this sanguinary advice, and only kept the brothers in confinement, with the exception of her eldest son, Monobaz II, to whom she confided the regency. When Izates arrived at the capital of Adiabene, and had, according to his father's last testament, received the crown from the hand of Monobaz, he considered it an unmanly act of cruelty to leave his brothers to languish in confinement, and he sent them as hostages into honorable banishment, some to Rome and some to the Parthian capital.

Once on the throne, Izates intended to adopt Judaism, and even to submit to the rite of circumcision, but he was dissuaded from doing so by his mother, and by his physician, also named Anania, who, being an Hellenic Judæan, represented to him that the latter was not essential. Izates felt reassured for the time; but another Judæan, a Galilæan of the name of Eleazar, and a strict follower of the Law, came to his court and offered a contrary opinion. Eleazar, seeing the king engrossed in reading the Pentateuch, probably a Greek translation, could not help observing that to belong to the Judæan faith it was not sufficient to read the Law, but it was necessary also to practise its precepts. Thereupon Izates, and, according to some authorities, also his elder brother Monobaz, secretly submitted to the rite of circumcision. The queen-mother had anticipated dangerous results from so decided a step, but they were not immediately forthcoming. Not only was there perfect peace after the accession of Izates, but he was so much respected that he was chosen to be arbitrator between the Parthian king Artaban and the rebellious nobles of that monarch.

Some time later, when several of the king's relations avowed their conversion to Judaism, some of the nobles of Adiabene formed a conspiracy, and secretly induced Abia, the king of Arabia, to declare war against him. Izates, however, was successful, and Abia killed himself in 218
despair. The nobles then conspired with Vologeses, the king of Parthia, to make war against their king, who had been faithless to the religion of his forefathers. This war, however, which might have been most calamitous for Izates, Vologeses was prevented from undertaking, and henceforth his reign, which lasted about thirty years, continued undisturbed. Queen Helen, fired by the enthusiasm of the Judæan faith, desired to visit Jerusalem, and, accompanied by her son, she accomplished this long journey in about the year 43. Izates sent five of his own sons to Jerusalem to learn the religion and the language of the Hebrews.

How grand and joyous must have been the welcome offered by the inhabitants of Jerusalem to a queen come from the far distant East with the sole view of paying homage to their God and His Law! Was not the word of prophecy fulfilled before their very eyes, that the second Temple should be greater than the first, inasmuch as the heathens should come and worship the one God?

Helen soon had the opportunity of appearing as the benefactress of the people. A famine prevailed which created great distress in the country, and the poorer classes especially suffered severely. Queen Helen sought to relieve them by bringing from Alexandria and Cyprus whole ship-loads of wheat and figs, which she distributed among the starving people (48 C. E.). Abundant means were given her by Izates to carry out her generous impulses. Her offering to the Temple consisted of a golden shell-shaped portal for the door of the inner Temple, to receive and reflect the first rays of the morning sun, and thus announce the break of dawn to the officiating priests.

The piety and benevolence of the proselyte Helen were long remembered with love and gratitude by the nation. She survived her son Izates, who died at the age of fifty-five (55 C. E.); he 219
is said to have left twenty-four sons and the same number of daughters. He was succeeded by his elder brother, Monobaz II, who declared himself also to be a firm adherent to Judaism. When Helen died, Monobaz caused her remains, as well as those of his brother, to be removed to Jerusalem, and to be buried within the magnificent tomb which she had constructed there during her lifetime. This mausoleum, which was about thirty stadia north of Jerusalem, had beautiful pillars of alabaster, and was considered a great work of art. Helen had built a palace in the lower part of the town, and her granddaughter, the Princess Grapte, erected another in that part of Jerusalem known as Ophla. Monobaz, who also had his palace in Jerusalem, had golden vessels made for use in the Temple on the Day of Atonement. The people of Adiabene remained firm friends of the Judæan nation, and were always ready to give their powerful help in times of

danger.

This leaning towards Judaism, evinced by so many religiously inclined heathens, was utilized by the teachers of the Nazarene creed. They took advantage of and worked upon this enthusiasm, and thus laid the first step to their future conquest of the world.

Two Judæans, both coming from countries where the Greek language was spoken, Saul of Tarsus (known as Paul) and Jose Barnabas of Cyprus, declared their intention of proselytizing the heathen. They thus widened the sphere of the small community, and raised it from being an insignificant sect of Judaism to the position of a distinct and separate religious body, but in order to do so they were obliged to change its original character and purpose.

During the short decade following the death of its founder the small community had been augmented by Essenes and some Judæan inhabitants of Greek countries. The former, who had hitherto lived in a mystic land of visions and trusted to miraculous intervention for the arrival of 220
the kingdom of heaven, may have seen their dreams fulfilled in the advent of Jesus. The Essenes, who had no families, were obliged to augment their numbers from without. They could only add to the community by dint of mystical persuasions, and, as believing followers of Jesus, they continued their propaganda and attracted new adherents from the lower classes, whom the leaders of the Pharisees had neglected or avoided. Their untiring zeal incited the activity of the first Christians, who had been awaiting, not so much an increase of believers, as the speedy re-appearance of Jesus, enthroned in the clouds of heaven. Apostles were now sent out from Jerusalem, where they were chiefly established, to propagate the belief that Jesus was the true Messiah. In order, however, to gain many converts, a greater power of oratory was required than the simple fishermen and mechanics of Galilee possessed. This want was supplied by the addition of Greek-speaking Judæans. From Asia Minor, Egypt, Cyrene, from the islands of Crete and Cyprus, there was an annual pilgrimage of Judæans to Jerusalem at the time of the Passover festival. Besides men of piety and enthusiasts, there were adventurers, seekers after novelty, and beggars, ignorant of the Law. Of these pilgrims, numbers eagerly adopted the new faith. Many adventurers among the Greek Judæans were easily persuaded to accept the doctrine of the community of goods, which the Ebionite Christians had retained from their Essene origin, and which found great favor with these homeless wanderers. All those who possessed any property sold it to increase the contents of the general treasury, and those who were utterly impecunious lived without any cares in the community. These Greek Judæans, who had learnt from their heathen neighbors the art of speaking on every subject, and even of veiling almost meaningless 221
expressions in an attractive and persuasive manner, presented the new religion in an attractive form. They were best adapted to become the preachers and missionaries. When converted themselves, they used all their efforts to convert others. The Greek element soon predominated over the Galilæan, Ebionite and Essene elements, of which the community had previously been composed.

These Greek Judæans, who had never been taught the Law in the schools of Jerusalem and were, indeed, generally ignorant of its tenets, transgressed them, sometimes unwillingly, but at times intentionally. When taken to task they justified their actions by the belief which they entertained in the Messianic character of Jesus, who, they alleged, had also put aside the authority of the Law. In Jerusalem, still considered as the holy city, each practice and observance was made a matter of deep importance. People began to suspect that the Nazarenes, who spoke in foreign tongues, were introducing innovations and endeavoring to bring the Law into contempt, and the disciples of Jesus were thenceforth watched, and their utterances in the synagogues and in the market-places were carefully noted. Amongst those who were most fanatical against the Nazarenes was Saul of Tarsus, a zealous follower of the Pharisaic school, who held that no edict of either the oral or the written Law might be tampered with. As he spoke Greek himself, he was able to measure the boldness of the utterances of the Judæan-Christian Greeks who were in Jerusalem, and his indignation was great against them. One of these Greeks, of the name of Stephen, was particularly violent in his attacks, and had recklessly spoken against the holiness of the Law and the Temple. It appears that Saul proclaimed him to be a blasphemer, and that he was stoned, whether after a judicial trial or by an angry populace is not known. After 222
that time the Nazarenes were viewed with still greater suspicion, and were called upon to defend themselves; and again it was Saul who watched the proceedings of these Greek adherents of the new sect, and caused them to be brought up for trial. They were imprisoned, and those who were found guilty of contempt of the Law by their belief in the Messianic attributes of Jesus were not punished by death, but were sentenced to be scourged. The foreign Nazarenes, terrified by this severity, hastened away from Jerusalem and dispersed in various Greek towns in which there dwelt Judæan communities, among whom they continued their work of proselytizing. Those followers of Jesus, however, who, notwithstanding their new faith, did not deny the holiness of the Law, remained unmolested. Their three leaders, James, a brother or a relation of Jesus, Kephas or Peter, and John, son of Zebedee, lived at Jerusalem without fear of persecution.

The other Nazarenes zealously continued the work of conversion in foreign places. Homeless themselves, they endeavored to introduce into their circle of followers the doctrine of the community of goods, which would enable them to live on from day to day without care or thought for the morrow. They were particularly attracted towards the towns of Antioch and Damascus, where they found a large field for their labors in the Greek-speaking community of men and women. The half-educated multitude listened eagerly to the words of messengers who announced that a heavenly kingdom was at hand, and to enter it they must accept only baptism, and the belief that Jesus was the Messiah who had actually appeared, had been crucified, and had risen again.

Soon these two Greek cities saw a Nazarene community settling within their walls, who seemed to be Judæans, who lived according to Judæan rule, who prayed, sang psalms, and ended 223
their songs of praise with the customary "Amen"; but who yet showed certain signs of forming a new sect. They assembled together at a meal which they called Agape, spoke the blessing over the wine, drank after one another from the same vessel, broke their bread in remembrance of the last hours of Jesus, and gave each other, men and women indiscriminately, the kiss of peace. Then, in convulsive excitement, some arose and prophesied, others spoke in strange tongues, whilst others again effected miraculous cures in the name of Jesus. An unnatural and highly wrought state of enthusiasm prevailed in these Greek-Nazarene circles, which would probably have been deemed ridiculous, and would have evaporated in time; in short, Christianity might have died a noiseless death, if Saul of Tarsus had not appeared, and given it a new direction, a great scope, and thereby imparted to it vital powers and vigor. Without Jesus, Saul would not have made his vast spiritual conquests, but without Saul, Christianity itself would have had no stability.

Saul (born in Tarsus in Cilicia, at the beginning of the Christian epoch, and belonging to the tribe of Benjamin) had a very remarkable nature. Weak and fragile in body, he was possessed of a tenacity which nothing could daunt. He was excitable and vehement, could not endure any opposition to his opinions, and was one-sided and bitter in his treatment of those who differed from him in the slightest degree. He had a limited knowledge of Judæan writings, and was only familiar with the Scriptures through the Greek translation; enthusiastic and fanciful, he believed in the visions of his imagination and allowed himself to be guided by them. In short, Saul combined a morbid and an iron nature; he seemed created to establish what was new, and to give form and reality to that which seemed impossible and unreal.

He had persecuted the Greek Nazarenes, hunted them out of their haunts of concealment to 224
give them over to punishment, because they had seceded from Pharisaic Judaism. But that did not suffice. Hearing that some of them were established in Damascus, he followed them thither with all zeal, intending, with implacable persecuting zeal, to exterminate the community. But his disposition towards them suddenly changed. In Damascus many heathens, particularly many of the female population, had gone over to Judaism. The conversion of the royal house of Adiabene had caused much excitement. Saul had probably himself witnessed the great triumph of Judaism, the entry of Queen Helen, the Princes of Adiabene and their retinue into Jerusalem. She probably stayed in Damascus on her journey, and there must have received the thanks of the Judæan inhabitants of that city. These events must have made a deep impression on Saul, and may have given rise to the thought: Had not the time foreseen by the prophets now arrived, when every nation should recognize the God of Israel, bow down and swear allegiance to Him alone?

If he was occupied with these thoughts he must also have been prepared to wrestle with many doubts to which they gave rise. Would it be possible to convert the heathen world if the Law were to bind them with its trammels, if they were to be forced to observe the Sabbath and the festivals, to keep the dietary laws, to distinguish between the clean and the unclean, and even to submit to circumcision? Should the heathen be required to follow even the severe Pharisaic ordinances? In that case it would be impossible that other nations should enter the Judæan community. But, on the other hand, could not the Law be abrogated for the sake of the heathens, and might they not merely be taught the knowledge of God and a loftier morality? Yet, as the whole law originated 225
from God, by whom it was revealed, and who had expressly commanded that it should be fulfilled, how could it be set aside? A saying of his teachers may then have occurred to Saul, that the Law was only binding until the time of the Messiah, and that as soon as the Redeemer came its importance and significance would cease. If the Messiah had really appeared, then all the difficulties that surrounded the conversion of the heathen would disappear. This train of thought engrossed the mind of Saul. His nervous temperament and imaginative nature easily dispelled all doubts, and he believed firmly and truly that Jesus had made himself manifest to him. Much later he said of the vision which had appeared: "If it were in the flesh I know not, if it were supernatural I know not, God knows; but I was carried up beyond the third heaven." This is not very reliable evidence to an actual fact. Legend has adorned this conversion, which was of such great importance to Christianity, in a fitting manner. It describes Saul traveling to Damascus, and his path illumined by a great light. Beholding this light, he is said to have fallen in terror to the earth, and to have heard a voice, which called to him, "Saul, Saul, why dost thou persecute me?" Blinded by the vision, he reached Damascus; and after an interview with a Christian, who advised him to be baptized, the scales at length fell from his eyes.

With the certainty that he had actually beheld Jesus, another doubt was banished from Saul's mind, or a different Messianic point of view was revealed to him. Jesus had certainly died—or rather had been crucified—but, as he appeared to Saul, he must have risen from the dead; he must have been the first who had been brought to life again, and had therefore confirmed the fact that there would be a Resurrection, which fact had been a matter of contention between the various schools: and Jesus had also thereby announced the advent of the kingdom of heaven, of 226
which, as the prophet Daniel had predicted, the resurrection of the dead was to be the forerunner. Thus the former Pharisee of Tarsus was firmly convinced of three things—that Jesus had arisen; that he was the true Messiah who had been predicted; and that the kingdom of heaven, the period of the resurrection, was near, and that the then existing generation, or rather the true believers in Jesus, would soon witness its arrival. This belief led to further results. If the Messiah had already appeared, or if Jesus were actually the Christ, then the Law was of itself abrogated, and the heathens could participate in the blessing of Abraham, without observing the Law. This belief acted as an incentive to Saul. He felt himself called upon to convert the depraved world of heathendom, and, through Christ, to lead it back to the Father of all. No time was

allowed to elapse between the inception of this idea and its realization. Assuming the name of Paul, he joined the Nazarenes of Damascus, who were not a little astonished that their persecutor had now become their colleague, and was seeking to make fresh converts.

Paul found many opportunities for converting in Damascus, as a strong feeling in favor of Judaism prevailed there, and the sacrifice incumbent on its followers alone kept many aloof. The newly-converted Apostle could render this step easier, as he relieved them of all duties to the Law by means of a belief in Jesus. He does not, however, seem to have found a warm reception for his faith, resting as it did on sophistry, even amongst his own countrymen. His theory that the whole Law might be set aside was probably not considered as quite acceptable. The people also seem to have felt distrust of their former persecutor. In short, Saul-Paul could not maintain his ground in Damascus, and fled to Arabia (Auranitis), where Judæan communities also existed. 227
When, however, he returned to Damascus for the second time, and his coreligionists had acquired greater confidence in him, he could indulge his love of proselytism. But his brusque, inconsiderate manner, and his assertion that the Law was no longer in force, aroused the Judæan community of Damascus against him. The Judæan ethnarch of the town, who had been appointed or confirmed by Aretas Philodemus, sought to take him prisoner. His companions saved him, by lowering him in a basket from a window in the wall. Thus he escaped from those who rightly considered him as the destroyer of Judaism. He returned to Jerusalem three years after his conversion. He felt that there was a wide difference between himself and the Galilæan Christians, and that he would not be able to make terms with them. Paul was filled with the one thought, that the blessing for all generations, the promise (evangel) made to Abraham that he should be father of many nations, and that the wealth of the heathen should belong to the children of Abraham, was now finally to be realized, and that he (Paul) was called upon to effect this work. He wished to put an end to the difference between the Judæans and the Greeks, between slaves and freemen, and to make all brothers in the covenant of Abraham—as the seed of Abraham—according to the promise given in by-gone years. This was the glad message which he brought to the people; it was a far-reaching thought, of which the Ebionites in Jerusalem and the so-called main Apostles had no understanding.

After a short stay in Jerusalem, Saul, accompanied by his disciple, the Cyprian Joseph Barnabas, repaired to Cilicia, Paul's native place, and traversed Asia Minor and Macedonia to Achaia. There his endeavors were crowned with marvelous results. He founded in various places Greek-Christian communities, especially in Galatia, in Ephesus, Philippi, and Thessalonica, and in 228
the town of Corinth. This result may partly be laid to the credit of Judaism; for when Paul wished to win over the heathens, he had to unfold to them the glorious past of the Judæan nation, in order to speak of Jesus. He also had to contrast the pure belief in God with the wild practices of heathendom. He found a susceptibility for the pure teachings of Judaism among the heathen. Not a few felt disgust at the mythological stories of the gods and the deification of human beings. The remembrance was yet fresh in their memories how all nations of the Roman kingdom, with unexampled abjectness, had dedicated altars to the monster Caligula, and had recognized and worshiped him as a god. Despairing and pure spirits sought a God to whom they might elevate themselves, but they did not find him. Now Paul had come and brought them this God, surrounded, it is true, with wonderful stories, which, however, pleased them, on account of the mythological strain in them. The heathen nations could better comprehend the "Son of God" than the "Messianic Redeemer." The wide-spread disease of immorality, which was rife throughout the Roman empire, rendered the Judæan teachings acceptable and proper. Paul's orations, delivered with the fire of enthusiasm, and uttered by one who threw his whole soul into his words, could not fail to make an impression on the better-disposed and purer-minded heathens. To this was added the fear of the approach of the end of the world, which Paul, through his firm belief in the resurrection and reappearance of Jesus, had transformed into the hope that the dead would arise, in refulgent form, at the trumpet-call, and that the living would be carried up into heaven in a cloud.

Thus Paul appealed to the imagination of many heathens in his apostolic wanderings from Jerusalem to Illyria. At first he aroused only people of the lower classes, slaves, and especially women, by his glad tidings. To the cultivated Greeks the Christianity which Paul preached, based 229
on the so-called resurrection of Jesus, appeared as a ridiculous absurdity. The Judæans were naturally displeased with him. Paul's chief topics, on which he dilated to the heathens whom he wished to convert, were the Judæan nation, Judæan writings, and the Judæan Law; without these his preaching about a Messiah or salvation had no foundation. The Greeks must have been told about Israel and Jerusalem, or his words would have fallen on deaf ears. He, therefore, could only resort to those towns where Judæan communities dwelt, from whom the heathen nations had received some faint notion of the history and doctrines of Judaism.

Paul's efforts were directly aimed at destroying the bonds which connected the teachings of Christ with those of Judaism. He therefore inveighed against the Law, as it proved a hindrance to the reception of heathen proselytes. He asserted that it was detrimental to the pursuit of a higher spiritual life and to following the way of truth. Paul not only disapproved of the so-called ceremonial laws of Judaism, but also of those relating to morality. He affirmed that without laws men would not have given way to their evil desires. "Thou shalt not covet" had first aroused covetousness; thus through the Law the knowledge of sin had arisen. Man is sensual and inclined to sin, for flesh is weak and inclined to resist the Law. Paul set up a new teaching. He maintained that man had only become sensual, weak and sinful because the first man had sinned. Adam's fall had given birth to an inextinguishable hereditary sin, and by this means death had come upon humanity. The Law was not able to overcome this hereditary sin. In order to destroy sin and death, God had made a special dispensation. He had given up the Messiah, His son, to death, and

again re-animated him, and he had become the second Adam, who was to obliterate hereditary sin, to conquer death, and establish everlasting life. Thus the Redeemer, instead of bringing about the redemption of nations from the yoke imposed on them, had redeemed them from sin. 230

Paul therefore conceived Christianity to be the very opposite of Judaism. The one was founded on law and compulsion, the other owed its origin to freedom and grace. Jesus or Christianity had brought about the holy state foretold by the prophets. The ancient times had departed, and a new state of things had arisen; the old covenant (Testament) must yield to the new one; Abraham himself had not been judged as just through the Law, but through faith. Thus Paul sophistically explained the Scriptures. From the Law it is to be inferred that whosoever does not abide by it, and refuses wholly and entirely to comply with its precepts, stands under a curse. The great service which Jesus had rendered was that he had delivered all men from this curse, for through his means the Law had been set aside. How could the Judæans submit to this open desecration of the Law of Sinai for which their forefathers had suffered death, and for which, but a short time since, under Caligula, they had determined to sacrifice their lives? It is not to be wondered at that they rose against the man who despised the Law, and persecuted him. They, however, contented themselves with flogging Paul when he fell into their hands, but they left his life unharmed; five times, as he himself relates, he was chastised with thirty-nine strokes. Not only the Judæans but also the Nazarenes, or Judæan Christians, were incensed against Paul for his attack on the Law, and by this means dissension and schisms arose in the midst of young Christianity. Peter, or Kephas, who came as a messenger to the Judæans, taught a Christianity which differed from that of Paul, and that of the other Apostles who sought to make converts 231
amongst the heathen; whilst Apollos from Alexandria, and a certain Chrestus preached another version.

The Judaic Christians saw with terror the fruits of the ceremonial freedom preached by Paul in the communities founded by him in Corinth and Ephesus, where every species of vice and immorality was rife. Other Apostles, therefore, followed Paul, and proclaimed his teachings full of error and misrepresentation, and maintained that the Law of Judaism was binding on Christians, as it was only by this Law that the lower passions could be held in check. In Antioch a violent quarrel arose between Paul and the Judaic-Christian Apostle. Peter, who till then had disregarded the dietary laws and eaten at one table with the heathens, was censured by the leaders of the severe party of the Apostle James, and was now obliged to acknowledge his fault, and to speak openly against Paul's contempt of the Law. Paul, on the other hand, reproached him with hypocrisy. The influence of the severe, Law-loving Judaic Christians was, however, so great that all the Judæan Christians of Antioch gave up eating at the tables of the heathen, and their example was even followed by Barnabas, the disciple of Paul.

Racial feelings also helped to widen the breach between the two parties. The Greek Christians despised the Judaic Christians in the same way as the Hellenes had looked down upon the Judæans. Paul sent out violent epistles against the adherents of the Law, and laid a curse on those who preached salvation in a manner differing from his own. These did not spare him either, and related how he had loved the daughter of a high priest; how, on being despised by her, he had in disgust written against circumcision, the Sabbath, and the Law. Thus, within barely thirty 232
years after the death of its founder, Christianity was split into two parties, namely, a Judaic-Christian and a heathen-Christian sect. The Judaic Christians remained attached to the foundations of Judaism, compelled their converts to adhere to the Law, and clung to Jerusalem, where they awaited the return of the Messiah. The heathen Christians, on the other hand, separated themselves more and more from Judaism, and took up an inimical position towards it.

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CHAPTER IX.

AGRIPPA II. AND OUTBREAK OF THE WAR.

Position of Affairs in Judæa—Roman Oppression—Character of Agrippa II.—The last High Priest—The Zealots and the Sicarii—Eleazar ben Dinai—Quarrel with the Samaritans—Violence in Cæsarea—The Procurators—Florus—Insurrection in Cæsarea—Bloodshed in Jerusalem—The Peace and War Parties—The Leader of the Zealots, Eleazar ben Ananias—Menahem, chief of the Zealots—Massacres of Heathens and Judæans—Defeat of the Romans—The Synhedrion and its President, Simon ben Gamaliel—Position of the Synhedrion.

49–66 C. E.

Whatever triumph Judaism might celebrate by the accession of proselytes, and bright as seemed the dawn of the day predicted by the prophet, when the peoples of the earth would turn their eyes to Zion, and towards the light issuing thence to illumine the human race, yet in their native land, and more especially in Jerusalem, the yoke of the Romans weighed heavily on the Judæans, and became daily more oppressive.

The pitiable state of existing affairs crushed down all joyful feelings as to the prospective dominion of Judaism. A veil of sadness had for the last twenty years been spread over the nation, and no joyful feelings could exist beneath it. The last decades exhibit the nation as a captive who, continually tormented and goaded on by his jailer, tugs at his fetters, with the strength of despair, until he wrenches them asunder. The bloody contest between Rome, strong in arms and fertile in stratagem, and Judæa, poor in outward means of warfare and powerful only through indomitable will, inspires the deepest interest because, in spite of the disproportion between the combatants, the weak daughter of Zion would probably have gained the victory had she not been 234
torn by conflicting parties and surrounded by treachery. Perhaps, had she awaited a more favorable moment, success might have been hers; but Providence had decreed the destruction of her national life.

This great combat, to which few struggles in the history of the world are comparable, was waged not merely for liberty, like the wars in which the Gauls, Germans, and Britons were engaged against Rome, but had likewise a religious character. The Judæan people were daily wounded in their religious sentiments by the arbitrary rule of Rome, and desired to gain their independence in order to acquire and maintain the free exercise of their religion. Such being their aim, the frequent reverses they sustained could not abate the ardent longing they felt to be free; on the contrary, it rose with each fresh disaster, and in the most trivial circumstances they saw and resented an attack upon their most sacred convictions. It was seldom, indeed, that Rome outraged the religious feelings of the Judæans as she had done under Caligula; on the contrary, she rather indulged their susceptibilities, but she often wounded them unintentionally through her despotic and jealous supervision.

The higher classes, poisoned by the seductive arts of Rome, had become deaf to the voice of duty, and the wise and vigilant among the nation feared, with reason, that the whole body would be infused with the moral prostration of its highest members. The aristocratic families were, indeed, so deeply steeped in immorality that the middle classes could hardly escape its contaminating influence. The bad example was set by the last members of the house of Herod, who were educated either in Rome itself or in the small courts of the princely Roman vassals. Agrippa II (born 27, died 91–93), son of the last noble Judæan king Agrippa I, a mere stripling of 235
seventeen years at the time of his father's death, drank in the poisoned air of the Roman court, where the Messalinas and Agrippinas openly displayed the most hideous vices. After the demise of Herod II, the Emperor Claudius gave Agrippa the tiny kingdom of Chalcis (about 50). It was whispered that this last scion of the Hasmonæan and Herodian houses led an incestuous life with his beautiful sister Berenice, who was a year younger than himself, and a widow on the death of her husband, Herod II. There was probably some truth in the rumor, as Agrippa found himself forced to silence it. He betrothed his sister to Polemon, king of Cilicia, who, perhaps allured by her wealth even more than by her beauty, adopted Judaism to obtain her hand. But impelled by her inconstant humor, Berenice soon left Polemon, and was free again to indulge in her licentious intrigues.

Agrippa's second sister, Mariamne II (born 34), married to a native of Palestine, Julius Archelaus, dissolved that union, though she had borne him a daughter, and became the wife of the Judæan Demetrius of Alexandria, probably the son of the Alabarch Alexander, and in that case the brother of the apostate Tiberius Alexander. Still more depraved was his youngest sister, the beautiful Drusilla (born 38). Her father had promised her, when still a child, to the prince Epiphanes, the son of his friend Antiochus of Commagene, but only upon condition of his becoming a convert to Judaism. After Agrippa's death, however, Epiphanes refused to accept Judaism, and the young Agrippa gave his sister Drusilla to Aziz, king of Emesa, who declared himself willing to embrace her faith. Heedless, however, of conjugal duty, Drusilla soon abandoned her husband, married a Roman, the Governor Felix, and for his sake gave up her faith and became a pagan. The envy with which Berenice inspired Drusilla was supposed to have been 236
the motive of the infidelity of the younger sister both to her husband and to her religion.

Although Agrippa was only prince of Chalcis, he was looked upon as the king of Judæa. Rome certainly had not deprived him of the royal title, but had divested him of all power, and made use

of him only as a pliant tool and as a guard upon the movements of the surrounding nations. Agrippa was devoted to the imperial house, styling himself the emperor's friend. He displayed weakness and impotency when it behooved him to put bounds to the usurpations, insolence, and arrogance of Rome, and only showed his strength when he opposed the struggles of his people to regain their freedom and liberty. The whole house of Agrippa, including his most distant connections, Antipas and the two brothers Costobar and Saul, were all immoral, rapacious, and hostile to their own people. The only authority which Claudius, or rather his council, had left in the hands of the titular king, and which was ratified by his successors, was that which he was allowed to exercise over the Temple, and which enabled him to appoint the high priest. It was not religious zeal or moral worth that swayed Agrippa in the choice of the high priest, but simply the sentiments felt by the candidate for that office towards Rome. He who carried servility and the surrender of national aspirations furthest gained the prize. In barely twenty years Agrippa had named at least seven high priests. Among that number was Ananias (son of Eleazar?), whose enormous wealth, either acquired or inherited, allowed him to ingratiate himself with all who were open to bribery, and set him free to practise acts of lawlessness and violence. Since the time when Herod had lowered the dignity of the high priest's office by permitting it to be sold or gained by pandering to most degraded sentiments, there were certain families who seemed to 237
have acquired a right to it—those of Boëthus, Cantheras, Phabi, Camith, and Anan or Seth, and it was but seldom that any one was elected outside that circle. The members of these families vied with each other in dishonorable conduct and frivolous thoughtlessness. Often their fierce jealousy broke out in acts of violence, and the streets of Jerusalem occasionally were the scenes of bloody skirmishes between the followers of those hostile rival houses. Each succeeding high priest tried to gain as much as possible out of his office, giving—heedless of the worth or fitness of the recipient—the most lucrative places in the Temple to his relatives and friends. So reckless were the high priests in the use, or rather abuse, of their power, that they would send their slaves, armed with clubs, to the barns to seize for themselves the tithes which every one was legally free to give to whichever priest he might select. Those priests who had not the good fortune to be related to the high priest were thus deprived of the means of subsistence, and fell into stringent poverty. Avarice and greed of power were the mainsprings of the actions of those who were elected to represent the highest ideal of morality; the Temple was despoiled by its dignitaries even before the enemy forced his way into it with his weapons of murder.

From this time, according to tradition, the visible signs of divine mercy ceased to appear in the Temple. Like some cankerous affection, this demoralization of princes and high priests extended ever more and more to the classes closest to them, producing evils which are depicted in dark colors by the pen of a contemporary. Since the penal laws were administered in the name of the emperor, and were placed under the control of the governors, the judiciary became dependent upon the Romans and the wealthy and influential classes. Selfishness, bribery, calumny, and cowardice, according to the painter of the manners and morality of that period, 238
were ever increasing. "They throw off," he bitterly exclaims, "the yoke of heaven, and place themselves under the yoke of men; their judgments are false and their actions perverse. The vain and thoughtless are made great, while the nobler citizens are despised." Frivolity in the women and licentiousness in the men were so completely the order of the day that the most eminent teacher of morality of that time, Jochanan ben Zaccai, found himself obliged to abolish the ritual hitherto used in cases of suspicion of adultery. With deep sorrow, the nobler-minded Judæans lamented a state of things in which outward forms of worship stood higher than morality, and the defiling of the Temple caused more scandal and wrath than an act of murder. In the lower classes, crime of another but of a not less alarming nature appeared. The frequent insurrections which had been stimulated and fomented by the Zealots since Rome had arrogantly treated Judæa like a conquered province, had given rise to bands of free troops, which roved wildly about the country, confounding liberty with licentiousness, and trampling upon both customs and laws. They crowded the caves and hollows which abound in the rocky mountains of Judæa, and from those retreats made frequent irruptions to gratify their love of unbridled liberty. Some bands of Zealots, led by Eleazar ben Dinai and Alexander, were incited by feelings of patriotism to deeds of cruelty. They had sworn destruction and death to the Romans, and they included among the latter all those who consorted with them; they would not recognize them as Judæans, and deemed it no crime to plunder and destroy them. The degenerate friends of Rome were, according to their views, and the oaths they had taken, mere outlaws, and the Zealots kept their oath only too well. They attacked the nobles as often as they fell in their way, ravaged their 239
possessions and did them as much harm as lay in their power. If there was any wrong to be avenged upon the enemy of their country, they were the first to lend their sword in defense of their outraged nationality.

Another band of Zealots, grown wild and savage, forgot the original aim of liberating their country, and turned their attacks upon the foes of the latter into profit for themselves. They were called Sicarii, from the short dagger "sica," which they wore concealed under their cloaks, and with which, either openly or insidiously, they struck and killed their enemies. The Sicarii belonged to the very refuse of the Zealots. Later they acknowledged the grandsons of Judas of Galilee, Menahem and Eleazar ben Jair, as their leaders, but at the commencement of this epoch they were under no discipline whatever. They wandered about the country without any defined object, lending their assistance to those who either offered them a reward or an opportunity for satisfying their thirst for revenge. Armed with daggers, they wandered among the various groups that thronged the colonnade of the Temple during the festivals, and unperceived, struck down those they had marked out as their victims. These murders were committed with such extraordinary rapidity and skill, that for a long time the assassins remained undiscovered, but all the greater were the dread and horror excited by those dark, mysterious deeds. Murders became

so frequent that Jochanan ben Zaccai and the teachers of the Law found it necessary to abrogate the sin-offering for the shedding of innocent blood, as too many animals would have been slaughtered for the human victims. It may have been about this time that the Great Synhedrion, which witnessed with intense grief the constant increase of lawlessness and immorality, gave up its functions and transferred its place of meeting from the Hewn-stone Hall to the Commercial Hall in Bethany, an act which seemed to imply its dissolution. 240

To stem, if possible, the confusion and disorder which existed, the noblest citizens combined, and keeping aloof from conflicts and strifes, sought to further by all means in their power the spiritual advancement of Judaism. To keep the Law intact was their self-imposed, sacred task. In Jochanan ben Zaccai they found a fitting representative. He was considered, next to the president of the Synhedrion, Simon ben Gamaliel (and perhaps even before him), as the greatest teacher of that time. On account of his deep knowledge of the Law and of the worth and dignity of his character, Jochanan ben Zaccai was made vice-president of the Synhedrion. That position gave him the power to cancel such laws as could not be enforced in that stormy period. His chief office, however, was that of teacher. In the cool shade cast by the Temple walls, he sat, encircled by his disciples, to whom he delivered the laws that were to be observed, and expounded the Scriptures.

Besides the spirit of anarchy there was another source of discord and misery. As the existing situation became more and more sad and hopeless, the longing in the hearts of faithful believers for the expected deliverer who was to bring peace to Judæa became more and more intense. Messianic hopes were rifer among the people now than they had been even during the time of the first Roman governors; and these hopes stirred up enthusiasts who proclaimed themselves to be prophets and Messiahs, and who inspired belief and obtained followers. Freedom from the yoke of Rome was the one great aim of all these enthusiasts. What the disciples of Judas attempted to bring about by force of arms, the disciples of Theudas hoped to accomplish without fighting, having recourse only to signs and miracles. A Judæan from Egypt calling himself a prophet, found no less than three, or according to another account, four thousand followers. 241 These he summoned to the Mount of Olives, and there promised to overthrow the walls of Jerusalem with the breath of his mouth and to defeat the Roman soldiers. He was not the only one who, carried away by the fervor of desire, prophesied the approach of better times. And well may those enthusiasts have found acceptance among the people. A nation that had enjoyed so rich a past and looked forward even to a more glorious future, might allow itself to be lulled into forgetfulness of the dismal present by pictures of freedom and happiness. These visions and prophecies, harmless enough in themselves, derived a sad importance from the bitter and savage animosity with which they inspired the Roman governors. If the people, jealous of any interference with their religion, looked upon the slightest offense to it as an attack upon Judaism itself, and made the governors, the emperor, and the Roman state responsible for the delinquency, the imperial officials in Judæa were not less susceptible, for they treated the most trivial agitation among the people as an insult to the majesty of Rome and the emperor, and punished with equal severity the innocent and the guilty. Vain was the favor shown to the Judæan nation by the emperors Claudius and Nero—the procurator constantly over-stepped the limit of his authority, and urged on by greed and the love of power, acted the part of tyrant. Judæa had the misfortune to be almost always governed by depraved creatures, who owed their position to the reckless favorites who ruled at court. They rivaled one another in acts of wickedness and cruelty, thus ever increasing the discontent and provoking the wrath of the people. Cumanus, who succeeded Tiberius Alexander (about 48–52), was the first of five such avaricious and bloodthirsty procurators. He governed only the provinces of Judæa and Samaria, Claudius having 242 bestowed the command of the province of Galilee on Felix, the brother of his favorite, Pallas. Cumanus and Felix became deadly foes.

It was the governor of Judæa who first excited the resentment of the people. Jealous suspicion of any great concourse of people assembled in the Temple, a suspicion which, since the revolt at the time of the census, had become traditional among the Roman governors, induced Cumanus, at the time of the Passover, to place an armed cohort in the colonnade of the Temple to watch the throngs which gathered there during that festival. On that occasion a soldier, with the recklessness often exhibited by the inferior Roman troops, made an offensive gesture towards the sanctuary, which the people interpreted as an insult to their Temple. Carried away by indignation and anger, they threw stones at the soldiers and abused the governor. A tumult ensued, which threatened to become a serious sedition. Cumanus ordered fresh troops to advance and take possession of the fortress of Antonia, and assuming a menacing aspect, alarmed the people assembled round the Temple, who now hastened to escape from his reach. In their anxiety to get away, the crowds pressed fearfully through the various places of exit, and it is believed that more than ten or indeed twenty thousand persons were suffocated or trampled to death.

A similar occasion might have led to a like disastrous result, had not Cumanus prudently complied with the wishes of the people. On the highway, not far from Bethoron, a band of Sicarii having fallen upon and robbed a servant of the emperor, Cumanus resolved that all the neighboring villages should suffer bitterly for the act of violence committed in their vicinity. One of the Roman soldiers, infuriated by an attack upon a fellow-countryman, got possession of a 243 Book of the Law, tore it in pieces and threw the fragments into the fire. Here was a new cause for angry excitement and wrathful reproaches in the desecration of what they held most sacred. Countless bands flocked to Cumanus at Cæsarea, crying out against the blasphemer. Much rather, they exclaimed, would they suffer the worst fate themselves than see their Holy Scriptures profaned; and in tones of fury they called for the death of the guilty man. The governor yielded this time to the counsel of his friends, and ordered the soldier to be executed in

the presence of those whose religious feelings he had outraged.

Another occurrence took a more serious form and led to strife and bloodshed. Some Galilæans who were on their way to a festival at Jerusalem, passed through Samaria, and whilst in the town of Ginæa, on the southeastern end of the plain of Jezreel, they were murdered in a fray with the hostile Samaritans. Was this only an accidental mischance, or the result of the burning hatred which existed between the Judæans and the Samaritans? In either case the representatives of Galilee were justified in demanding vengeance at the hands of the governor upon the murderers. But Cumanus treated the affair with contemptuous indifference, and thus obliged the Judæans to deal with the matter themselves. The leaders of the Zealots, Eleazer ben Dinai and Alexander, incited both by the Galilæans and their governor, Felix, took the matter into their own hands, entered with their troops the province of Acrabatene, inhabited by Samaritans, and pitilessly destroyed and killed all within their reach. The Samaritans appealed to Cumanus for redress for this attack upon their province, and he gave them permission to take up arms, sending at the same time Roman troops to assist them in a fearful massacre.

This proof, as they considered it, of the partisanship of the emperor's officials roused the 244
anger of the inhabitants of Jerusalem to such a degree that, spurred on among others by Dortus, a man of some position, they were on the point of attacking the troops of Cumanus, which would doubtless have seriously increased the gravity of the situation, and might have hastened the final catastrophe by twenty years. The principal inhabitants of Jerusalem, however, alarmed at the possible consequences of an outbreak against the Roman arms, strove to prevent so dangerous an act, and, clothed in deep mourning, implored the irritated multitude to pause and think of the future. At their prayer the people laid down their arms. But neither the Judæans nor the Samaritans were really pacified, and still smarting under the wrongs mutually received, they sent deputies to the Syrian governor, Umidius Quadratus, accusing each other, and asking him to investigate the whole dispute. To effect that object, Quadratus visited Samaria; but he was not an impartial judge, and many of the captive Judæans were doomed to perish on the cross. It was only after those executions had taken place that he formed a tribunal of justice, and summoned both parties to appear before it. In the meantime, however, Felix having taken the part of the Galilæans against the Samaritans, such entanglements ensued that Quadratus would not venture to adjudicate between the disputants, and ordered them to send deputies to Rome to obtain the decision of the emperor. Among the Judæan envoys were Jonathan, the former high priest, and Anan, the governor of the Temple. Cumanus was also obliged to leave his post in order to appear at Rome and justify himself there.

All the intricate court intrigues were brought into play by this trial, which took on a more
serious aspect from the fact that the governor himself was one of the accused. The emperor 245
caused a tribunal to be formed, but the verdict was given not by himself, but by his depraved wife, the notorious Agrippina, who was the paramour of Pallas, the brother of Felix. It had been arranged between the Judæan deputies and Pallas that after sentence was pronounced against Cumanus, the emperor should be asked to name Felix governor of Judæa in his stead. The verdict given in favor of the Judæans could not be considered an impartial one, and was not in itself a proof that the Samaritans had been the aggressors. Many of them were pronounced guilty and executed, and Cumanus was sent into banishment. At the same time, probably also through the intercession of the empress, a kingdom in the northeast of Judæa was bestowed upon Agrippa; it consisted of that part of the country which had once belonged to Philip's tetrarchy, Batanæa, Gaulanitis, Auranitis, Trachonitis, as well as Paneas and Abilene. On Judæa proper Rome kept a firm grasp, and would never allow a native prince, however much he might be under Roman influence and control, to exercise in that domain any regal prerogatives.

Felix, whose appointment had been sought of the emperor by the former high priest, Jonathan, succeeded Cumanus as governor of Judæa. He married Drusilla, King Agrippa II's beautiful sister, who thereupon went over to paganism. During his long administration, Felix surpassed all his predecessors in arrogance and audacity. He gave himself up entirely to the acquisition of riches and the satisfaction of his appetites. He continued to exercise his evil power even after the death of Claudius (54). For although the young emperor, Nero, or his mother, Agrippina, was as favorable to the house of Herod as Claudius had been, and had given Agrippa four considerable towns with their surrounding districts as well as the important city of Tiberias 246
near Tarichea in Galilee, Judæa was allowed to remain under the iron rule of its cruel governor. Felix pretended to attack only the seditious mutineers; but the fact of his consorting with the wild Sicarii showed how little truth there was in that assumption. Numerous, indeed, must have been the victims who suffered death at his hands under the plea that they were the enemies of Rome, for even the former high priest, Jonathan, at whose request the emperor had given Felix his appointment, now bitterly reproached him for his misdeeds. Exasperated by his boldness the governor caused him to be assassinated, employing the Sicarii to seize and murder him in the broad light of day. Ishmael II, of the house of Phabi, was named high priest by Agrippa in about the year 59. It was during his pontificate that the family of the high priest gained such power in the state that, aided by a strong rabble, they were able to compel the landowners to pay them all the tithes, thus robbing the lower priests of their incomes and causing many of them to perish from want.

The arrogance with which the governors treated the nation was not without its baneful influence upon the conduct of the foreigners who dwelt in great numbers in the towns on the sea-coast. The Greeks and Romans that had settled in Judæa openly showed their hatred to their neighbors, and usurped the position of masters in the land. The fearful picture drawn by the great prophet seemed now on the point of being literally fulfilled: "The stranger in thy midst will

ever rise higher, but thou wilt ever sink lower." The most shameless in their conduct towards the Judæans were the Greek Syrians who lived in Cæsarea—even the civil rights of the former were disputed by them. But the Judæans of Cæsarea, who far surpassed their heathen fellow-citizens in industry, wealth and courage, would not allow themselves to be deprived of their rights of 247
citizenship, and fierce disputes and fights in the streets were consequently of almost daily occurrence. On one occasion, some Judæan youths having avenged with blows an insult they had received from a party of Syrians, and obliged the latter to flee, Felix took up the affair, called in some troops, which, being chiefly composed of Greeks and Syrians, sided heartily with their own countrymen. Many Judæans lost their lives, many were imprisoned, and the houses of the rich were plundered and destroyed. The actual point in dispute remained undecided, both sides being only more embittered by the blood that had been shed. The rival parties sent deputies to Rome, and Nero was called upon to pronounce judgment between them. Bribery gained the favor of Burrus, the secretary of the emperor, to the cause of the Syrians of Cæsarea. His verdict was consequently given against the Judæans, who were deprived of their civil rights.

Festus, the successor of Felix, governed for only a short time (from 59 to 61). During that period the unsatisfactory state of things remained unchanged, or, if possible, became still worse. A new enthusiast, proclaiming himself the Messiah, awoke the hope of the people for liberty and redemption, drew followers around him, and then shared the fate of his predecessors. The jealous spite which animated the different parties became more and more violent. The king, Agrippa, at length took up his residence in Jerusalem, in the Hasmonæan palace, which was just opposite the Temple. In order to overlook the courts of the latter he added to the height of his palace, and from the hall in that building, where he took his repasts, he could watch every movement that took place in the Temple. The Temple authorities took umbrage at this, and complained that Agrippa encroached upon their privileges; and in order to hide the Temple from his view they had 248
a high wall built on its western side. This aroused the displeasure of Agrippa and of the governor, who wished to demolish the hardly finished wall. Bitter words were used on both sides; but at last prudence prevailed, and it was resolved that the dispute should be settled by the emperor. Twelve deputies, among whom were the high priest Ishmael and the treasurer Hilkia, were sent to represent the case at Rome. It was not Nero, however, but his paramour, Poppea Sabina, who gave the verdict. This beautiful but shameless woman had, strangely enough, a preference for Judaism, and as at Nero's court all state affairs were conducted by intrigue, the Judæan deputies profited by that happy chance and won their cause. The deputies brought back the imperial order that the jealous guard kept over the Temple should be discontinued. A few years later Poppea interceded again on behalf of two Judæans who had been condemned by Felix and sent as prisoners to Rome. In order not to infringe upon the laws of their religion they, like Daniel and his friends, refused, whilst in prison, to eat anything but fruit. But at the desire of Poppea, who had now become empress, Nero granted the self-denying captives their liberty.

After the death of Festus, Nero named Albinus governor, and in comparison with those who preceded and those who came after him he was looked upon as a just ruler. Before he entered the province, Anan the high priest attempted to revive the half-extinct Sadducæism, and to put its penal code again into force; a tribunal was elected by him, and innocent men were condemned. The Pharisees were so dissatisfied with this illegal Synhedrion that they demanded of Agrippa the dismissal of the high priest.

The new governor Albinus was met on his way by accusations against Anan, who it was said had infringed upon the authority of Rome by punishing criminals himself. His enemies were 249
successful, and he was obliged to resign his office of high priest after having filled it for three months. Joshua ben Damnai succeeded him, but in a short time he had to give way to Joshua ben Gamala (63 or 64). Ben-Gamala had married a widow of great wealth, Martha, a daughter of the house of the high priest Boëthus, and it is said that she induced King Agrippa II, by the offer of a large bribe, to confer the office of high priest upon her husband. Between Joshua ben Damnai and his more fortunate successor there burned so fierce a hatred that their respective followers could not meet in the streets without insulting and even attacking each other.

Joshua ben Gamala can, however, by no means be ranked among the worst of the high priests. The improvement in education, which began with him, testified to the interest he took in the useful institutions of the community. He established schools for boys from the age of five years in every town. But Ben-Gamala did not long retain his high office; he was obliged to resign it to Matthia ben Theophilus (65), the last of the twenty-eight high priests who owed their election to Rome and the house of Herod. Albinus the governor, who was bent upon the destruction of the fanatical Sicarii, embittered the people by the heavy taxes laid upon them, a part of which he kept for himself. Upon learning that a successor had been appointed, he caused those of the Sicarii who had been imprisoned for serious offenses to be executed, and those who were suffering for lighter misdeeds were, upon paying a fine, set at liberty. The Sicarii thus released from imprisonment took part afterwards in the insurrections of the people against their oppressors, and stained the good cause with many acts of cruelty.

The last of the procurators, Gessius Florus, who also was appointed by Poppea, hastened by his shameless partiality, avarice, and inhumanity, the execution of the long-cherished plan of the 250
malcontents to shake off the tyrannical yoke of Rome. Florus was one of those utterly profligate beings to whom nothing is sacred; who sacrifice everything to their greed, and disregard, without scruple, the most solemn oaths. What his predecessors had done with a pretense at least to some form, or under the shadow of secrecy, he accomplished openly in brazen-faced defiance of the Law. Inaccessible to pity, he had indulgence only for the Sicarii, who gave him a portion of their plunder. In the two years during which his administration lasted (64–66), many towns were

completely sacked. The Sicarii were allowed to carry on unmolested their nefarious practices, the rich being obliged to purchase their favor as well as that of their patrons.

So unbearable was this condition of the state that even a cowardly nation must have lost patience, and the courage of the Judæan people, in spite of the thousand disasters which had befallen them, of the heavy weight of the Roman yoke, and of the daily acts of violence of which they were the victims, was not yet broken. Rome at that time resembled a community of madmen, among whom the emperor Nero, confiding in the favor of the Senate and the people, perpetrated one folly after another, and was guilty of a succession of crimes. Thus, excepting through their own endeavors, there appeared no chance of deliverance for the Judæans. This was the opinion of the best and greatest among them, of all those who were not the tools of Rome, or blinded by her false splendor, or paralyzed by terror of her strength. The boldest were already thinking of rebellion. The governor, Cestius Gallus, had, in the meantime, been informed of the exasperation and angry feeling that existed among the Judæan people, and reported the state of Judæa at the court of Rome, failing not to make known there that the nation was brooding over conspiracy and 251
revolt. But no one listened to his warning voice. Nero was too busy to attend to such trifles; he had to play the zither, to perform on the stage, to indulge in orgies, and to devise murders. The Empress Poppea, the friend of the Judæans, was dead. The creatures of the court resembled the monster Gessius Florus, and doubtless derided what they considered the puerile fears of Gallus. The latter thereupon devised a plan to bring prominently before Nero's court the vastness of the population of Judæa, and the imprudence of underrating it. It was arranged between Agrippa and the high priest Matthia that at the Feast of the Passover a great though peaceful demonstration should take place, through a peculiar manner of numbering the people. Circulars were sent to the community, residing both within and outside Judæa, bidding vast numbers appear at the coming festival. Crowds of worshipers, a greater concourse than had ever assembled before, obeyed the summons. In the spring of the year 66 they flocked to celebrate the Feast of Passover; from the towns and villages of Judæa, from Syria, even from countries bordering the Euphrates, and from Egypt, they streamed into Jerusalem, which could hardly contain the vast multitude. On their way towards the Temple, some of the pilgrims were crushed in the crowd, and this feast was thereafter called the Passover of the Crushing. The numbering of the people was carried on in the following way:—From each offering a kidney was taken for the priests, the kidneys thus appropriated being counted; and it was reckoned that each lamb that was eaten in company, was partaken of by at least ten persons. The result of these calculations proved that nearly three millions were at that time present in Jerusalem.

Cestius Gallus had himself come to Jerusalem to conduct the investigation, and all appealed to him to have pity on their unspeakable woes, and to deliver them from their country's scourge. 252
Florus, who was present, only smiled, but the governor of the city promised to use his influence in softening the procurator's heart towards them, and he acquainted Rome with the imposing concourse he had seen with his own eyes at Jerusalem. He was, however, much deceived as to the effect produced by his device of proving how great were the numbers of the people. Nero, at that time, had reached the highest point of his arrogance and pride. "Should Nero, whose triumphs surpassed those of Pompey, Cæsar, and Augustus, fear Judæa?" The account sent by Cestius Gallus of the crowds assembled at Jerusalem during the Feast of Passover was probably not even read by Nero, or, if looked at, only thrown to the winds.

In Judæa, and above all in the capital, men, young and old, became daily more impatient to break the galling chains of Rome. Patience was exhausted; they awaited only the favorable moment when they could strike at their foe with a chance of success. A trifling incident, which brought to light the unparalleled insolence of Florus, fanned the spirit of impatience and closed the lips of prudence. Fresh causes of disagreement had arisen between the Judæans and the Syrians in Cæsarea; the former could not forget that Nero had lowered them in the eyes of their fellow-citizens, and the latter, elated by the preference given them, made the Judæans feel their degraded position. The irritation thus caused, stirred up the religious hatred and racial animosity which slumbered under the surface in both communities. A piece of ground belonging to a heathen in Cæsarea, which happened to be just in front of the synagogue, was covered by him with shops, so that only one narrow entrance to the sacred building remained. The hot-headed Judæan youths tried to interrupt the construction of these booths, and Florus, won over by a large sum of money, refrained from interfering; and, in order not to be a witness of the probable 253
scene of contention, he absented himself and went to Samaria, leaving the two bitterly-opposed parties to the undisturbed exercise of their passionate animosity. On a certain Sabbath, while the Judæans were assembled in worship, a Greek placed a vessel in front of the synagogue and sacrificed birds upon it, to signify that the Judæans were descendants of outcast lepers. This calumny concerning the origin of their race was not taken quietly by the Judæan youths, who instantly armed themselves and fell upon their mocking foes. The fight ended in the defeat of the Judæans, all of whom thereupon, carrying away their holy books, betook themselves to the neighboring small town of Narbata, and thence sent an embassy of twelve men, among whom was the rich tax-gatherer Jonathan, to Florus in Samaria. The deputies reminded him of the sum he had received, and of his promise to afford them protection. But instead of listening to their supplications he received them harshly, and threw them into prison. When tidings of this new act of violence reached Jerusalem, the anger of the whole population was aroused, but before they had time to form any plan of action, Florus sent them another exasperating message. He desired the warden of the Temple to hand over out of the sacred treasury seventeen talents, which he declared were required in the service of the emperor. This command, the intention of which was plainly discerned by the inhabitants of Jerusalem, made them flock around the Temple as though they would shield the threatened Sanctuary. The timid broke forth in lamentations, and the

fearless reviled the Roman governor, and carried a box about as though they were collecting alms for the indigent Florus. The latter, anticipating opportunities to satisfy his avarice and thirst for blood, now came himself to Jerusalem, and by his presence added fuel to the fire. Florus 254
placed himself as judge in front of the palace of Herod, and called upon the high priest and the men of greatest standing to appear before him, demanding them to deliver into his hands those who had dared mock him. Trembling, they endeavored to offer excuses for what had taken place, and implored his mercy. But Florus heeded them not, and gave orders to the Roman soldiers to plunder the upper market-place, a quarter inhabited by the wealthy. Like very demons the wild soldiers threw themselves into the market and the adjoining streets, killed men, women and children, ransacked houses and carried off their contents. On that one day (16th Iyar), more than three thousand six hundred men perished. The prisoners, by the command of Florus, were scourged and crucified. In vain had the princess or queen Berenice knelt before Florus, imploring him to stay the work of bloodshed and destruction; he was deaf to her entreaties, and in fear for her own safety she was obliged to seek refuge and safety in her palace.

Some days after, vast crowds gathered in the now half-ruined upper town (Zion), uttering lamentations for those who had been killed and pronouncing execrations upon their murderer Florus, and it was not without much difficulty that the heads of the people succeeded in silencing them. But this only increased the audacity of Florus, who demanded, as a proof of their present peaceable intentions, that the people with the nobles should go forth to meet the incoming troops and welcome them in a friendly spirit. The representatives of the Sanctuary could hardly induce the people to comply with that request, for the patriots rebelled against the new humiliation thus thrust upon them, and persuaded many to share their sentiments. At length, however, the high priest succeeded in persuading the people to offer an amicable reception to the Roman cohorts. But soon the deceitful intention of the governor manifested itself. The people fulfilled the heavy 255
sacrifice they had with heavy hearts undertaken to perform, and greeted the troops with forced friendliness; but the soldiers, having received their instructions from Florus, looked grimly at them and made no response. At the first murmur of discontent caused by the strange manner of the Roman troops, the latter rushed upon the people with drawn swords, driving them before them, whilst the horses trampled on the fugitives. A fearful crush took place at the gates of the city, and the road from Bezetha was strewn with the wounded and the killed. When it was perceived that the soldiers were directing their steps towards Fort Antonia and the Temple, the designs of Florus upon the treasures contained in it could no longer be concealed, and the people hastened to the Sanctuary to protect it, if possible, from his sacrilegious project. They threw stones at the soldiers, barred their passage through the narrow entrance, demolished the colonnade which connected the fortress Antonia with the Temple, and thus frustrated the governor's hope of becoming a second Crassus. Without being aware of it themselves, the inhabitants of Jerusalem had by that step commenced the war of insurrection.

Before the determined attitude of the people the courage of Florus forsook him. He informed the representatives of the capital that in order to restore peace to Jerusalem, he would quit the city and withdraw the greater number of the troops, leaving only a small garrison behind. Upon representations being made to him that the greater part of the army was hated by the people, on account of the inhumanity of which it had been guilty, he bade them choose those soldiers who had taken least part in the recent butchery. The representatives of Judæa selected the soldiers who served under Metilius, whose weak disposition appeared to them a pledge of forbearance. But hardly had Florus left Jerusalem, when the heated ferment resolved itself into determined 256
action. The people were divided into two parties, one was the party of peace, the other the party that favored revolution. The latter party was composed chiefly of the young and strong, who shared the views and principles of the Zealots. They were ready to risk their lives in their endeavor to overthrow the yoke of pagan, tyrannical Rome, and regain their cherished liberty.

The revolutionary party was not devoid of statesmanlike discretion; it had already formed an alliance with the princely house of Adiabene, which was warmly devoted to Judaism, and had likewise managed to interest the Parthian-Babylonian community in its cause. The advocates of war, bold and fearless, looked down upon their more timid brethren. Men of strength, filled with lofty aspirations, they swore a solemn oath to die rather than submit to Rome; and well did they keep that oath in the raging war, under the hail of the catapults, tortured by the rack, and in the arena of wild beasts. The soul of the revolutionary party in Jerusalem was Eleazar ben Ananias, who belonged to a high-priestly family. He was well versed in the Law, and belonged to the strict school of Shammai, which generally agreed with the Zealots.

On the side of peace were the followers of Hillel, who abhorred war on principle; the nobles who were basking in the brilliant sunshine of Rome; the wealthy, whose possessions would be exposed to jeopardy through so great a revolution—all these, though smarting under the insolence of Florus, desired the continuance of the present state of things under the imperial power of Rome. The honest friends of peace, however, failed to perceive that the evil from which the Judæan community suffered did not depend upon any one person who might be accidentally in power, but upon the system of tutelage and robbery, and on the fundamental difference which 257
existed between the foreign rulers and the people they governed. Even the best governors, those who truly desired to preserve order and peace, could not have prevented the susceptibility of the nation from being frequently wounded, nor the constant irritation of the people.

The people, although aroused and embittered, appeared undecided, and paused before taking the final step, each party trying to draw the populace to its side. The friends of peace, whilst they strove to moderate the anger of the masses, endeavored likewise to justify their revolt against Florus before the Syrian governor, Cestius, and to explain that Florus was in fault for the

disturbance which had broken out. They acquainted Cestius with everything that had occurred, and begged him to come to Jerusalem to see with his own eyes the misery and ruin caused by the acts of the last governor, and to convince himself of the friendly demeanor of its inhabitants. Cestius, too indolent to come and inquire into the matter himself, sent a deputy, Neapolitanus, in his stead.

The leaders of the revolutionary party had, in the meantime, been so successful that the payment of taxes to Rome was withheld. The king, Agrippa, who, from motives of self-interest, was in favor of peace, called the people together, and attempted to open their eyes to the danger into which they were blindly running. Standing upon a high gallery opposite the Temple he spoke to the people. At his side was the Princess Berenice, who had interceded for the injured and downtrodden, to cover him with the shield of her popularity.

His speech, containing every argument that reason or sophistry could urge against war with Rome, made at first some impression upon the people. A great number of them cried out that they had no ill-will against the Romans, but only desired to be delivered from the yoke of Florus. 258
Thereupon Agrippa exhorted the assembled multitude to show that they were really peacefully inclined by replacing the broken columns they had thrown down and paying the taxes due to the emperor. For the moment it appeared as though their angry feelings were about to subside. The shattered colonnade was to be repaired, and in the adjoining towns and villages taxes were gathered. When Agrippa found what an advantage he had gained he went a step further, and tried to persuade the people to obey Florus as their governor until his successor should be appointed. But this last demand spoilt all. The revolutionary party again won the upper hand, and Agrippa was obliged to flee from Jerusalem. Those who had so often suffered from the cruelty and injustice of Florus, at the very mention of his name feared to become again his miserable dupes and the victims of cunning intrigue. After Agrippa's departure there was no question of taxes. Universal was the satisfaction at their abolition, and the tax-gatherers durst not confront the prevailing excitement by attempting to enforce their payment. The day on which it was resolved not to pay the taxes, the 25th Sivan (June), was henceforth to be kept as the anniversary of a victory. The Sicarii now also began to bestir themselves. They assembled under the command of Menahem, a descendant of Judas, the founder of the Zealots, and took the fortress of Masada; they put its Roman garrison to death, possessed themselves of their weapons, and being thus well armed, appeared on the field of battle.

Eleazar, the head of the Zealots, fanned the revolutionary spirit of the people, and drove them on to complete rupture with Rome. He dissuaded the priests from receiving any presents or sacrifices from heathens, and so great was the power he exerted that the officiating priests 259
discontinued offering the daily sacrifice for the emperor Nero. That was the starting-point of the revolution. Allegiance to the emperor was thenceforth renounced. The party of peace saw also the grave importance of this step and tried to retrace it. Learned teachers of the Law, doubtless of the school of Hillel, explained to a large gathering of the people that it was unlawful to shut out the offerings of heathens from the Temple, and aged priests declared that it was an ancient custom to receive such offerings. The officiating priests, however, remained unconvinced, and threw themselves without reserve into the maelstrom of revolution. From that time on, the Temple obeyed its chief, Eleazar, and became the hotbed of the insurrection.

The advocates of peace saw with sorrow the progress made by the rival party, and tried to smother the flames before they could accomplish the work of destruction and ruin; but the means they employed to quench the revolutionary fire only made it burn the more fiercely. They sent deputies to Florus and Agrippa, earnestly entreating that a sufficiently large number of troops should be instantly despatched to Jerusalem. The former, actuated either by timidity or by the spirit of revenge which made him desire that the hated Judæans should become more and more hopelessly entangled, refused to comply with that request. Agrippa, on the other hand, sent 3,000 horsemen, Auranites, Batanæans, and wild Trachonites, under the command of Philip of Bathyrene, and Darius, a commander of cavalry, to help the party that wished to remain at peace with Rome. When these troops arrived, they found the Mount on which the Temple stood, as well as the lower town, already in the possession of the Zealots. The aristocratic quarter of the higher town alone remained open to them. A fierce combat took place between the two parties, the royal 260
troops joining the few soldiers left of the Roman garrison. Fighting continued for seven days, with no decided results.

At the time of the festival of wood-carrying (15th Ab), however, the situation changed. The Zealots barred the entrance of the Temple against any one belonging to the peace party, and gained over to their side the masses who had brought wood for the altar, as well as the Sicarii who had made their way into the Temple through the crowd. Strengthened by the increase of numbers, the Zealots drove away their opponents and became masters of the upper town. The anger of the people was roused against the friends of Rome, they set fire to the palaces of King Agrippa and Princess Berenice, devoting to the flames likewise the house of the rich priest Ananias, and the public archives, among which the bonds of debtors were kept. Some of the partisans of Rome crept in terror into the sewers, while others took refuge with the troops in the western palace of Herod. Shortly after this the Zealots attacked the Roman guards in the fort Antonia, overcame them after a siege of two days, and put them to death (17th Ab); they then stormed the palace of Herod, which was defended by the combined troops of Rome and Agrippa. After eighteen days of incessant fighting the garrison capitulated and the Judæan soldiers under Philip were allowed to depart unhurt. The Romans, too proud to sue for mercy, retreated to the three towers in the wall, Hippicus, Phasael, and Mariamne. The Sicarii under Menahem rushed into the fort after the Romans had left it, and killed all who had not been able to save themselves

by flight (6th Elul—August).

But the patriotic Zealots, the followers of Eleazar, were soon made aware of the injury their righteous cause must sustain from their fraternizing with the unrestrainable Sicarii. Puffed up by their victory over Agrippa's troops, Menahem and his satellites broke out into acts of shameful 261
cruelty. Insulting pride now characterized Menahem's behavior; words of anger were exchanged between him and Eleazar; and as the former entered the Temple in the captured regal attire, the words became blows and fighting commenced. The Sicarii were besieged, and Menahem, who had fled to the part of the city called Ophla, was brought back and executed. A small number of his followers, under his relative Eleazar ben Jair, escaped to the fortress of Masada, which was occupied by their friends. After this bloody episode the Zealots, led by Eleazar, besieged the towers, and the Roman troops under the command of Metilius were at last obliged to sue for mercy. The Judæans deputed to treat with Metilius agreed that the Romans, deprived of their arms and baggage, should be allowed to depart unmolested. As soon, however, as the conquered soldiers were divested of their swords and shields, Eleazar's band fell upon them and destroyed them all. Metilius alone was spared, because in the fear of death he had promised to adopt the Judæan faith, and he was allowed to live an animated trophy of the victory of the Judæans over the Romans. The day on which Jerusalem was delivered from the Romans (17 Elul) was henceforth to be considered one of the festive anniversaries. That the aim of Eleazar and his party was noble and disinterested was shown by the moderation they observed after their victory. The city was in their hands, their rivals helpless, and yet in the annals of those times we can discover no trace of persecution or cruelty towards them.

Thus far the insurrection had been limited to Jerusalem, for the rest of Judæa, although equally excited, remained quiet during the events that were taking place in the capital, and awaited the result. Florus himself had likewise remained quietly at Cæsarea, taking care, however, that the revolution should flow on like a stream of fire, carrying devastation all over the 262
country, and even beyond its boundaries. When tidings of the battle between the Zealots and the Roman cohorts in Jerusalem reached Cæsarea, the Greeks and Syrians attacked the Judæans who had returned there. The carnage which ensued must have been fearful; more than twenty thousand Judæans were killed, and these, doubtless, did not succumb without, in self-defense, causing some other deaths. Not a single Judæan remained alive in Cæsarea. Those who tried to flee were captured, put into chains by the command of Florus, and sent as slaves to various ships. This unexampled cruelty exasperated the whole population of Judæa, and their hatred against the heathens broke out into wild frenzy. Everywhere, as though by common assent, bands of free troops formed themselves, attacking the heathen inhabitants of the country, burning, destroying, and slaying. These barbarous onslaughts, of course, called again for revenge from the heathen population of Judæa and Syria. Many towns were divided into two hostile parties, which savagely fought together during the day, and lay in ambush to injure each other at night.

A horrible deed, resulting from the war of races, took place in the town of Bethshean, the first of a long series of acts of self-destruction of which we read in the account of the destruction of the Temple. Its heathen inhabitants had made a covenant with their Judæan fellow-citizens, promising to befriend them if they would assist in repulsing any attack of Judæan bands upon their town. The Judæans in Bethshean honestly fulfilled their agreement, fought vigorously against their brethren, and drove them away from the vicinity of the town. Among the combatants on that occasion, Simon ben Saul, a Judæan of gigantic strength and great valor, was principally distinguished. No sooner, however, were the heathen inhabitants delivered from their 263
assailants than, under cover of the night, they fell upon the unguarded Judæans, and put them all, nearly thirteen thousand, to death. In that fearful massacre Simon and his family alone survived, the former, wielding his drawn sword with the energy of despair, drove terror into the hearts of his enemies. Full of anguish and remorse at having fought against his brethren, he resolved to fall only by his own hand. After killing his aged parents, his wife and children, he thrust his sword into his breast and expired at their side.

The violent animosity which inflamed the Judæans and heathens in Cæsarea also reached Alexandria. A massacre of the Judæans, partly due to the anger of an apostate, took place in the Egyptian capital. The Alexandrian Greeks, jealous of their Judæan fellow-citizens, resolved to solicit the Emperor Nero to deprive them of the rights which they had received from Claudius, putting them on a footing of equality with the Greeks. To select the deputies who were to convey their wishes to the emperor, a large concourse assembled in the amphitheater of the town. A few Judæans being discovered among the crowd, they were fiercely attacked and insulted as spies. Three of them were dragged through the streets to be committed alive to the flames. Enraged at the savage treatment of their brethren, the Judæans armed themselves, seized firebrands, and threatened to burn the amphitheater where the Greeks were still assembled. The governor Tiberius now attempted to interfere in order to stay the impending civil strife, but he only increased the angry ferment. The Judæans hated him for being a renegade to his faith, and reproached him with his apostasy. Infuriated by their taunts, Tiberius Alexander lost all control over himself; he ordered his legions to repair to the Judæan quarter, and gave free license to the 264
exercise of that brutality which it had cost so much effort to restrain. The soldiers, greedy for blood and plunder, poured in upon the beautiful Delta quarter of the town, killed all whom they found in their way, burned the houses, and filled the streets with blood and corpses. Fifty thousand Judæans lost their lives, and the man who ordered that frightful butchery was the nephew of the Judæan philosopher Philo!

Such was the alarming proportion which the insurrectionary movement by Eleazar ben Ananias had assumed. The revolution had tasted blood, and was drawn on and on in its hurried

course till it carried away even the indifferent, and converted almost the whole nation into Zealots. From day to day the number of brave and daring warriors increased. The expected help now came from Adiabene and Babylon. Members of the royal house of Adiabene, brothers and sons of the King Izates, Monobazus and Cenedæus, took the management of the rebellion into their own hands, and prepared to hold out to the last. Three heroes, who alone seemed more than equal to a whole army, now entered Jerusalem. They were Niger, from the other side of the Jordan, Silas, the Babylonian, and Simon Bar-Giora, the wild patriot, who, from his first entrance to the end of the war, brought terror to the hearts of the Romans. Cestius Gallus, whose duty it was as Governor of Syria to uphold the honor of Roman arms, and to keep the imperial supremacy intact in the country placed under his jurisdiction, could no longer witness the rebellion spreading around him without an effort to stem its progress. He called his legions together, and the neighboring princes voluntarily sent their troops to his assistance as auxiliaries. Even Agrippa contributed three thousand foot soldiers and two thousand horsemen to the Roman army, and offered himself as guide through the mountain paths and ravines of that 265
dangerous country. Cestius led more than thirty thousand men, experienced soldiers, out of Antioch, against Judæa, and doubted not that in one battle he would be able to destroy the Judæan rebels. On his way along the sea-coast he left in every town marks of blood and fire.

As soon as the Zealots in Jerusalem heard of the approach of the Roman troops they seized their arms, in spite of its being the Sabbath day. They were not afraid to face the Romans, nor would they allow the Sabbath laws to interfere with their warlike ardor. Cestius had made a halt at Gabaot, about a mile from Jerusalem, expecting, perhaps, a missive of repentant submission. But the Zealots attacked the Roman army with such impetuosity that they broke through their ranks, killing in the first onslaught more than five hundred soldiers, whilst they only lost three and twenty men themselves (26th Tishri—October). If the Roman cavalry had not come to the assistance of the foot soldiers, the latter would have been utterly destroyed. Loaded with rich booty, the victors returned to Jerusalem, singing jubilant hosannas, while Cestius during three days remained idle in his camp without venturing to advance.

It was only on the fourth day that the Roman army approached the capital. The Zealots had abandoned the outer parts of Jerusalem, which could afford them no adequate shelter, and had withdrawn behind the strong walls of the inner town behind the Temple. The Romans thereupon marched in, destroyed the suburb Bezetha, then pressed on towards the western point, just opposite Herod's palace, where they pitched their camp (30th Tishri). This caused no alarm to the Zealots; they threw the traitors who, following the advice of Anan ben Jonathan, wished to open the gates to the enemy, over the walls, and prepared vigorously for the defense of the places they 266
occupied. During five successive days the Romans stormed the walls, but were always obliged to fall back before the missiles of the Judæans. It was only on the sixth day that they succeeded in undermining a part of the northern wall in front of the Temple. But this advantage was not followed up by Cestius. He did not deem it advisable to continue the combat against heroic enthusiasts and embark on a lengthy campaign at that season, when the autumn rains would soon commence, if they had not already set in, and might prevent the army from receiving provisions. On that account probably he thought it more prudent to retrace his steps. It could hardly have been cowardice which inspired the resolve.

As soon as the unexpected departure of the Romans became known to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, they followed them, attacking the rear and flanks of the army from the mountain crests, the Roman troops being obliged to keep to the beaten ways in the valleys and passes. A great number of Romans, among whom were many distinguished officers, lay slain upon the line of march. When the army reached the camp in Gabaot, it found itself surrounded by swarming hosts of Judæans, and Cestius, not considering it safe to remain there any longer, hastened his retreat, leaving the heaviest part of the baggage behind. In the narrow pass of Bethoron the Roman army fared still worse; attacked on all sides, it was brought into confusion and disorder, and the men could not defend themselves from the arrows of the enemy, which fell thick upon them from the vantage-ground of the mountain wall on either side. Wildly the Roman troops hurried on towards Bethoron, and they would have been almost completely destroyed in their flight had not approaching night saved them from further pursuit.

The Judæans remained all night before Bethoron, but Cestius, leaving four hundred brave soldiers in the camp, marched noiselessly out with the whole of his army, so that at break of day, 267
when the Judæans perceived what had taken place, he had already obtained a considerable start. The four hundred soldiers left behind succumbed to the Judæans, who then vainly followed the Roman army as far as Antipatris. They found, however, rich booty, consisting of arms and implements of war. These they brought back as trophies to Jerusalem, making good use of them later on against their enemies. The money chests of Cestius, which contained the supplies for the war, fell also into their hands, and helped to replenish the treasury at Jerusalem. In this first campaign against the despised Judæans the army of Cestius lost nearly six thousand men, both Romans and allies; and the legion which the governor had brought from Antioch as a picked corps to fight against Jerusalem had lost their eagles, a loss which was regarded by Rome as the greatest dishonor that could befall an army, equivalent to a shameful defeat.

The Zealots, shouting exultant war songs, returned to Jerusalem (8th October), their hearts beating with the joyful hope of liberty and independence. The proud and happy time of the Hasmonæans seemed to have returned, and its glory even to be surpassed. Had not the great Roman army, feared by all the world, been defeated and forced to ignominious flight? What a change had been effected in the brief space of six months! Then every one trembled before the cowardly Florus and his few soldiers, and now the Romans had fled! Had not God helped them as

mercifully as He had helped their forefathers? The hearts of the Zealots knew no fears for the future. "As we have beaten the two generals, Metilius and Cestius, so likewise shall we overcome their successors." Any one who spoke of submission to Rome or of the advantage of opening negotiations with her was looked upon as a traitor to his country and an enemy to Judaism. The 268
advocates of peace had for the moment lost all influence, and the friends of Rome could not venture to utter aloud their real sentiments. Many of them left Jerusalem secretly, whilst others pretended to share the Zealots' love of freedom and hatred of Rome. The two Herodian brothers, Costobar and Saul, sought the presence of the Emperor Nero in Greece, attempting to excuse the insurrectionary outburst and to throw the blame of it upon Florus. While they were trying to vindicate the fidelity of the Judæan nation, the Zealots, intoxicated with their victory, had coins struck with the inscription—"For the deliverance of Jerusalem." Even the Samaritans now put aside their old feeling of animosity against the Judæans, and to gratify their hatred of the Romans made common cause with their former enemies.

Stirring activity took possession of the capital, and gave it quite a new appearance. Everywhere weapons were being forged and implements of war manufactured, in preparation for any fresh assault. The walls of Jerusalem were strengthened to a degree that promised to set the enemy for a long time at defiance. The young men underwent daily military exercise, and their enthusiasm made up for their want of experience. In all parts of Judæa the warlike patriots and foes of Rome formed provisional committees to prepare for the great struggle which they felt must be approaching, and their glowing ardor was shared even by the Judæans who lived in foreign lands.

Of the internal political arrangements introduced in Jerusalem after the defeat of Cestius, only slight and uncertain indications have come down to us. The historian friendly to Rome, who could not sufficiently darken the rebellion of the Judæans, was not inclined to record any of their acts. There can be no doubt, however, that the Great Synhedrion again acquired its former 269
supreme authority over all political and military affairs. At the head of the great council was Simon ben Gamaliel, of the House of Hillel, one who, even according to the account of his enemy, must have been gifted with remarkable discernment and energy, and who might, had his advice been followed, have brought the impending struggle to a successful issue. Although he did not belong to the party of extreme Zealots, he desired the contest to be carried on with the most resolute activity, and upheld, with all the strength given him by his eminence and position, those who were determined that the revolution should be real and its effects lasting. Upon coins dating from the first and second years of the newly-won independence, appears the following inscription, "Simon, the Prince of Israel," which doubtless referred to the Patriarch Simon ben Gamaliel.

After the victory gained over Cestius, the heathens became more and more embittered against their Judæan neighbors; and either from fear of an onslaught from them, or actuated by revenge for the defeat of the Romans, they formed themselves into murderous bands, slaying without pity Judæan men, women and children who were living among them. Such cruel massacres must have incensed the patriots all the more, as they frequently occurred among communities innocent of the remotest idea of joining the rebellion, and now, as far as lay in their power, the Judæans took their revenge upon their heathen neighbors. The savage enmity of races rose higher and higher, and, spreading far beyond the narrow boundary of Palestine, animated the Judæans on the one side and the Greeks and Romans on the other. As all the nations around Judæa, including Syrians, Greeks, Romans and Alexandrians, made common cause with the Roman emperor, the ultra-Zealots thought themselves justified in visiting upon them the wrath 270
that inflamed them against Rome. To cut off every link between them, the followers of the school of Shammai proposed erecting a barrier which should effectually prevent any communication, by prohibiting the Judæans in future from buying wine, oil, bread, or any other articles of food from their heathen neighbors. These regulations were known under the name of "The Eighteen Things." Religious fervor and political zealotry, in those stormy times, always accompanied each other. The Hillelites, more moderate in their religious and political views, could not agree to such sharply defined exclusiveness, but when the Synod was called together to decide upon the laws before mentioned, the Zealots proved all-powerful. Eleazar ben Ananias, probably the leader of the Zealots, who was himself a teacher of the Law, invited the disciples of both schools to meet in his house. Armed soldiers were placed at the door and were directed to allow every one to enter but no one to go out, and during the fiery discussions that were carried on there, many of the school of Hillel are said to have been killed. On account of these acts of violence, the day on which the severe decrees of the school of Shammai were brought forward and agreed to, the 9th Adar, was regarded as a day of misfortune.

Meanwhile, the warlike activity of the Judæans had not ceased for a moment. The urgent necessity of making a selection of generals and leaders for the approaching strife was felt by all. The important choice belonged, it appears, to the people themselves, who for some cause or other had taken umbrage at the ultra-Zealots. Eleazar ben Ananias, who had given the first impulse to the great uprising, was only made governor of the unimportant province of Idumæa, and was even obliged to divide his authority with another.

Eleazar ben Simon, an ultra-Zealot, who had been instrumental in gaining the victory over 271
Cestius and who was the treasurer of the Temple, was, in spite of belonging to the class of nobles, completely overlooked. Moderate men, even those who had been formerly friends of Rome, obtained the preference. Joseph ben Gorion, and Anan the son of Anan, who for a short time had held the office of high priest, received posts of the greatest importance, the supervision of Jerusalem and the defense of the fortresses. Besides these, five governors were appointed over

different provinces. To Joseph ben Matthias was entrusted the most important place of all. The people, still dazzled by the magic of aristocratic names, could not allow men of unknown origin, however brave and devoted they might be, to fill high political positions. The ruling power lay in the Great Synhedrion, and consequently in those who presided over that assembly, Simon ben Gamaliel and his associates Anan and Joseph ben Gorion.

Simon was at the head of the Pharisees, and Anan, the former high priest, made no attempt to conceal his leaning towards Sadducæism; but their antagonism in religious matters did not prevent them from now acting together. The love of country outweighed the spirit of partisanship. The apparent unanimity that reigned in the Synhedrion was nevertheless deceptive. Great nobles, secret friends to Rome, had a place and voice in that assembly, and often brought indecision into its councils. Opposite and conflicting views resulted in halting measures and diminished vigor. The Synhedrion was likewise often swayed by the changing sentiments of the people, which always receive attention in the hour of revolution. Thus deprived of united strength and active energy, the Synhedrion ruled for barely two years, when it succumbed through weakness, and was obliged to give up the reins to the ultra-Zealots.

CHAPTER X.

THE WAR IN GALILEE.

Description of Galilee—Its Population and Importance—The Rising in Galilee—John of Gischala—Flavius Josephus, his Education and Character—His Conduct as Governor of Galilee—Commencement of the War—Overthrow of Gabara—Siege and Capture of Jotapata—Surrender of Josephus to the Romans—Cruelty of Vespasian—Siege and Capture of Gamala and Mount Tabor—Surrender of Gischala—Escape of John of Gischala to Jerusalem.

66–67 C. E.

The territory entrusted for defense to Joseph ben Matthias, by reason of its position, its astonishing fertility, its sturdy population, and its various resources in time of danger, was looked upon as the post of greatest importance next to the capital; it was, in fact, the bulwark of Jerusalem. Galilee was divided into Upper and Lower Galilee. This, the country of enthusiasts, the birthplace of the Zealot Judas and of Jesus of Nazareth, did not receive the news of the revolt of Jerusalem and the defeat of Cestius with indifference. It assumed, on the contrary, with unreflecting ardor the jubilant spirit of the victorious party. And how could the Galilæans have remained indifferent? Had they not witnessed the cruel deaths of their own kin at the hands of the heathen? Daily they had been in the habit of giving shelter to unhappy Judæan exiles, and daily they had had to fear the worst from their heathen neighbors. It was in the face of such dangers that all the cities of Galilee had armed to be ready for action, and were only awaiting a signal from the Synhedrion in Jerusalem. Three cities above all others were longing to raise the standard of revolt—Gischala in the extreme north, Tiberias in the south, and Gamala, opposite 273
Tiberias, on the eastern shores of the Sea of Galilee. The Judæan inhabitants of Gischala were, to a certain extent, forced into insurrection, for the neighboring cities had banded together, and, after plundering the town, had partly destroyed it by fire. The enraged Gischalites placed themselves under the leadership of a man destined to carry on the war against Rome to its bitter end, and who, in company with Simon bar-Giora, became the terror of her legions.

John ben Levi, of Gischala, commenced his career by collecting under his flag all the rebellious Judæans of Upper Galilee, and by preparing to lead them against the heathen populace. He was a man of small means and of delicate constitution, but he possessed one of those enthusiastic natures capable of rising above the depressing influences of poverty and ill-health; besides which he had the art of making the circumstances of his life subservient to his own aims. At the commencement of the Galilæan rising, John's only ambition was to strengthen the walls of his birthplace against the attacks of hostile neighbors. Later on, he expended the considerable sums of money which he earned by selling oil to the Judæans of Syria and Cæsarea Philippi (for they would not use the unclean oil prepared by the heathens), in paying for the services of patriotic volunteers. He had gathered around him about four thousand of these, principally Galilæans, but partly refugees from Syria, who were always increasing in number.

In Tiberias, the second focus of insurrection, the revolutionary party were confronted by a faction with Roman proclivities. This beautiful city by the sea had been in the possession of King Agrippa for many years, and having enjoyed a tolerably easy condition under his rule, had but little cause for complaint. But the greater part of the populace were Zealots, clamorous to free themselves from their monarch. The soul of the revolt was Justus, the son of Pistus, who wrote 274
the history of the war in which he was engaged, in the Greek language. He was gifted with a persuasive tongue; but his great influence was confined to the wealthy and refined inhabitants of the city. Jesus ben Sapphia, a Zealot like himself, led the lower classes of sailors and burden-carriers. Opposed to these insurgents was the aristocratic party, which rallied loyally round the king and the Roman army. They were represented by Julius Capellus, Herod ben Miar, Herod ben Gamala, and Kompse bar Kompse, but they had no following amongst the people, and were obliged to become the unwilling spectators of the surrender of their city to the revolutionists.

The news of the defeat of Cestius was the signal for Justis and Jesus ben Sapphia to commence operations against the heathen cities where their co-religionists had been so barbarously massacred. The city of Gamala, one of the most important on the southeast coast of the Sea of Galilee, whose impregnable position made defense easy and conquest difficult, was preparing for revolt.

In the neighborhood of Gamala lived a settlement of Judæan Babylonians, who, under Herod I, had migrated to Batanæa, where they had built several towns and the fortress of Bathyra. The Babylonians, for the colony was called by this name, were devoted adherents to the Herodian family, and Philip, a grandson of Zamaris, the first founder of the colony, was the leader of the royal troops who fought against the Zealots in Jerusalem. When, however, he had suffered defeat in that city, his life had been spared, for he had promised to aid the Zealots in their struggle against Rome. He lay concealed for a few days in Jerusalem, and then effected his escape to a village of his own near the fortress of Gamala.

Varus, who temporarily was taking the place of Agrippa in Cæsarea, did not look favorably upon Philip, of whose influence with the king he was jealous. For Varus hoped in time to 275
supersede Agrippa, and, in order to court popularity, resorted to the cruel device of putting many Judæans in Cæsarea Philippi to death. But all the while he dreaded the Babylonian colony and the wrath of Philip, who most certainly would divulge his ambitious designs to Agrippa. Thus he tried

to lure Philip into his presence, but, happily for himself, that general was seized with a severe attack of fever, which he had caught in his flight from Jerusalem, and which prevented him from obeying the summons of Varus.

Varus succeeded, however, in tempting seventy of the most distinguished Judæans into his power, the greater number of whom were murdered by his command. At the news of this assassination, terror seized upon all the Babylonian Judæans who were settled in the various cities of Galilee. They rushed into Gamala for protection, breathing vengeance, not only against Varus, but against all the Syrians who had supported him. They were joined by Philip, who with difficulty restrained them from some signal act of vengeance. But even after Agrippa had dismissed the unscrupulous Varus from his office, the Babylonian Judæans still evinced great eagerness to coalesce with the enemies of Rome, and were therefore ordered to leave the fortress of Gamala and return to Batanæa. But this caused so great a tumult and division in the city that some of the inhabitants rose and attacked the Babylonians who were about to leave them, whilst others, under the leadership of a certain Joseph, revolted from the rule of Agrippa.

It was at this moment, when the volcano of revolutionary passions was ever ready to burst forth in fresh eruptions, that Joseph ben Matthias was entrusted by the Great Synhedrion with the command of Upper and Lower Galilee. In those provinces the powerful city of Sepphoris 276
alone remained faithful to the Romans, and in all Galilee there reigned a bitter feeling of enmity against Sepphoris. For the people of Tiberias were angered that their city should have taken only a secondary place in the province, in spite of Agrippa II's having chosen it for his capital. It was the business of the governor to promote a spirit of concord amongst the inhabitants of Galilee, and at the same time to win the Sepphorites to the popular cause. Upon the shoulders of this man rested a heavy responsibility. For it would naturally depend greatly upon him whether this revolt, which had burst into life with such extreme energy, would attain the end desired by the patriots, or would have a tragic termination. Unfortunately, Joseph was not the man who could successfully pilot so gigantic a scheme, but by his conduct he materially contributed to the fall of the Judæan nation.

Joseph, the son of Matthias, better known as Flavius Josephus, was a native of Jerusalem (born 38, died about 95), of illustrious priestly descent, and related, on the female side, to the Hasmonæan house. He and his brother Matthias received a careful education, and were taught the tenets of the Law whilst very young, their father's house being frequented by learned rabbis. At the age of sixteen Josephus became the disciple of the hermit Vanus, following his master into the desert, living on the wild fruits of the earth and bathing daily in cold water, according to the habit of the Essenes. But, growing weary of this life, he returned, after three years, to Jerusalem, where his fine intellectual tastes led him to a profound study of Greek literature. At the age of twenty-six he had occasion to undertake a journey to Rome, in order to plead for two imprisoned Pharisees, in the presence of the Empress Poppea, and he succeeded in obtaining their freedom. The Empress, who entertained a friendly feeling toward the Judæans, loaded him with gifts. 277
Rome itself could not fail to exercise a great influence upon the character of Josephus. The glitter of Nero's court, the busy life of the capital of the world, the immensity of all the imperial institutions, so dazzled him that he thought the Roman empire would be an eternal one and that it was specially favored by Divine Providence. He did not see concealed beneath the purple and the gold the terrible disease of which that great empire was sickening. From that moment Josephus became a fervent adherent of the Roman rule.

Filled with enthusiastic admiration for Rome, he must upon his return have found the proportions of Judæa humble and dwarfed. How sarcastically he must have smiled at the wild gestures of the frenzied Zealots who dreamt of expelling the Romans from Judæa! Such an expectation appeared to him like the dream of a madman. With all the experiences that he had gathered in his travels he tried to shatter the revolutionary projects of the Zealots. But it was useless; the people determined upon war, seized their weapons, and rose to revolt. Josephus, alarmed for his safety, took shelter with some of his adherents in the Temple, whence he emerged only upon hearing that the more moderate Zealots, under the leadership of Eleazer, were placed in control of affairs. Apprehensive that his well-known Roman proclivities might make him an object of suspicion, he simulated a desire for national liberty, whilst secretly rejoicing at the prospect of the advance of the Roman general Cestius, who, it was thought, would soon put an end to this mad struggle for freedom. But the result disappointed all his hopes. The retreat of Cestius resembled a defeat.

Why Josephus, the devoted adherent of Rome, should have been entrusted with the governorship of the important province of Galilee is inexplicable. Probably his friend, the former high priest Joshua, son of Gamala, whose voice carried great weight in the Synhedrion, may have 278
urged his claims, and Josephus' dissimulation may have led those about him to look upon him as a Zealot. But, at all events, the heroic bearing of the insurgents and the victory that they had gained over the army of Cestius, cannot have failed to make upon Josephus, as upon other plain and matter-of-fact Judæans, a powerful impression. Entire separation from the empire of Rome appeared to him an impossible scheme; but he may have hoped that some concessions were to be extorted from the imperial court; that perhaps Judæa might be handed over to the control of Agrippa, and that he might be allowed to fill the post in Jerusalem. To Agrippa himself the revolt was not quite unwelcome, for he hoped to reap some benefit from it, and through the agency of Josephus he was able to act in a way which he himself could not have pursued as a vassal of Rome. Josephus had, in fact, been working for Agrippa, and, in so far, there was nothing dishonest or traitorous in his conduct.

Two coadjutors, Joaser and Judah, were sent by the Synhedrion to assist Josephus. They were

both learned in the Law, and were described by him, now as pure and clean-handed, and again as open to bribery. But they were quite unimportant and soon disappeared from the scene of action. At first Josephus seems to have been anxious to promote the revolutionary ardor of the Galilæans. He called a kind of Synhedrion together, consisting of seventy men of repute, after the fashion of the great council in Tiberias. He appointed seven judges in each city, and officers of the law in different parts of Galilee. He raised an army of a hundred thousand men, armed and drilled them according to the Roman system, and inculcated order and discipline amongst his soldiers, qualities indispensable to a nation of warriors, but less important to a people 279
enthusiastic for liberty. He even created a corps of cavalry and supported them from his own means. He surrounded himself with a body-guard of five hundred mercenaries, who were disciplined to obey a sign from their master. He began to fortify a number of cities in Upper and Lower Galilee; and stored them with provisions. Thus he seriously contemplated the defense of his province against Rome. Upon his arrival in Galilee, either inspired by the Synhedrion or impelled by his own ardor, Josephus carried his religious zeal to the extent of ordering the destruction of the palace inhabited by his ancestor Herod during the time of Augustus, where images of animals were worshiped in direct defiance of the Law. In order to carry out this design he invited the most distinguished men of Tiberias to meet him at Bethmaon, but during their discussion Jesus ben Sapphia set fire to the palace and divided the spoil amongst his followers. This displeased Josephus, who hastened into the town of Tiberias, and gathering up what remained of the plunder, handed it over into the custody of King Agrippa's officers.

Peculiarly repugnant to Josephus was John of Gischala; his untiring energy and intellectual superiority were enough to awaken the jealousy of the former, although Josephus, as the representative of the Synhedrion, assumed the higher position of the two. He took pains to place obstacles in the way of the patriot. Thus John was at first not permitted to carry off and sell the large quantity of corn stored by the Romans in Upper Galilee, the sale of which was to have enabled him to complete the fortification of his own city. Joaser and Judah finally extorted from Josephus the requisite authorization. It was on this occasion that John of Gischala was made painfully aware of the duplicity of the governor, which for the future he determined to baffle. Certain youths of a village called Dabaritta, near Mount Tabor, had waylaid and plundered the 280
wife of one of the king's agents who was traveling through the land, and they brought the precious metals and rich garments which they had taken from her to Josephus, then at Tarichea. Out of too great a regard for the king, Josephus undertook to return this booty to him, at the same time falsely pretending that he had sent it to Jerusalem for the national treasury. The inhabitants of the neighboring villages, roused to angry displeasure at the news of Josephus' treachery, assembled at Tarichea in crowds. They were led by Jesus ben Sapphia, who came with the holy Book of the Law in his hand, charging the people, if not for their own sakes, at least for the honor of their sacred writings, to punish the traitor. Josephus' house was surrounded at daybreak by a furious throng, who would have burnt it down over his head had he not saved himself by one of his ingenious falsehoods. He rent his clothes, poured ashes upon his head, hung a sword round his neck, and appeared as a suppliant in the arena of Tarichea. As soon as he could gain a hearing he made the Taricheans believe that he was not keeping the spoil, either for the use of Agrippa or for the advantage of Jerusalem, but that it was to enable him to fortify the walls of their own city. The credulous Taricheans, who readily believed this explanation, now declared themselves in favor of Josephus, and turned their weapons upon the discontented strangers. The governor meanwhile, under cover of the tumult, crept back to his own house, where, however, he was soon roused by some hundreds of the infuriated crowd (not Taricheans), who were utterly intractable, and were bent upon the destruction of his dwelling-place. Nothing daunted, Josephus appeared upon the roof, and begged of the ringleaders to enter and give him some reason for their conduct. The men allowed themselves to be tempted within the doors, whereupon they were instantly seized, cruelly scourged, maimed, and then cast out to their 281
followers, who, thinking Josephus must have some hidden force of men concealed within, departed in consternation. From that moment all hope of a manly defense of Galilee had to be abandoned. Josephus was like a demon of discord, to whose lot had fallen the task of promoting a spirit of harmony amongst the people. Galilee was divided into two parties, the one composed of the more moderate inhabitants of that province, who were the adherents of the governor, the other numbering the fiery patriots, who could no longer doubt his duplicity, and had selected John as their leader. The two leaders hated each other cordially, but equaled each other in craft and dissimulation.

When John became aware that the greater number of the Galilæans were under the impression that Josephus was a truthful and reliable man, and were supporting him with all their might, he sent his brother Simon, with a hundred chosen followers, to the Synhedrion at Jerusalem, there to lodge a complaint against the governor, begging of the Great Council to recall him from his post. The President of the Synhedrion, Simon ben Gamaliel, who was a friend of John, and who entirely discredited the sincerity of Josephus, as well as Anan, the former high priest, supported this charge, and decreed that four envoys be sent to Galilee, with orders that Josephus lay down his office, and that they be invested with the power of bringing him, alive or dead, to Jerusalem. The larger communities of Tiberias, Sepphoris, and Gabara were instructed by the Synhedrion to afford no protection to Josephus, who was an enemy to his country, but to support John of Gischala in his stead.

Once more Josephus was in great peril. But, as usual, he saved himself by his own ready wit and crafty policy. On the one hand, he would not give up the post which had become dear to him; 282
and, on the other, he did not wish to disobey the orders of the Synhedrion. As soon as the decrees of the Great Council were made known to him, through his father, who was living in Jerusalem,

he took his precautionary measures. He pretended to be in active preparation for a revolt from Rome, and perplexed the envoys by the evasive replies he gave them, assuring them, with a resigned air, when they ordered him to depart instantly for Jerusalem, that he was more than ready to lay down his office. But all the while he was inciting the Galilæans to hatred of the envoys, who, in traveling from one town to another, found that they were not furthering their mission, but that, on the contrary, they were often in danger of being roughly handled by Josephus' friends. Weary of this useless journeying, the envoys, on the advice of John of Gischala, sent secret messengers throughout Galilee, declaring Josephus outlawed. A traitor revealed this resolution to the governor. With an energy deserving of a better cause, Josephus sent his troops to guard the passes leading from the Galilæan towns to Jerusalem, and had the messengers seized and brought into his presence. He then summoned all his devoted followers (who came streaming from all the small towns and villages of Galilee) to appear armed before him, and told them he was the victim of a fiendish plot. This was enough to lash them into a frenzy of rage, and they would have torn the envoys to pieces had not Josephus, with wonderfully assumed generosity, quieted their wrath. He then sent for some of the most simple-minded and credulous men of his province whom he easily persuaded into going to Jerusalem, there to extol his government, to entreat of the Synhedrion to leave their beloved governor at his post, and to recall the hated envoys.

Meanwhile, these latter, finding they could achieve nothing in Upper Galilee, withdrew from that part of the province and appeared in Tiberias. But Josephus was there before them, ready to 283
frustrate all their plans. In their extreme vexation and perplexity, they had commanded the people to keep a day of fasting and humiliation, when prayer was to be offered up for Divine help, without which no earthly weapons were of avail. The people answered to this call by assembling in great numbers in the arena of Tiberias, a place capable of holding many thousands. Although every one was supposed to be unarmed, Josephus and his soldiers managed to conceal weapons under their cloaks. Prayers for Divine help were followed by angry discussions; at last, words gave place to action, and Josephus' followers, drawing their arms, rushed frantically upon his enemies. The populace sided with Josephus, who was once more saved from deadly peril. Meanwhile, the Galilæan messengers who had been sent to Jerusalem produced so favorable an impression for Josephus in that city, that the envoys were recalled, and the governor reinstated in his official post. Josephus revenged himself upon his enemies by sending the envoys back to Jerusalem in chains, thus treating the Synhedrion with contempt.

But whilst he was bringing civil war upon Galilee, contempt upon the Synhedrion, disunion amongst the patriots, whilst he was urging the important city of Tiberias to rebellion, the Galilæan capital, Sepphoris, with its Roman proclivities, had ample time to make overtures to the Empire. Josephus must bear the eternal opprobrium of having unmanned and broken the one strong bulwark of Judæa, the vigorous and warlike Galilee, and this he accomplished through indecision, egotism, want of tact, and above all, his extraordinary duplicity. He certainly did strengthen some of the fortresses, or rather he did not prevent their garrisons from doing so, but when the Romans appeared in the land they found neither an army nor a nation to oppose them. 284
Every fortress had to depend upon its own resources. The Galilæans, without confidence in their leader, and exhausted by constant strife, were becoming self-seeking if not cowardly.

It would indeed be difficult for us to believe the numerous instances recorded of craft and duplicity on the part of Josephus, had he not dwelt upon them himself with unexampled shamelessness. All that had been gained during the four months' rebellion in Jerusalem was lost during the five fatal months of his governorship of Galilee (from Nov., 66, to March, 67), and this was before the enemy had even threatened to appear, for the Romans during that time had been inactive in Judæa. The Emperor Nero was courting popular favor in Greece, by appearing in the arena as singer, player, and charioteer. Whilst engaged in these engrossing pursuits, there came upon him like a thunderbolt the news of the rising in Judæa and the defeat of the Roman army under Cestius. Nero trembled, for the revolution in Judæa might be the precursor of grave events. The emperor was then apprised of the death of his general Cestius, and none could tell whether he had met with a natural death, or had died heartbroken at his defeat.

Nero selected as his successor Flavius Vespasian, who had won his laurels fighting against the Britons, and who was known to be one of the ablest generals of his time. But so great was the alarm felt at the Judæan rebellion and its possible consequences, that Licinius Mucianus was chosen as special governor of Syria, and ordered to quell all dangerous symptoms of disaffection that might appear among the Parthians. Vespasian was not in the emperor's favor at that time, and Nero would far rather have given some other general his post; but the emperor had no choice, for the ability of Vespasian was unquestionable, and Judæa required a strong hand. Vespasian started from Greece in the winter season, and commenced his preparations for the 285
campaign in Ptolemais. His son Titus, who first won renown in fighting against the Judæans, brought two legions from Alexandria, the fifth and tenth, those wild Decumani whose cruelty, already experienced by the Alexandrian Judæans, was now for the first time to be felt by their Palestinean brethren. Vespasian was met in Ptolemais by all who wished to express their feelings of friendliness towards the Romans; amongst others came Agrippa with his sister Berenice. Agrippa had been accused by the Tyrians of being in secret league with the rebellious Judæans, and was therefore regarded with some suspicion by Vespasian; but he came at the head of his troops as a loyal subject-prince, whilst his beautiful sister Berenice, still beautiful in spite of having passed her first youth, captivated the general's son Titus, and kept him enslaved for many years to come.

Vespasian's army, consisting of Roman troops and mercenaries, amounted to more than

50,000 men, besides the countless horde that was in the habit of following in the wake of armies. Early in the spring the army was equipped, and the campaign began by the despatch of small bands to clear the way of Judæan scouts, on the roads leading to the fortified places. Vespasian, far more prudent than his predecessor Cestius, instead of displaying great energy, carried on the campaign from beginning to end with extreme caution, seeking to cut the ground, step by step, from under his enemies' feet. Josephus and his troops were slowly but surely driven back; in open battle he was often shamefully defeated, for his men had no confidence in his generalship, and his army literally melted away at the sight of the enemy. With how different a spirit were the followers of John of Gischala inspired! As soon as the hostile forces approached Jotapata, the inhabitants of that city offered desperate resistance, and although they could not break through 286
the serried ranks of the Romans, they fought so bravely that they put the vanguard to flight.

Vespasian determined upon effecting the subjection of Galilee before turning his steps towards the capital, and to accomplish this purpose he marched upon the fortresses in the north of that province, Gabara and Jotapata. The first, insufficiently fortified, was soon taken and burnt. The entire population of the garrison were put to the sword, to avenge the defeat of the Romans at Jerusalem. The unfortunate inhabitants of the entire district suffered a similar fate, for they were either cruelly butchered or sold into slavery. The war now became one of revenge and extermination. But Josephus remained far from the scene of action in his capital at Tiberias, which at his flight thither was filled with terror.

Josephus would gladly have gone over to the enemy, but some remote feeling of shame prevented him from taking this unpardonable step at the beginning of the war. He proceeded to lay a statement of the condition of his unhappy province before the Synhedrion, demanded instruction as to his movements, whether he was to resist the enemy (in which case he would require reinforcements), or whether he was to enter into negotiations with Vespasian. The province of Galilee, although far more thickly populated than Judæa, counting more than three millions of souls, now already required military aid, so terribly had it been weakened by Josephus' inefficient management.

Vespasian marched from Gabara to Jotapata, but his troops had to make their way with the greatest difficulty, for the Judæans had endeavored to bar the narrow passes and render the road impassable. The rock upon which the fortress of Jotapata was built is surrounded by steep and lofty hills, from which it is separated by abrupt precipices. There existed only one practicable 287
entrance to the fortress, and this was on the north side, but it was firmly protected by a high wall bristling with towers. Upon this wall were gathered all possible instruments for repelling the enemy; great pieces of rock, slings for throwing stones, bows and arrows, and weapons of countless sorts. Against this one approach all the efforts of the Romans were directed. They confronted it with sixty storming machines, from which, in one uninterrupted volley, poured spears, stones, and slings containing ignitible matter. But the besieged fought with such bitterness, and with such cool contempt of death, that even the Romans grew weary. The Galilæans not only repulsed the storming parties, and often destroyed their machinery, but they also made successful sorties. The siege lasted more than forty days, when at last, through the treachery of a Galilæan, the fortress fell. Thus the Romans were able to surprise the besieged at daybreak, when they fell upon the exhausted sentinels, and then put the garrison to the sword. Many, however, of their devoted victims, rather than fall into the hands of their terrible adversaries, sought death by flinging themselves over the walls, or by falling on their own weapons. Forty thousand men lost their lives in this siege, and more than a thousand women and children were sold into slavery, whilst the fortress was razed to the ground. But Jotapata had shown her unhappy country how to fall with honor and glory. A few days previously Japha (Japhia) had been taken, its men, both old and young, slaughtered, and its women and children sold as slaves.

Josephus had been actually within the walls of the fortress of Jotapata throughout the siege. He had arrived from Tiberias at the first news of the enemy's approach, and placed himself at the head of the garrison. But divining rightly enough that all resistance would eventually prove hopeless, he had attempted to abandon his people, and had only been prevented from doing this 288
by the besieged. When the Romans entered the fortress, Josephus sought concealment in a huge cistern, in which hiding-place he found forty of his own soldiers. When their retreat was discovered, Josephus was called upon to give himself up to the Romans. This exactly coincided with his own wishes, as his person was to be protected; but his companions, pointing their swords against his breast, swore that sooner than allow him to dishonor the Judæans by his cowardice they would instantly take his life. Entirely at their mercy, he consented to their proposal that they should all die then and there. Each soldier swore that he would fall by the hand of one of his companions, and each in turn fell heroically. But Josephus broke his word to the dead as he had broken it to the living. He and one comrade being the only survivors, he succeeded, partly by persuasion and partly by force, in disarming his companion, and in delivering himself into the hands of the Romans. Vespasian treated him with extreme courtesy, as if he had never looked upon him as an enemy. Although he bore the semblance of a prisoner, he was allowed to wear a robe of honor. Vespasian loaded him with presents, Titus was his constant companion, and he was permitted to select a wife from the captive maidens.

Joppa's turn to fall before the conquerors soon followed upon that of Japha and Jotapata, whilst the people of Tiberias, thoroughly discouraged by the conduct of Josephus, were not long in opening the gates of their city to the Romans.

Thus, one year after the revolt in Jerusalem, the greater part of the province of Galilee, which had defended itself with all the fire of patriotism, with all the zeal of a free country, and with all

the enthusiasm of its faith, was ruined, depopulated, and more thoroughly than ever made subject to its conquerors.

It was upon this occasion that Agrippa proved that his conduct to the Judæans was not solely influenced by his fear of the Romans. For Vespasian gave him free control over them in his own province, and he chose to sell those unfortunate people into captivity, when he might either have chastised them or given them their liberty. 289

The Galilæan Zealots were in possession of only three fortified places—Gamala, Mount Tabor, and Gischala—in the extreme north. Joseph of Gamala and Chares were the leaders of the insurgents in Gamala. All in vain had one of Agrippa's officers besieged the place for some months; the Zealots held out, until at last Vespasian with his force approached the fortress. The story of the siege constitutes one of the most heroic pages in the whole account of the war. For many days the besieged fought from their walls in a manner worthy of the first great Zealot Judas. At the end of three weeks the battering-rams of the Romans opened a breach in the walls, through which the enemy crept. As the besieged retired, their assailants followed them into a labyrinth of narrow streets, and found themselves suddenly attacked from the house-tops. The Romans tried to save themselves by clambering on some low-roofed houses, but these were too weak to bear their weight and gave way, burying the men in their ruins. The besieged then seized upon huge stones—their whole city, so to speak—and hurled them upon their enemies' heads, so that flight was impossible.

This victory, falling upon the Feast of Tabernacles, was a glorious day for the men of Gamala; but it was dearly bought, for the corpses of the Romans lay upon the bodies of many Judæan warriors, who could ill be spared. Chares, one of their leaders, was mortally wounded. At last the Romans, after secretly mining one of the fortified towers, made a feint of attacking it; the Judæans rushed to the battlements, and were preparing for defense, when the walls gave way and fell with a fearful crash, burying the besieged, amongst whom was the sole remaining leader, Joseph, the son of the midwife. The siege was now practically over, for the Romans poured in, and slaughtered every man they met. Nearly five thousand died by their own hands; only two maidens were left out of the whole population of Gamala. 290

Meanwhile the fortress of Mount Tabor was taken by the strategy of Placidus. It stood isolated on an almost perpendicular height, rising sixteen hundred feet from the plain of Jezreel. From its position it was invincible. But Placidus tempted the greater part of the garrison out of the fortress by feigned flight. When his pursuers were close upon him, his cavalry wheeled around and threw themselves upon the unfortunate Judæans, of whom some few fled to Jerusalem, whilst the weakened fortress opened her gates to the enemy.

The small city of Gischala, garrisoned by very few men, under the leadership of John, could not possibly hold out against the Romans. Upon the approach of Titus, John begged for a twenty-four hours' truce before the capitulation of his fortress, ostensibly to preserve the sanctity of the Sabbath. Upon the acquiescence of the Roman general, he made his escape from the city, followed by many thousands of his people. On the morrow Gischala capitulated, her gates were thrown open, and her walls razed to the ground. But, indignant at the conduct of the Judæan leader, Titus ordered him to be hotly pursued. John succeeded, however, in reaching Jerusalem with a remnant of his army, whilst numbers of fugitives of both sexes and of every age were captured and massacred by the Roman soldiery. This was the last death-struggle of besieged Galilee. But the Romans were so thoroughly exhausted by those desperate encounters, and their ranks were so much thinned by their long warfare, that Vespasian was obliged to declare a truce to hostilities.

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CHAPTER XI.

DESTRUCTION OF THE JUDÆAN STATE.

Galilæan Fugitives in Jerusalem—Condition of the Capital—Internal Contests—The Idumæans—Eleazer ben Simon, John of Gischala, and Simon Bar-Giora—Progress of the War—Affairs in Rome—Vespasian created Emperor—Siege of Jerusalem by Titus—Heroic Defense—Famine—Fall of the Fortress Antonia—Burning of the Temple—Destruction of the City—Number of the Slain.

67–70 C. E.

Jerusalem was the rallying point of all the Galilæan fugitives. Thither many thousands had been brought by John of Gischala, and thither numbers fled from Tiberias; there, where the last stroke of the nation's destiny was to fall, patriotism, ambition, revenge, and despair were all duly represented. The Galilæan Zealots' burning account of their desperate resistance to the Roman arms, and of the massacre of the weak and defenseless by the soldiers of Titus, had stirred the blood of the people of Jerusalem. The despondent drew fresh courage, and the fearless still greater ardor from the words of these enthusiasts. The defenders of their country, daily growing in numbers, and heroic in deed as well as in word, considered themselves invincible. When the Zealots looked upon the fortresses of their capital, the last shadow of alarm melted away. The Romans, they declared, must have wings to take those walls and those towers, whose defenders were iron-hearted men. Had it not cost Rome a desperate struggle to conquer Galilee; what then had the strongly fortified capital to fear? This overwrought condition of the Judæans was stimulated by their ardent belief that the Messianic period, so long foretold by the prophets, was actually dawning, when every other nation of the earth would be given into the dominion of 292
Israel. In spite of the loss of Galilee and of its brave defenders, coins were struck, bearing this inscription: "In the first or second year of the deliverance or freedom of Israel," and on the reverse side: "Simon, Prince of Israel." But the Zealots were indulging in fatal self-confidence, almost as dangerous to their cause as the treachery of Josephus and the conquest of Galilee.

Never had Jerusalem been so populous, so beautiful, and so strong as at the moment when she was doomed to destruction; it was as if she was to learn the bitter lesson that outward strength and outward glory alone are of but little avail. Within the fortifications, the circumference of Jerusalem was nearly one geographical mile in extent, embracing the suburbs of Bethany and Bethphage, where the worshipers who came up thrice a year to the holy city found shelter. It is difficult to compute the exact population of Jerusalem. From one source we learn that it contained six hundred thousand souls; but then we must further take into account the numbers that had streamed into the city for protection.

The Zealots had not succeeded in imparting their enthusiasm to the inhabitants of the country towns; many of the wealthiest and shrewdest, seeing no possible advantage to themselves in the continuation of the war, were ready to capitulate. Thus only the very young and men of no worldly position devoted themselves to the cause of the revolutionists. Every community, every family, was divided against itself, some clamoring for war and others demanding peace; but as the former had no rallying point in their own towns, they all sought kindred spirits in Jerusalem, and increased the number of Zealots in that city. The fortress of Masada alone, commanded by Eleazer ben Jair, was a hotbed of insurgents; it was the Jerusalem of the Sicarii, who were 293
strengthened by the leadership of Simon Bar-Giora. This man, who was to play a leading part in the war, was remarkable for his physical strength, and distinguished for his reckless courage, a quality which did not desert him until his last breath. At the flight of the Roman troops under Cestius he followed amongst the very first upon the heels of the fugitives. He then gathered a number of free-lances about him, and led a wild life in the neighborhood of the Dead Sea, namely in Acrabattine. When the inhabitants of that district complained in Jerusalem that he imperiled their safety, the moderate party of the Zealots sent a troop against him, obliging him to take refuge in Masada. It was from this place that he and the Sicarii undertook armed expeditions into Idumæa for the purpose of cattle-lifting and forage-hunting. This roused the Idumæans to retaliate by opposing his force with a large army numbering twenty thousand men. These rival hosts outdid each other in patriotism, fierce courage, and recklessness.

The stream of patriots daily pouring into Jerusalem fanned the excitement and warlike energy of the inhabitants, embittered as they were by Josephus' duplicity and defection. For, as long as the Judæans believed that he was buried under the ruins of Jotapata, his name was mentioned with reverence, but as soon as the tidings spread that he was in the Roman camp, and treated with consideration by the Roman generals, their feelings of pity were changed into violent hatred. The ultra-Zealots were filled with suspicion and distrust, and they looked upon all who were not in favor of extreme measures as traitors to the cause.

Eleazer ben Simon, the leader of the Zealots, and a man of great penetration, nursed a special feeling of hatred against the Synhedrion, a body that bound him, valiant and aspiring patriot as 294
he was, to a life of inaction. And who presided in the Synhedrion? Josephus' friend and chosen companion, Joshua ben Gamala, who had not attempted to depose the Governor of Galilee, even when his duplicity was clearly proved. And who was the treasurer? Antipas, a Herodian, a near relative of King Agrippa. Was it not more than likely that the Synhedrion and the Herodians would throw open the gates of their city at the approach of the Romans? This was the prevailing feeling of the Zealots, and they believed themselves strong enough to take the government into

their own hands, and by desperate exertions to prosecute the war undisturbed.

It was not surprising that from day to day the feeling of enmity between the Zealots and the more moderate Synhedrists should grow in intensity, for it was a war of life and death in which they were engaged. Matters were brought to a crisis by the Zealots falling upon and imprisoning those persons whose relationship to the royal house and whose doubtful opinions seemed to proclaim them to be secret conspirators. But they did not halt at this step. They degraded those belonging to the family of the high-priest from their position, and replaced them by representatives chosen from the people. They determined upon divesting the high-priest of his office (of late years the Romans had held the conferring of this dignity in their own hands), and raising to this exalted rank an unknown priest of the name of Phineas ben Samuel, of the city of Aphta. It was said of Phineas, probably to disparage him, that he had originally been a stone-mason or an agriculturist. He was brought by the Zealots with due solemnity from his homely surroundings, was invested with the priestly garments, and was materially aided by his rich friends to maintain the dignity of his state, whilst Matthias ben Theophilus, who had been chosen high-priest by Agrippa, was deposed. The Synhedrists, whose leaders belonged principally to the 295
high-priesthood, and who looked upon the instalment of Phineas as an outrage to their sacred calling, were beside themselves with indignation at this step. Anan, whose audacity of speech and great wealth entitled him to a prominent position in the Synhedrion, induced the citizens of Jerusalem to rebel, and to attack the Zealots sword in hand, and thus the civil war commenced. The moderate party, who were numerically the stronger, drove their antagonists step by step out of every district of the city up to the Mount of the Temple, where they forced them to take refuge within the second wall of the citadel. Meanwhile, a rumor spread that Anan had called upon the Roman general for help. This was enough to bring John of Gischala with his troops to the gates of the capital. Twenty thousand Idumæans, men who rejoiced in an appeal to reckless and savage soldiery, under the leadership of John, Simon, Phineas, and Jacob, appeared likewise before Jerusalem, ready to wield their swords in favor of the Zealots who were besieged in the Temple. Anan prepared for the assault by barring the gates and doubling his sentinels. But in the ensuing night his troops were seized with a panic. A terrific storm of thunder, lightning, and drenching rain raged over Jerusalem. The Idumæans, men of bold character and hardy nature, did not flinch from their position, but many of the sentinels on the walls sought shelter from the violence of the elements and deserted their posts. The ever-watchful Zealots within the fortifications were thus able to communicate with their Idumæan allies and to effect their entrance. The besiegers threw themselves upon some of the unsuspecting watch, whilst the Zealots overpowered others. The citizens were roused to arms and a terrible battle ensued. The moderate party laid their weapons down in despair, as the Idumæans pouring into the city massacred all those whom they suspected 296
of being friendly to Anan. The morning sun dawned upon a hideous mass of corpses, for more than 8000 dead bodies were found in the city.

The Zealots were now the victors, and their reign of terror began. They committed to trial, not without some show of justice, and then executed, all persons suspected of having been concerned in the conspiracy. Anan and Joshua ben Gamala were necessarily amongst the victims, and the bitterness which was felt towards them was so great that their unburied bodies were thrown to the dogs. The Synhedrion naturally ceased to exist, so many of its members having been executed; but a new Synhedrion seems to have been called into being by the Zealots, no longer of aristocratic and high-priestly elements, but rather of a democratic order, also numbering seventy members.

The Idumæans were as heartily disliked by the Zealots as they were by the moderate party, and many of them were courteously persuaded to withdraw from Jerusalem. Meanwhile the reign of terror continued, and amongst others fell Niger, the hero from Peræa, probably because he had upheld the Synhedrists. In fact, this one case corroborates the general rule that every revolution devours its originators. For Niger was one of those who had strained every nerve to support the first rising amongst the Judæans, and his death was a blot upon the rule of the Zealots. In order to check the anarchy which followed the overthrow of the Synhedrion, John of Gischala threw himself boldly into the front ranks, and was warmly supported by the Galilæan fugitives. His heroic bearing soon secured him the following of the most fiery of the Judæans, whose devotion to himself rivaled that of his own Galilæans. John was born to be a leader of men; for not only was he dauntless as a commander, but he excelled others in penetration and fertility of invention. This superiority naturally awakened the jealousy of the Zealot leaders in Jerusalem, 297
who were not a little afraid of his becoming sole dictator and lawgiver.

Meanwhile the Romans were remaining absolutely quiet. Vespasian was far too prudent to attack the lion in his lair, in spite of the repeated assurances of his followers that the conquest of Jerusalem would be an easy task. He chose to wait until the Judæans, weakened by their internal strife, would be entirely at his mercy. His troops, after spending an inactive winter (67–68), opened a new campaign in the spring against Peræa and many distant parts of Judæa, where thousands were slain in obstinate and hard fighting. Vespasian returned to Cæsarea at the end of this campaign, and left Jerusalem undisturbed for two years. He was led to this course by two different events: the fresh outburst of civil war in Jerusalem, the death of Nero, and the fact that his successor had been chosen and triumphantly installed by the Spanish and Gallic legions.

The lawless Simon Bar-Giora, who had kindled the war in Jerusalem, could not rest in Masada, where the Sicarii had received him, for he was ambitious and eager for action. Thus he left the fortress, and collecting a number of slaves, to whom he held out promises of freedom and plunder, appeared before Jerusalem, ready to play an important part in the war. But the Zealots were afraid of him, and wished to make him powerless. They did not dare meet him in open

battle, for he had already been their conqueror; so they waited in ambush, and made his wife and some of his soldiery prisoners, hoping to crush him by this cowardly action. But Bar-Giora was a stern-hearted warrior, and, in retaliation, threw himself upon the defenseless Judæans who ventured outside the walls to procure the necessaries of life. The Judæans, alarmed at this revenge, sent back his wife, while Bar-Giora was more determined than ever to make himself master of the capital. Day and night he waited and watched for some means of ingress, and at last he obtained what he wished through the party of the aristocrats. 298

In spite of the loss of their most prominent men, this party had not really ceased to exist, but was secretly working to destroy the power of the Zealots. At their head stood the high-priest Matthias, the son of Boëthus, and others belonging to the great priestly families. They knew how to enlist upon their side many of the populace who were unable to leave the city, and who were afraid of the consequences of the civil war. In league with the Idumæans, they suddenly made a well-directed attack upon the Zealots, over whom they gained a signal, but only a momentary advantage, for, recovering themselves from this defeat, the Zealots assembled upon the Mount of the Temple, and prepared to show a bold front to their opponents. The latter, much discomfited, appealed to Bar-Giora for assistance, and thus a fatal division was brought within the very walls of Jerusalem.

With the entry of this commander, civil war began in its most terrible form. Bar-Giora commanded his followers to surround the Mount of the Temple, where the Zealots lay entrenched. From the galleries and from the roofs the besieged were able not only to defend themselves, but also to repulse their assailants. In spite of his impatience, Bar-Giora was obliged to withdraw and to take up a safer position in the town.

Vespasian, who was informed of all these movements, quietly bided his time, convinced that the losing side would sooner or later demand his help, and that then victory would be easy. He felt indisposed, through various circumstances, to undertake a long and difficult siege, but was inclined rather to keep his hands free for the final struggle. Nero had ended his shameful life with a shameful death (68), and Galba, who succeeded him as emperor, held the reins of power with an aged and trembling grasp. Old and childless, he had to think of choosing a successor. At this critical time, when every day was pregnant with some important event, Vespasian did not think it prudent to devote himself to the siege of Jerusalem. He adopted a waiting, watchful policy, and sent his son Titus with King Agrippa to Rome to receive the new emperor, and, as people said, to be adopted by him as heir to his vast empire. But when Titus heard, upon arriving in Corinth, that Galba had been murdered (5 Jan., 69), and that two emperors had been elected by the legions in his stead—Otho in Rome, and Vitellius in Lower Germany, he hurried back to Judæa, not only buoyed up by the secret hopes of seeing his father created emperor in the general confusion which was pending, but also attracted by a powerful magnet, the beautiful Princess Berenice, who, in spite of living according to orthodox Judæan custom, did not hesitate to carry on an intrigue with the heathen Titus. Otho could retain possession of the purple only for one hundred days, at the end of which time he found himself forced to fight against Vitellius, whom the German legions had borne upon their shields, by way of teaching the Spanish legions that they were fittest to choose and instal an emperor. They also wished to make it evident that the emperor need not owe his election only to Rome and the Prætorian Guard, but should be the choice also of the legions in the provinces. Vitellius' army gained the victory, and Otho, after brave resistance, fell by his own hand. Meanwhile Vespasian was dreaming of the moment when he should drape himself in the stained imperial mantle, but he hesitated before putting his scheme into execution. He wished to be driven to it. Partly, he feared Licinius Mucianus, governor of Syria, who commanded more legions than he did, and with whom he was not on very friendly terms. But Vespasian's son Titus, who made no secret of his ambition, won over Mucianus to urge his father into allowing himself to be proclaimed emperor. It was also absolutely essential to obtain the support of Tiberius Alexander, the son of the Alabarch and the governor of that most important province—Egypt. This move in the great game was due to the hand of a woman. The Princess Berenice was a friend of the Egyptian governor, and she was furthering the imperial election as an affair of the heart. Titus' love for her was so openly avowed that all her court were convinced that he had promised her marriage. It was therefore not unnatural that she should employ all the means suggested by her imagination, and made possible by her personal charms, to attain this end. The most important step was to gain Tiberius Alexander's support for Vespasian, and in this she succeeded admirably. The governor of Egypt responded to her appeal by making his legions swear fealty to him whom they now called emperor. A few days later the legions stationed in Judæa, and the Syrian troops under the command of Mucianus, also tendered their allegiance to Vespasian. The possession of the coveted purple was enough to make Vespasian for the time being forgetful of the conquest of Judæa. Accompanied by his son Titus, he repaired to Egypt, where they received the news of Vitellius' death (Dec., 69), an event which had drawn forth but the contemptuous scorn of his people. 299 300

And how did Jerusalem spend the two years of peace that Vespasian granted her? There were originally four distinct factions in the city, without counting the more moderate. These were the Jerusalem Zealots under Eleazer ben Simon and Simon ben Ezron, consisting only of two thousand four hundred members, the Galilæan Zealots under John, numbering six thousand armed men, the Simonists and Sicarii outnumbering the rest by their army of ten thousand, and the Idumæans under Jacob ben Sosa and Simon ben Kathla, a troop of five thousand men. These twenty-four thousand heroic patriots might have put their valor to some account in one decisive battle could they but have acted in harmony. But not one of their leaders was capable of sacrificing his own ambition to the general good. The followers of Eleazer claimed precedence on 301

the grounds of their being natives of Jerusalem and of having thus given the first impulse to the movement. John insisted upon his superiority on account of his quickness of perception and readiness in action, and Simon felt revengeful towards the Zealots, who had dared quell his disorder. Members of the four different factions were perpetually meeting and fighting in the streets, giving the enemy both the time and the opportunity to devastate the surrounding country; for it was almost certain that no one faction would dare oppose the Romans, and equally certain that the four factions would not combine in arms against them.

Titus, the new heir to the imperial throne, at last made his appearance before Jerusalem (February, 70), fully expecting that he would be able to force the city into submission; for it was almost a reproach to the Romans that this rebellious capital should have maintained her independence for four years. The prestige of the new imperial house seemed in some measure to depend upon the fall of Jerusalem; a protracted siege would necessarily imply weakness in the military power of Vespasian and his son.

Although Titus was eagerly looking forward to the subjection of Judæa, he could not complete his preparations for the siege of Jerusalem before the spring. He collected an army of not less 302
than eighty thousand men, who came, bringing with them the largest number of battering machines that had been used in the warfare of that time. Three traitors amongst the Judæans were most useful to him in his laborious undertakings—King Agrippa, who not only brought a contingent of men, but who also tried to influence the inhabitants of Jerusalem in favor of the Romans; Tiberius Alexander, who sealed his apostasy from Judaism by going into battle against his own nation; and Josephus, the constant companion of Titus, who, from being a prisoner, had become a guide in the country which he knew so well. Titus was not experienced enough in the art of war, and so bade the Judæan apostate stand by his side, and gave him the command of his own body-guard (Præfectus prætorio). But the hostile factions had drawn together when this new danger threatened them. Shortly before the Passover festival numbers of devoted men streamed into Jerusalem to defend their holy city. The elders and chiefs had sent messengers to the people living in the outlying provinces, praying for help, and their request was not made in vain. The walls of Jerusalem were fortified more strongly than ever.

At last Titus assembled his huge army from all sides and encamped at Scopus-Zophim, north of Jerusalem. He summoned in the first instance the inhabitants to surrender; he demanded only submission, acknowledgment of the Roman rule, and payment of the taxes. Eager as he was to return to Rome, where all the enjoyments belonging to his great position were awaiting him, he was ready to deal gently with the Judæans. Besides which, his devotion to a Judæan princess, who, in spite of her errors, still clung faithfully to the holy city, made him anxious to spare that city from destruction. But the Judæans refused all negotiation. They had sworn to defend their 303
city with their lives, and would not hear of surrender. Then the siege began in earnest. All the gardens and groves to the north and west of Jerusalem, the first points of the attack, were unsparingly destroyed.

Titus, anxious to reconnoitre the ground, advanced with a few followers to the north wall, where he narrowly escaped being taken prisoner. The first feat of arms upon the part of the Judæans was crowned with success, and seemed a good omen for the future. A few days later they surprised and totally discomfited the Tenth Legion, who were pitching their tents on the Mount of Olives. But, unfortunately, this skirmish proved fruitless, for the Judæans were always obliged to retreat to their fortresses, not, however, without having convinced the Romans that they would have a desperate foe to encounter. The besiegers succeeded in pitching their camps on three sides of the city, and in raising their engines against the outer wall. Titus commenced operations during the Passover festival (March or April, 70), when he believed that the Judæans would not be willing to fight. But as soon as the engines were in working order, they rushed like demons from their retreat, destroying the battering-rams, scattering the workmen, and bringing alarm and confusion upon the enemy. Not only the Zealots, but all who could carry arms took part in the defense, the women setting splendid examples of heroism to the men. The besieged threw masses of stone upon their assailants, poured boiling oil upon their heads, seized the ponderous missiles that were hurled into the city, and turned them into tools of destruction against the Romans. But the latter succeeded in repairing their broken battering-rams, and in forcing the Judæans, after fifteen days of conflict, back from the outer wall. This wall, the scene of a desperate struggle, was at last taken by the Romans, who, while making themselves masters of it, seized the suburban town of Bezetha.

The skirmishes were now carried on daily, and with increasing bitterness. After seventeen 304
days of unremitting labor, the Romans succeeded in raising their banks opposite the Antonine tower. But John of Gischala and some heroic followers of Bar-Giora, creeping through a subterranean passage, destroyed these works by setting fire to them. With the ever-increasing danger grew the heroism of the besieged. All Josephus' persuasive words, prompted by Titus, were useless. There were but two courses left open to them—victory or death. At the very outset of the siege they had learned what they would have to expect from the Romans. Titus, surnamed "Delight of all Mankind," crucified, at times, five hundred of his prisoners in a day. Again, he would send them back into the city after cutting off their hands. He was, however, forced to acknowledge to himself that the siege would be one of long duration. But the horrors of famine were soon to come to his assistance. All egress from and ingress into the besieged city being rigorously prevented, the provisions began to fail amongst the thickly-crowded populace. Houses and streets were filled with unburied corpses, and the pangs of starvation seemed to destroy all feelings of pity in the unfortunate survivors. The prospect—a terrible one indeed—of a lingering death sent numbers of deserters to the Romans, where they met with a pitiful fate. As the

number of these unfortunate fugitives increased, the Zealots treated those whom they suspected of defection with still greater severity. A conspiracy being discovered amongst Bar-Giora's followers, that leader relentlessly punished the guilty with death. They were all beheaded in full view of the Roman camp, amongst them being Matthias Boëthus, of priestly family.

But in spite of the watchfulness of the Zealots, they were unable to circumvent the traitors in all their designs. Those who were secretly friendly to Rome shot off on their arrow-heads written 305
accounts concerning the state of the city, which fell into the enemy's camp. The Zealots struggled manfully to prevent the Romans from completing their earthworks, but at the end of twenty-one days, the battering-rams were again pointing at the Antonine tower. The wall surrounding the fortress fell at length under the tremendous blows from without. What was the surprise and horror of the Romans, however, when they discovered that a second and inner wall had been erected behind the one they had succeeded in destroying. They tried in vain to storm it, the Judæans repulsing a nocturnal attack. The battle lasted until the following morning. It was at about this time that the daily sacrifices ceased, on account of the scarcity of the animals. Titus seized this opportunity again to summon the besieged to surrender, but the mere sight of the interpreter who bore the message aroused the indignation of the besieged. John of Gischala replied that the holy city could not be destroyed, and that God held her fate in His hands. The Judæans then withdrew to their last point of defense, the Temple. The battering-rams were raised against the sacred walls. The unfortunate people were compelled to destroy the colonnades leading to the Antonine tower, thus cutting off all connection with that fortress. They spared no craft to tire out the Romans, even setting fire to some of the pillars attached to the Temple, and then pretending to take flight. This stratagem succeeded in making the Romans climb over the walls, beyond which the Judæans lay in ambush to receive them, putting them to the sword or casting them into the flames. But the fire could not be extinguished, and the beautiful colonnade of the western side was entirely destroyed.

Meanwhile, the inhabitants of the city were suffering cruelly from famine, which was sapping their life, obliterating all distinctions between rich and poor, and giving free scope to the lowest 306
passions. Money had lost its value, for it could not purchase bread. Men fought desperately in the streets over the most loathsome and disgusting food, a handful of straw, a piece of leather, or offal thrown to the dogs. The wealthy Martha, wife of the High Priest Joshua ben Gamala, whose wont it had been to step on carpets from her house to the Temple, was found searching the town like the very poorest for a morsel of food, of even the most revolting description. As if not one line of the old prophecy concerning the doom of Judæa was to remain unfulfilled, a terrible scene was enacted, which struck even the enemy with horror. A woman by the name of Miriam, who had fled from Peræa to the capital, actually killed and devoured her own child.

The rapidly increasing number of unburied corpses made the sultry summer air pestilential, and the populace fell a prey to sickness, famine, and the sword. But the army of the besieged fought on with unbroken courage, they rushed to the battle-field, although fainting with hunger and surrounded by grim pictures of death, as bravely as had been their wont in the early days of the siege. The Romans were amazed at the unflinching heroism of the Zealots, at their devotion to the Sanctuary and to the cause of their people. In fact, they grew to look upon them as invincible, and stimulated by this belief, some few of their number were actually known to desert their colors and their faith and to accept Judaism, persuaded, in their turn, that the holy city could never fall into the hands of the enemy. Proud as the Judæans well might be of these voluntary proselytes, at this the supreme moment of their history, they volunteered to guard them as best they could from the horrors of starvation.

Meanwhile, the Romans had begun to batter the outer walls of the courts of the Temple. For six days they had been working in vain, and had then tried to fix their scaling ladders and storm 307
the walls. But as they were repulsed with great loss of life, Titus relinquished his hope of sparing the sacred edifice, and ordered his men to set fire to the gates. For a whole night and the next day the fire raged fiercely; then Titus commanded that it should be extinguished, and that a road should be leveled for the advance of his legions. A council of war was hastily summoned to decide upon the fate of the Sanctuary. This council consisted of six of the chief generals of the army, three of whom advised the destruction of the Temple, which, if spared, would inevitably remain as a focus for rebellion. Titus was opposed to this decision, partly on account of the Princess Berenice's feelings, and three of the council agreeing with their leader, it was decided to take the Temple, but not to destroy it.

On the 9th Ab, the Judæans made another desperate sally, but were driven back by an overpowering force of the besiegers. But the hour of the city's doom was about to strike, and in striking, leave an echo that would ring through the centuries to come. The besieged attempted one more furious onslaught upon their enemies. They were again defeated, and again driven back to their sheltering walls. But this time they were closely followed by the Romans, one of whom, seizing a burning firebrand, mounted upon a comrade's shoulders, and flung his terrible missile through the so-called golden window of the Temple. The fire blazed up; it caught the wooden beams of the sanctuary, and rose in flames heavenwards. At this sight the bravest of the Judæans recoiled terror-stricken. Titus hurried to the spot with his troops, and shouted to the soldiers to extinguish the flames. But no one heeded him. The maddened soldiery plunged into the courts of the Temple, murdering all who came within their reach, and hurling their firebrands into the 308
blazing building. Titus, unable to control his legions, and urged by curiosity, penetrated into the Holy of Holies.

Meanwhile, the Judæans, desperate in their death agonies, closed wildly with their assailants. The shouts of victory, the shrieks of despair, the fierce hissing of the flames, making the very

earth tremble and the air vibrate, rose in one hideous din, which echoed from the tottering walls of the Sanctuary to the mountain-heights of Judæa. There were congregated clusters of trembling people from all the country round, who beheld in the ascending flames the sign that the glory of their nation had departed forever. Many of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, unwilling to outlive their beloved Temple, cast themselves headlong into the burning mass. But thousands of men, women, and children, in spite of the fierce onslaught of the legions and the rapidly increasing flames, clung fondly to the inner court. For had they not been promised by the persuasive lips of false prophets, that God would save them by a miracle at the very moment of destruction? They fell but an easier prey to the Romans, who slew some six thousand on the spot. The Temple was burnt to the ground, and only a few smouldering ruins were left, rising like gigantic ghosts from the ashes. A few of the priests had escaped to the tops of the walls, where they remained without food for some days, until they were compelled to surrender. Titus ordered their instant execution, saying, "Priests must fall with their Temple." The conquering legions raised their standards in the midst of the ruins, sacrificed to their gods in the Holy Place, and saluted Titus as emperor. By a strange coincidence the second Temple had fallen upon the anniversary of the destruction of the first Temple (10th Ab, 70). Titus, who could no longer feel bound to respect the feelings of the Princess Berenice, gave orders that the Acra and the Ophla, different parts of the city, should be instantly set on fire.

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But the struggle was not yet over. The leaders of the rebellion had retreated to the upper city with some of their followers. There they conferred with Titus. John and Simon, having sworn that they would never lay down their arms, offered to surrender upon the condition that they would be permitted to pass armed through the Roman camp. But Titus sternly bade them throw themselves upon his mercy; and so the fierce strife blazed out anew. On the 20th of Ab, the Romans began to raise their embankments, and after eighteen days of labor the siege of the upper city commenced. Even then the Zealots would not think of surrender. Discovering that the Idumæans were secretly making terms with Titus, they threw some of the ringleaders into prison, and executed others. But the Judæan warriors were exhausted by their super-human resistance and by the long famine, and the Romans were at last able to scale the walls and to seize the fortresses, a prelude to their spreading through the city, plundering and murdering the last of the wretched inhabitants. On the 8th of Elul they set fire to all that remained of Jerusalem, the upper city, known by the name of Zion. The walls were entirely leveled, Titus leaving only the three fortresses of Hippicus, Mariamne, and Phasael to stand as lasting witnesses of his victory. Under the ruins of Jerusalem and her Temple lay buried the last remnant of Judæa's independence. More than a million of lives had been lost during the siege. Counting those who had fallen at Galilee, Peræa, and the provinces, it may be assumed that the Judæans who inhabited their native land were almost all destroyed.

Once more did Zion sit weeping amongst the ruins, weeping over her sons fallen in battle, over her daughters sold into slavery or abandoned to the savage soldiery of Rome; but she was more desolate now than in the days of her first captivity, for hushed was the voice of the prophet, who once foretold the end of her widowhood and her mourning.

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CHAPTER XII.

THE AFTER-THROES OF THE WAR.

Sufferings of the Prisoners—The Arena—Cruelty of Titus—Enmity of the Antiochians—Triumph of the Emperor on the occasion of the Conquest of Judæa—End of Simon Bar-Giora and John of Gischala—Coins to Commemorate the Roman Triumph—Fall of the Last Fortresses: Herodium, Masada, and Machærus—Resistance of the Zealots in Alexandria and Cyrene—End of the Temple of Onias—The Last of the Zealots—Death of Berenice and Agrippa—Flavius Josephus and his Writings.

70–73 C. E.

It would, indeed, be difficult to describe the sufferings of those who were taken captive in the war, estimated at the number of nine hundred thousand. The surviving inhabitants of Jerusalem were driven into the site of the Temple, and placed under the guardianship of a certain Fronto and a freed slave. All those who were recognized as insurgents were crucified, the princes of Adiabene alone being spared and sent as hostages to Rome, to secure the loyalty of the king of Adiabene. Seventeen thousand prisoners died of hunger, many of them being neglected by Fronto, whilst others indignantly refused the food which their conquerors offered them. From amongst the youths above seventeen years of age, the tallest and handsomest were selected for the Roman triumphs, whilst others were sent to labor in the mines for the rest of their lives, or were relegated to the Roman provinces, to take their part in the fights of the arena. Youths under the age of sixteen and most of the female captives were sold into slavery at an incredibly low price, for the market was glutted. How many scenes of horror must have been witnessed and enacted by those unfortunate ones! They had, it is true, one ray of comfort left. Possibly they 312
might be carried to some Roman town where a Judæan community existed; their own people would assuredly give any sum to purchase their freedom, and would then treat them with brotherly sympathy.

Vespasian now declared that all Judæa was his property by conquest, and bade the Roman officials divide the country into lots, offering them to the highest bidder. And why should he not do so? Had he not fertilized the land with blood? Besides which, the sale would realize great profits, and Vespasian cared even more for gold than for honor.

And what was the work of the merciful Titus after ordering the execution of thousands, and consigning thousands to slavery? In his march through Syria he was followed by the most vigorous of his captives in chains. When he held his court in Cæsarea, and entertained his friends in true Roman style, wild beasts were brought into the arena, and Judæan captives fought with them until they were torn to death; or they were forced to fight one against another, dying by each other's hands. Thus at Cæsarea, two thousand five hundred brave Judæan youths perished in this manner to celebrate the birthday of Domitian, the brother of the conqueror. And at Cæsarea Philippi, on Mount Hermon, the residence of King Agrippa, this terrible spectacle was renewed before the eyes of that monarch and of the Princess Berenice. Vespasian's birthday was honored in the same way at Berytus, the sand of the arena being literally soaked with Judæan blood. In fact, the gentleness and humanity of Titus were strangely displayed in all cities of Syria by a repetition of these barbarities. The Judæan communities in Syria, Asia Minor, Alexandria, and Rome, very nearly shared the fate of their brethren in Judæa. For the war had aroused the hatred of the entire heathen world against the unfortunate children of Israel—a hatred which was 313
fanatical in its intensity, its object being the entire destruction of the whole race. Titus' inmost feelings must have coincided with those of his people. But strange to say, his love for Berenice, so deeply implanted in his heart, made him, upon one occasion, extend his mercy to her race. When he approached the city of Antioch, the whole populace turned out to meet him and demanded nothing less than the expulsion of the Judæan colony. But Titus replied that "The Judæans having no country left to them, it would be inhuman to expel them from Antioch—they had no retreat." He even refused sternly to cancel their existing privileges. The Alexandrian Judæans also were left undisturbed in their adopted city.

Titus determined to celebrate his triumph over Judæa in the capital of the empire. For this purpose seven hundred of the flower of the Judæan captives and the two leaders of the Zealots, John of Gischala, who had surrendered to the enemy when fainting with hunger, and Simon Bar-Giora, were sent to Rome. At the close of the siege of Jerusalem the dauntless Simon had leaped, with some of his followers, into one of the vaults beneath the city, and provided with workmen's tools, had attempted to hew his way out; but coming upon a great rock he was prevented from accomplishing his purpose, and his slender stock of provisions failing him, he determined to die as became a hero. In a white robe, covered with a purple mantle, he suddenly appeared before the Roman sentinels who were reposing amongst the ruins of the Temple. They gazed at him with terror. He merely addressed them with the following words: "Take me to your general." When Rufus appeared at the sentinels' call, the leader of the Zealots presented himself before his astonished gaze, saying: "I am Simon Bar-Giora." He was instantly thrown into chains, and calmly 314
awaited the fate that he knew was in store for him.

Vespasian and his two sons, Titus and Domitian, celebrated their triumph over Judæa, in the imperial city of Rome. In front of the emperor were borne the vessels of the Temple, the seven-branched candlestick, the golden table, and a roll of the Law. The Romans were further gladdened by the pageant of a long train of Judæan captives heavily chained, and by the

wonderful representations of all the horrors and misery of the war—a kind of theatrical entertainment, devised with much ingenuity for the occasion. Simon Bar-Giora (the terrible foe of the Roman legions), with a halter round his neck, was dragged through the streets of Rome, and finally hurled as a human sacrifice to the gods, from the Tarpeian rock. John of Gischala met with his fate in a dungeon. Tiberius Alexander, the conqueror of his own race, shared in the triumph, and a statue was erected in his honor in the Forum. Josephus was but a spectator of the scene. This magnificent triumph, the like of which had not been witnessed for many years in Rome, was a proof of the exultant joy, which passed like a wave over the heathen world, at the fall of Judæa, for the Roman legions had but rarely met with so obstinate a foe. To commemorate this great victory, coins were struck, upon which Judæa was variously represented, as a sorrowing woman under a palm tree, either standing with fettered hands, or seated in a despairing attitude upon the ground. The coins bore these inscriptions, "the Conquered" or "the Captive Judæa" ("Judæa devicta," "Judæa capta"). Later on, a beautiful arch was erected to Titus, which is still standing, and upon which the carved reliefs of the candlestick and vessels of the Temple are plainly visible. The Roman Judæans, not only at that time, but in years to come, would take a longer or more 315
circuitous route, to avoid seeing this trophy. The rich spoils of the Sanctuary were deposited in the Temple of Peace, and the roll of the Law in the imperial palace; but at a later time, when Rome was expiating her heavy sins, these relics of the glory of Jerusalem were carried to other countries.

Judæa was not yet entirely subjugated, for three strong fortresses were still in arms: Herodium, Machærus, and Masada. The governor, Bassus, sent by Vespasian to Judæa, was commanded to take them. Herodium surrendered immediately, but Machærus offered a stubborn resistance. This fortress, built by Alexander Jannæus, was well defended from the enemy by its natural position. Steep precipices and yawning ravines made it impregnable. But it fell—and in this way: The young commander, Eleazer, a valiant hero, was captured by the Romans, whilst fearlessly standing without the gates, proudly reliant upon the terror of his arms. Bassus ordered him to be scourged within view of the besieged, and then made semblance of having him crucified. A wail of despair went up from the fortress; the besieged, determined to save their beloved comrade, offered to give up their citadel if his life were spared. Bassus agreed to this proposal, and the garrison was saved; but of the inhabitants of the lower town, the men and youths were inhumanly butchered, to the number of 1700, and the women and children sold into slavery.

Three thousand Zealots, under Judas ben Jair, who had escaped by one of the subterranean passages from Jerusalem, were hiding in a wood on the outskirts of the Jordan. There they were, however, discovered and surrounded by the Romans, who mercilessly destroyed them. The death of Bassus, taking place at this time, caused the difficult task of the conquest of Masada to devolve 316
upon his successor Silva. This hill-fortress was, if possible, still more inaccessible than that of Machærus. The garrison consisted of 1000 Zealots, with their wives and children, commanded by Eleazer ben Jair, a descendant of Judas the founder of the Zealots. They were amply provided with provisions, water and weapons, and were, moreover, men of heroic resolve. But a Roman battering-ram destroyed one of the protecting walls, and a second wall of wooden beams, built by the besieged, was set on fire by the assailants. The situation was a hopeless one. Eleazer realized this, and determined upon persuading the garrison to die by their own hands rather than to fall into the power of the Romans. The heroes agreed to this proposal, even with enthusiasm, and on the first day of the great Feast of Passover, after slaying their wives and children, they all perished on their own swords. When the Romans entered the citadel, prepared for the last desperate struggle with their victims, they stood amazed at the ominous silence, and their shouts brought forth only two trembling women and five children, who came creeping out from a cavern. And it was thus that the last Zealots fell on Judæan ground.

The Judæans who had tried to shake off the Roman yoke had, indeed, been severely punished. Not only the inhabitants of Judæa, but also the Judæan community in Rome were made answerable for the rebellion. The two drachmæ which they had annually given to their Sanctuary were now demanded for the Capitoline Jupiter. Vespasian's greed soon caused this tax to be swept into his private treasury; and this first tax, inaugurated and imposed by the emperor upon the Judæans, was called the Judæan fiscal tax (Fiscus Judaicus). On the other hand, those Judæans who had been friendly to Rome, and had given Vespasian assistance during the war, 317
were richly recompensed. Berenice was received with the highest honors at the Imperial court. Titus' passion for this beautiful woman was so great that once, in a fit of jealousy, he ordered the strangulation of a Roman Consul, Cacina, his own table-companion. To flatter his vanity the Council of the Areopagus, the Six Hundred and the people of Athens erected a statue to Berenice, dedicated to "the great Queen, daughter of the great King, Julius Agrippa." He was on the eve of making her his wife, when an indignant outburst from the people of Rome forced him to let her depart. Her brother Agrippa shared her fall.

More fortunate was Josephus, whom Vespasian and Titus could not sufficiently reward for his services. He accompanied the emperors on their triumphal processions, looked on the humiliation of his nation with revolting coldness, and showed undisguised delight in the death of her heroes. Vespasian not only granted him extensive landed possessions, but also placed his private palace at his disposal, and raised him to the citizenship of Rome. So high did he stand in the favor of the imperial house, that he was anxious to adopt their name, and is known to posterity as "Flavius Josephus." On the other hand, he was hated by the Judæan patriots, who exerted themselves to disturb him in the tranquil enjoyment of his possessions.

But the war against the Zealots did not terminate with the fall of the last fortress. They

transplanted their hatred of Rome whithersoever their flying feet carried them—to the provinces of the Euphrates, to Arabia, Egypt, and Cyrene. The Zealots who had taken refuge in Alexandria persuaded their co-religionists of that city to revolt against their rulers. Many of the Alexandrian Judæans, still smarting from the severe persecutions which they had suffered some years previously from the Romans, were ready for revolt; but this mad scheme was opposed by the 318
wealthy members of the community and the Council. They turned indignantly upon the Zealots, delivering six hundred into the hands of the governor, Lupus, who executed them upon the spot. Others fled to Thebes, where they were pursued, seized, and put to the torture to make them acknowledge the emperor's authority. But unflinchingly they bore the most horrible agonies, men and boys vying with each other in steadfast adherence to their Zealot principles, and dying at last under torture. Vespasian, fearing that Egypt might become a new center of revolt, ordered the Temple of Onias to be closed, thus taking from the people their religious focus. The annual gifts, dedicated to the service of the Sanctuary, found their way, as a matter of course, into the imperial treasury.

Some of the Zealots who had fled to the towns of Cyrenaica, now attempted to endanger their peace. Jonathan, one of their number, collected a multitude of the lower classes about him, and leading them into the Lybian Desert, announced some miraculous interposition. But here, again, the chief Judæans denounced their fanatical brethren to Catullus, the Roman governor, who seized them, and had many of them executed. Jonathan, however, evaded their pursuit for some time, and at last, when captured, revenged himself by accusing many of the wealthy Judæans of being his accomplices. He was thrown into chains and sent to Rome. In the imperial city he ventured to declare that Josephus and some of the Roman Judæans were disloyal to the emperor. Titus indignantly refused to believe this, and appeared to defend his favorite, whose innocence, together with that of his co-religionists, he clearly established. Jonathan was then scourged and burnt alive.

Thus ended the Zealot movement which had spread with evil results among a large portion of 319
the Judæan people in the Roman Empire. But the Zealots who had escaped to North Arabia to the vicinity of Medina were the most fortunate; for they succeeded in founding a community of their own, which lasted until the seventh century. Upon another occasion, they played no unimportant part.

So great was the sensation produced throughout the Roman Empire by this long and desperate resistance of the Judæans, that several writers felt themselves called upon to give a detailed description of the war. The heathen authors were, of course, partial in their treatment of the subject; and, with due deference to the feelings of the Roman generals, underrated the heroism of the Judæans. But Josephus, who, in spite of his Roman proclivities, had some spark of patriotism left, could not brook hearing his people stigmatized as cowards; so, collecting all the facts of the long struggle that had come under his own notice, he wrote an account of the war in seven books, at first in the Syro-Chaldaic tongue, and afterwards in Greek (75–79). But this version could not turn out to be any more impartial, seeing how deeply his own interests had been involved. He laid his work before Titus, who gave him permission to offer it to the public, a clear proof that the Emperor was satisfied with its tendency. Justus of Tiberias had preceded Josephus with a history of the Judæan war, in which he accused that historian of hostility to Rome, of having been party to the revolt in Galilee, and of having invented his descent from the Hasmonæan house.

When the war of the sword was at an end, the war of the pen was carried on by the two writers. But Justus can hardly be commended for exemplary conduct; for he had once led a revolt in Galilee, and had then headed a sally against the neighboring Greek population; after which he presented himself boldly before Agrippa. Berenice having obtained his pardon, he was taken into 320
the king's service and most generously treated. But for some later offense he was imprisoned, and banished, then recalled, pardoned, and made the king's secretary. He was at length banished again for some unknown reason. Justus, having received a thoroughly Greek education, was able to write the history of the war in a more correct and elegant style than it was possible for Josephus to do.

Jeremiah, uttering his lamentations amidst the ruins of Jerusalem, fitly ends the first period of Jewish history; whilst Flavius Josephus, writing the story of his people in the quiet of Cæsar's palace, concludes the second period.

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THE TALMUDIC EPOCH.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SYNHEDRION AT JABNE.

Foundation of the School at Jabne—Jochanan ben Zakkai—The Last of the Herodians—Judæa and Rome—The Tanaites—Gamaliel II. appointed Patriarch—The Power of Excommunication—Deposition and Restoration of the Patriarch—Steps towards Collecting the Mishna—Eliezer ben Hyrcanus—Joshua ben Chananya—Akiba and his System—Ishmael—Condition of the Synhedrion.

70–117 C. E.

The disastrous result of the war which had been waged against the Romans during a period of four years, the destruction of the State, the burning of the Temple, the condemnation of the prisoners to labor in the lead-works of Egypt, to be sold in the slave-markets, or to become victims in the fights with wild beasts in the arena—all these calamities came with such crushing force on the remaining Jews that they felt utterly at a loss as to what they should do. Judæa was depopulated; all who had taken up arms, whether in northern or southern, whether in cis- or trans-Jordanic Judæa, were either dead or enslaved and banished. The infuriated conquerors had spared neither the women nor the children. The third banishment—the Roman Exile (Galut Edom), under Vespasian and Titus—had commenced amid greater terror and cruelty than the Babylonian Exile under Nebuchadnezzar. Only a few were spared—those who openly or secretly sided with the Romans, partisans of Rome, who, from the very commencement, had been devoid of patriotic feelings; the friends of peace, who thought that Judaism had a different task from that of combating the Romans by force of arms, thoughtful and careful men, who looked upon a 322
contest with Rome as national suicide; and lastly those who, through party strife, had been forced to lay down their arms and to make separate terms with the Romans. This small remnant in the land of Judæa and the Jews of Syria, who had always hoped that Titus would respect the Temple (the center of worship and religion), were moved deeply, and thrown into despair at the destruction of the sanctuary protected by God. Their despair led to various results. Some were driven to lead an ascetic life, to deny themselves meat and wine; others were led thereby to join Christianity, seeking thus to fill the void in their hearts which was caused by the cessation of burnt-offerings. Judaism was threatened by the greatest danger; deprived, as it was, of its support and rallying-point, it appeared in imminent danger of stagnation or of falling to pieces. The communities in Syria, Babylon, and Persia, in Asia Minor, Rome, and in Europe generally, had until now turned their eyes to Jerusalem and the Temple, whence they drew their instructions and laws. The only independent congregation, that of Alexandria, had become helpless through the destruction of the Temple of Onias. What was to be the future of the Jewish nation, of Judaism? The Synhedrion, which had given laws to the entire community, and had regulated its religious life, had disappeared with the fall of Jerusalem. Who would step into the breach, and render a continued existence a possibility? There now appeared a man who seemed made to save the essential doctrines of Judaism, to restore some amount of strength to the nation, so that it might continue to live, and the threatened decay be averted.

This man was Jochanan, the son of Zakkai. He labored, like the prophets during the first exile in Babylon, but by other means, to maintain the life of the Jewish nation; he reanimated its frozen 323
limbs, and infusing fresh energy into its actions, consolidated its dispersed members into one whole. Jochanan, if not a disciple of Hillel, was yet an heir to his mind. For forty years he is said to have been a tradesman. In other cases, too, we shall see that the great leaders in Jewish history did not follow the study of the Law as a means of subsistence or of gain. During the existence of the State, Jochanan sat in the Synhedrion, or taught within the shadow of the Temple: his school at Jerusalem is said to have been an important one. He was the first man who successfully combated the Sadducees, and who knew how to refute their arguments. During the stormy days of the revolution, he, owing to his peaceful character, joined the party of peace, and on several occasions he urged the nation and the Zealots to surrender the town of Jerusalem, and to submit to the Romans. "Why do you desire to destroy the town, and to give up the Temple to the flames?" he would say to the leaders of the revolution.

Notwithstanding the respect in which he was held, his well-meant admonitions were ignored by the Zealots. The spies whom the Roman general placed in the besieged city of Jerusalem, and who reported to him what took place, did not fail to announce that Jochanan belonged to the friends of Rome, and that he counseled the chiefs to make peace. The news from the town was conveyed on small pieces of paper, which were shot on arrows into the Roman camp. Induced either by fear of the Zealots, or by the desire of obtaining a place of safety for the Law, Jochanan formed the idea of taking refuge in the camp of Titus. To depart from the town was, however, very difficult, as the Zealots kept up a constant watch; Jochanan, therefore, aided by a leader of the Zealots, named Ben-Batiach, determined to have himself conveyed out of the town as a 324
corpse. Having been placed in a coffin he was carried out of the city gates, at the hour of sunset, by his pupils Eleazer and Joshua. Titus received the fugitive in a friendly manner, and gave him permission to make some request of him. Jochanan modestly requested that he might be permitted to establish a school at Jamnia (Jabne), where he could give lectures to his pupils. The district in which this town lay belonged to the private domains of the imperial house, to which it had been bequeathed by the last will of Salome, the sister of Herod. Titus had nothing to urge against the harmless wish of Jochanan, for he could not foresee that by this unimportant concession he was enabling Judaism, feeble as it then appeared, to outlive Rome, which was in all

its vigor, by thousands of years.

Jochanan settled with his disciples in Jamnia, a city not far from the Mediterranean Sea, and situated between the port Joppa, and the former city of the Philistines, Ashdod. Jochanan was unable to settle down to his occupation for some space of time, during which the bitter strife was raging before the walls of Jerusalem, and within its streets and its Temple. When the news arrived that the city had fallen, and that the Temple was in flames, Jochanan and his disciples mourned and wailed as if they had lost a dear relative through death. Jochanan, however, unlike his followers, did not despair, for he recognized the truth that Judaism was not indissolubly bound up with its Temple and its altar. He rather consoled his mourning disciples for the loss of the place of expiation with the fitting remark that charity and love of mankind would take the place of burnt-offerings, as it is said in the Bible—"for I take pleasure in mercy and not in burnt-offerings." This liberal view of the value of burnt-offerings made it clear, however, that it was absolutely necessary for a fresh center to be established in lieu of the Temple. Jochanan 325
therefore formed a sort of Synhedrion in Jabne, of which he was at once recognized as the President. The newly created Synhedrion was certainly not composed of seventy members, and no doubt had a totally different sphere of action from the one in Jerusalem, which during the revolution had exercised control over the most important political events. The Synhedrion of Jamnia in the first place gave to its founder plenary power in all religious matters such as the Council had possessed in Jerusalem, and with this were connected the judicial functions of a supreme court. It was only by unbounded authority that Jochanan could compass the formation and consolidation of a Synhedrion, under the unfavorable conditions of the time. Jochanan had to oppose the general opinion that the Synhedrion as a body should have control only in the hewn-stone hall of the Temple, and that outside this spot it lost its judicial character and ceased to be the representative of the nation. When, therefore, Jochanan dissociated the functions of the Synhedrion from the site of the Temple, and removed it to Jabne, he had actually released Judaism from the observance of the rite of burnt-offerings, and rendered it independent. Without any opposition whatsoever, Jabne by this means took the place of Jerusalem, and became the religious national center for the dispersed community. The important functions of the Synhedrion, by which it exercised a judicial and uniting power over the distant congregations, such as the fixing of the time for the new moon and the festivals, proceeded from Jabne. It enjoyed some of the religious privileges of the Holy City. The Synhedrion now bore the name of the Beth-Din (Court of Justice)—the President was called Rosh-beth-din, and was honored by the title of Rabban (general teacher). Jochanan gave over to the Court of Justice the supervision of 326
arrangements for the calendar, which had formerly been one of the offices of the President. By this means the watchers who were looking out for the reappearance of the new moon needed no longer follow the President about in order to give him the information, but had only to attend the sittings of the assembly. This change was an important step, as it rendered the Synhedrion independent of the person of its President.

Jochanan made altogether nine changes, most of which affected such arrangements as had been rendered valueless through the destruction of the Temple. He, however, retained various religious customs as a remembrance of the Temple. He promoted the continuance and preservation of Judaism through the renewal of the study of the Law, and thus rendered firmer the weakened foundations of Jewish communal life. The school at Jabne he influenced through his disciples, whom he imbued with his spirit and his learning. Five of his distinguished pupils are known to us by name, but only three of them won lasting renown—Eliezer, and Joshua (who had carried Jochanan in a coffin out of Jerusalem), and also Eleazer ben Arach. The latter was the most eminent and important amongst them, and of him it was said, "If weighed in the scale, he would outweigh all his fellow-scholars." Jochanan loved to incite them to independent thought by deep-reaching questions. Thus he gave them as a theme for thought, "What should man endeavor most eagerly to obtain?" The one answered "a genial manner," the other "a noble friend," a third "a noble neighbor," the fourth "the gift of knowing in advance the result of his actions." Eleazer answered that "man's best possession is a noble heart." This remark won the approval of his master; it was an answer after his own mind, for in it all else was included.

What was the character of the teachings which Jochanan imparted to his pupils in the school? 327
Hillel, the most respected of the teachers of the Law, the highly-honored ideal in times to come, had given to Judaism a special garb and form, or rather had given it the character of the Law, which had always been peculiar to it. He was the first to develop and confirm a special theory, a sort of Jewish theology or nomology (science of religious laws). He was the founder of Talmudic Judaism. From the midst of contending parties, which were tearing one another to pieces, Hillel had drawn the Law into the quiet precincts of the school-house, and had endeavored to bring into harmony those precepts which were apparently opposed to the Law. Those which had been considered as only customary and traditional were regarded as human laws, and were looked upon by the Sadducees as innovations. Hillel had shown these to be of Biblical origin. His seven explanatory rules, or laws of interpretation, had on the one hand confirmed the laws which had been introduced by the Sopheric and Pharisaic teachers, and on the other hand had given them new scope to develop.

The written Law (that of the Pentateuch) and the oral Law (the Sopheric) from his time ceased to be two widely sundered branches, but were brought into close relations with each other, although the new rendering certainly did violence to the words of Scripture. But as the text was explained, not on a philological basis, but in order to elucidate the laws, it was not possible to keep simply to the written words; it was necessary to interpret them so as to render them suited to the new conditions of life. Under the term Oral Law was included everything which had been handed down from the Fathers, and it formed to a certain extent a hereditary

law. The various restrictions which the Sopheric teachers had placed around the Law, the legal decisions which had been introduced by the Synhedrion, the customs which had been observed from generation to generation, the extensions deduced from meager verses of the Pentateuch, all these elements were not written down, but were committed to memory. They were put into the form of short sentences, called "Halacha." They were not arranged or classified according to subjects, but were strung together without connection, or handed down separately, sometimes joined to the name of the authority from whom they were derived. A marvelous memory was needed to retain these Halachas or oral teachings. Jochanan ben Zakkai was the man who best knew these laws. He handed them down to his pupils, and pointed out to them their connection with the written law; he showed them how to draw deductions therefrom, the laws handed down being the material, and their mode of treatment the form. These deductions were obtained by two methods, the one showing how the ordinances of the Law were to be obtained from the words of Scripture (Midrash), and the other served to apply the oral Law to new questions as they arose (Talmud). Thus a fruitful field for the extension of the Law and for ingenious combinations was opened, which was later on freely cultivated. Jochanan ben Zakkai, however, thought much more of the material of the Law than of its form. 328

He taught not only those doctrines of Judaism which appertained to the Law, but also those portions of the Holy Scriptures which had no direct bearing on the Law. He gave lectures on the writings of the prophets and historians in the form of discourses, which had for some time past been in use both in and out of the synagogue. These lectures were either edifying, comforting, or bitter, sharp, and ironical, and applied the words of the prophets about Edom and Esau, to hated Rome and its tyranny. This kind of exposition of Scripture had a name, "Agada" or "Hagadah." Its chief subjects consisted in explaining historical events, prophetic utterances, and in bringing to mind the past, and treating of the future of Judaism. The Agada investigated the meaning of the Law, examined into the general moral truths of Judaism, deftly united the present with the past, and shadowed the present conditions of life in past experiences. The Halacha forms the chief trunk of the Law, the Midrash the suckling roots, which drew their nourishment from the words of Scripture. The Talmud formed the wide-spreading branches, and the Agada was the blossom which scented and colored the simple fabric of the laws. 329

In his Agadic dissertations Jochanan endeavored to illuminate the ordinances of the Law by the light of the understanding, and to combine them into general truths, but in a clear and simple manner, utterly dissimilar from the exaggerated method of the Alexandrian-Jewish teachers, who endeavored to extract the dazzling light of the Grecian mode of thought from Holy Writ.

Amongst other things, Jochanan explained very quaintly why the use of iron is forbidden in erecting an altar. Iron is the symbol of war and dissension; the altar, on the contrary, is the symbol of peace and atonement; therefore iron must be kept away from the altar. He deduced therefrom the high value of peace, the advantages of peace between man and wife, between one city and another, and between one nation and another. These were the principles which had induced him to side with the Romans against the revolutionaries. In this way he explained various laws, and rendered them comprehensible, when they seemed obscure or in any way extraordinary. Jochanan was wont to hold converse also with Pagans who had knowledge of the Jewish Law, either from the Greek translation or from their intercourse with the Jews, refuting the objections which they raised, and dispelling or making clear by suitable comparisons the peculiarities which occur in the Holy Writings. 330

Besides Jochanan, who was the most influential and the chief personage of his time, there was a group of teachers of the Law. They were all at an advanced age at the period of the destruction of the State, and were without doubt members of the Jamnian Synhedrion. Most of them, of whom nothing important is recorded, are known only by name. Among these were Chanina, the deputy of various High Priests (*Segan ha-Cohanim*), who has preserved for us traditions from the time of the Temple. He belonged to the lovers of peace, and exhorted his contemporaries to pray for the well-being of the ruling power (that of the Romans), "for, if no fear thereof existed, then one man would swallow another alive." Zadok, another teacher, was a disciple of Shammai, and in anticipation of the fall of the Temple he fasted for forty years, whereby he ruined his health. Nachum, the Mede, who had been previously member of a college of the Law in Jerusalem, Dossa ben Archinas, with his brother Jonathan, the latter a clear-headed and argumentative youth, and Abba Saul must also be mentioned.

Lastly, there belonged to this circle Nachum of Gimso (Emmaus), and Nechunya ben Hakana. The first has been recorded by tradition as the hero of strange adventures, and even the name of his birthplace Gimso has been explained, so as to put into his mouth the words "This also is for good" (Gam-su-l'-toba). He is represented in the world of legend as a scholar to whom many disagreeable experiences happened, all of which proved of good to him. Nachum developed a special mode of teaching, which consisted in explaining the oral law from the written text, according to certain particles which the lawgiver had purposely used as indications when drawing up the Law. These particles, according to his idea, not only served as syntactical signs in the sentences, but as signs for enlarging and diminishing the circle within which each law should work. Nachum's rules formed a new and fruitful addition to those laid down by Hillel; they were carefully cultivated and developed, and received the name "the rules of extension or exclusion" (Ribbuj-u-m'ut). Nechunya ben Hakana was, however, an opponent of Nachum's system; he approved only the explanatory rules as propounded by Hillel. 331

Jochanan ben Zakkai, the head not of the State but of the community, appears to have acted as a shield from a political point of view. His kindly and gentle disposition, in which he resembled Hillel, he displayed even to the heathens. It is related of him that he always greeted them in a

friendly manner. Such friendliness offers a striking contrast to the hatred felt by the Zealots towards the heathens, both before and after the revolution, which increased after the destruction of the Temple. The verse (Proverbs xiv. 34), "The kindness of the nations is sin," was taken literally by the people of that time, and was specially applied to the heathen world. "The heathens may do ever so much good, yet it is accounted to them as sin, for they do it only to mock us." Jochanan alone explained this verse in a sense expressive of true humanity: "As the burnt-offering atones for Israel, so mercy and kindness atone for the heathen nations." This kindliness of Jochanan may have contributed to the result that, notwithstanding the fresh outbreaks amongst the Jews in Cyrene and Egypt, which the Emperors Vespasian and Titus had to put down, they did not persecute the Jews in any extraordinary degree. It is expressly stated in ancient records that the Roman authorities removed the contempt which formerly attached to the Jews, and that the murder of a Jew was punished by death. The personality of Jochanan may have served them as a guarantee for the peaceful disposition of the mother-country. 332

Hope alone gave to him and his circle of fellow-pupils and disciples fresh courage, the hope or rather the assurance that Israel should not be lost. The dreary present did not veil from him the promised and brighter future. The present was in truth sufficiently overcast. The pasture lands had been taken away from those who had survived the national disasters, and given to strangers. Thereby those who had formerly been rich had fallen into poverty. The very poorest had to pay the Jews' tax (Fiscus Judaicus). The land, which before the war had been so flourishing, was strewn with ruins. Every joy had departed from Israel; even weddings were performed in a silent manner. Jochanan described the comfortless position of the times in an address to the people. He once saw a Jewish maiden of a rich house, picking up a scanty nourishment of barley-corn from amongst the horses' hoofs. At this he exclaimed, "Unhappy nation, you would not serve God, and therefore you must serve foreign nations; you would not offer half a shekel for the Temple, and therefore you must pay thirty times as much to the State of your new enemies; you refused to keep the roads and paths in order for the pilgrims, and, therefore, you must now support the watch-lodges in the vineyards, which the Romans have seized."

Agrippa and Berenice, the remaining members of the house of Herod, who kept up close connections with those in power, appear to have contributed greatly to the alleviation of the sorrows of the conquered Jews. Princess Berenice, whose beauty seemed to bid defiance to time, long held Titus captive by her charms, and it wanted but little for the Jewish princess to become a Roman empress. The prejudice of Roman pride disturbed the project of a marriage between Titus and Berenice, and compelled the Emperor's son to break the bonds which had bound him for years. Berenice had to leave the royal palace, and probably returned to her brother in Palestine. But as Titus had not yet given up the hope of making her his wife, her voice still had weight with him, and it probably was often raised in favor of her co-religionists, to whom she was attached. The last Jewish king, Agrippa, also stood in favor with Vespasian, for the great services which he had rendered to his house. It appears that the Emperor had added Galilee to his territories; Agrippa had a Jewish governor, whom he sent alternately to the two Galilæan capitals, Tiberias and Sepphoris. To this ruler it was no doubt due that the district of Galilee recovered itself more rapidly, and became sooner repeopled than Judæa, which was governed by a Roman ruler. 333

The period during which Jochanan worked in his new sphere of action cannot be stated with certainty. He united in himself the qualities of the prophet Jeremiah and the prince Zerubbabel, who had been in exile. Like Jeremiah he mourned over the destruction of Jerusalem, and like Zerubbabel he unrolled a new future. Both Jochanan ben Zakkai and Zerubbabel stood at the threshold of a new epoch, both laid the foundation-stone of a new edifice in Judaism, for the completion of which the subsequent generations have worked. Jochanan died on his bed in the arms of his pupils. He had previously had a conversation with them, which gives an insight into his mind. His pupils were surprised to find their courageous master frightened and depressed in the hour of his death. He remarked that he did not fear death, but the having to appear before the Eternal Ruler, whose justice was incorruptible. He blessed his pupils before his death with these words—"May the fear of God influence your actions as much as the fear of man."

Immediately after the death of their master, his chief disciples held council as to the place where they might continue the work of teaching the Law. Most of them thought of remaining in Jabne, where there lived a circle of men acquainted with the traditions of the past. Eleazar ben Arach, the favorite pupil of Jochanan, however, insisted on removing the school to Emmaus (Gimso), a healthy and pleasant town, three geographical miles distant from Jabne. Believing that he was absolutely needful to his fellow-students, and being persuaded by his wife that they would soon follow him, he separated from them, and remained in Emmaus. Solitary and cut off from the opportunity of exchanging ideas with others, he is said to have so utterly forgotten what he once knew, that amusing anecdotes are related of his subsequent ignorance. To Arach was applied the saying, "Repair to the place of the Law, and do not fancy that thy comrades will follow thee, and that they can uphold the Law only through thee; do not rely too much on thy penetration." Whilst Arach, from whom so much was hoped, was thus forgotten, his companions continued the work of their master, and became renowned in generations to come. Gamaliel, Joshua, and Eliezer came to the fore as important personages. 334

It was first necessary to give a chief to the community, which, though small, was yet respected by the Jews of all countries. Gamaliel was chosen; he was the descendant of Hillel, and his ancestors had presided over the Synhedrion throughout four generations. It must have been necessary to remove political difficulties to enable the son of the man who had been concerned in the uprising against the Romans, to attain so high a rank. Gamaliel took the title Nasi (Prince—

among the Romans, Patriarch). He had his seat in Jabne, and was also sufficiently versed in traditions to preside in the school. Although the town of Jabne was of first importance, the 335
members of the new college established some schools outside of the town of Jabne, but in its neighborhood. Eliezer taught at Lydda; Joshua at Bekiin, on the plains between Jabne and Lydda; other pupils of Jochanan also opened schools; and each attracted a circle of disciples, and was called by the title Rabbi (Master). The Patriarch was called Rabban (General Master), to distinguish him from the other teachers. The Law therefore was not left unheeded after the death of the founder of the Jabne Synhedrion; it received, if possible, even more attention; but the unity which had hardly been established threatened to disappear altogether. The disputes between the adherents of the schools of Hillel and Shammai, over which blood had been shed before the destruction of the Temple, and which had only been quelled by the war of the revolution, broke out afresh, and the more severely, as the uniting influence proceeding from the Temple now no longer existed. The contentions between the schools, which extended to various practical matters, brought about wide divergence in the views with regard to the Law and life. One teacher held some things to be permissible which another forbade; and in one place things were done which were not allowed in another. Thus Judaism seemed to have two bodies of laws, or, according to the words of the Talmud—"The one Law had become two." Important questions of life, sometimes involving serious consequences, such as those concerning marriage, were affected by these differences. The younger generation, relieved from the necessity for mutual forbearance occasioned by the late war, had no very strong desire to make peace, but contested the disputed questions with great acrimony. The endeavor to terminate these quarrels, which threatened the destruction of all unity, was the life-task of Gamaliel, but his policy brought him into open collision with his friends.

Little is known of his private affairs, but this little shows him to have possessed a high moral 336
character and a powerful mind. Gamaliel owned land, which he lent to be cultivated on condition that he received a part of the harvest. He also gave corn for sowing purposes, but when he was repaid he only accepted the lowest prices, in order to avoid even the appearance of taking interest. He displayed great tenderness to his favorite slave Tabi, whom he would willingly have set free could he have done so, and had not the Law disapproved of manumission. On the death of the slave he mourned for him as for a relative. Gamaliel appears to have had some mathematical knowledge. In fixing the new moon and the holidays dependent on it, he was guided more by astronomical calculations than by the evidence of witnesses that they had or had not seen the new moon. Such reckonings, exact even to a fraction, were handed down in the house of the Patriarch. Gamaliel often made journeys in order to visit the various congregations, to be an eye-witness of their condition, and to keep them all in order. His journeys took him over Judæa, into Galilee, and as far as Acco (Ptolemais). Although he was not of robust health, he did not spare himself the greatest exertions, when he could benefit his people. His rule as Patriarch occurred in a very troubled time, both within and without, and this circumstance caused him to insist on his dignity most strictly. His character was thereby misunderstood, and he was accused of forming selfish and ambitious plans. Gamaliel directed his chief energies to raise the patriarchal dignity that it should become the center of the Jewish community, so as to maintain by his authority the threatened unity of the Law, and the religious and moral condition of the people. In the contests between the disciples of the schools of Shammai and Hillel he decreed that votes should be taken with regard to each law in question, and that the decision should be determined 337
by the majority of votes in the college, in order to protect by authority the threatened unity of the Law against all attacks. The desire for unity seems to have been more generally felt, the more the opposition between the two schools increased, and the more the two sets of followers, who clung to the Halachas bequeathed to them by their teachers, sought to develop their doctrines. Contemporaries did not disguise from themselves the fact that the Law might easily be subject to confusion through these differences. A fear was expressed that the time would soon come when men would refer in vain to the Holy Writings or to the Oral Law for a decision, and when one account would contradict the other. The Synhedrion of Jabne, therefore, once more subjected contested matters to discussion and decision. It began with the fundamental propositions of Hillel and Shammai, in order to fix by voting such rules as should hold good in all cases. But it was not easy to obtain unity; for three and a half years the contest is said to have lasted in the vineyards of Jabne, both parties insisting on the exclusive correctness of their own traditions—the Shammaites being especially stubborn and immovable, and, like the founder of their school, not disposed to yield. Then a voice, heard by chance (Bath-Kol), which was usually considered as a communication from heaven in difficult cases, is said to have sounded through the school-house in Jabne—a voice which said, "The teachings of both schools are the words of the living God, but practically the laws of Hillel only are to carry weight." Joshua, a man of calm disposition, alone expressed himself against any decision arrived at by the Bath-Kol. "We do not require a miraculous voice," he said, "for the Law is not given for heavenly beings, but for men, who in questionable cases can decide by taking a majority, and a miracle cannot in such cases give the decision." Eliezer also was not satisfied with the conclusion arrived at, but this opposition had 338
only slight results. Hillel's expositions, deductions, and explanatory rules at length attained the authority due to them. As the followers of Shammai held with the Zealots, the enemies of the Romans, and the Hillelites with the peace party, the revolution was in some measure ended by this act of the Synhedrion of Jabne. But it was not intended to exercise compulsion against the Shammaites, and so entirely to reorganize their religious life according to the decision arrived at; on the contrary it permitted them to follow their own convictions. "Every man according to his choice may follow the school of Hillel or of Shammai, but the decisions of the school of Hillel shall be the only accepted interpretation of the Law." Rabbi Gamaliel watched most carefully over the union of the two parties, which was probably his work, and withstood any attempt to oppose the

decisions of the Synhedrion; he was supported by the venerable Zadok, to whom he gave the place of honor at his right hand at all meetings, and who, having beheld the Temple in its glory, was considered as an authority.

There seems to have been another regulation in use besides the above, but the connection of the two is not very clear. The Patriarch of Jabne made a rule that only such persons should be admitted to the school-house whose uprightness had been proved; and for this purpose he placed a porter at the doors of the school, in order to prevent the admission of those who were unworthy. It appears that he desired to exclude such as pursued the study of the Law with wrong intentions; some, perhaps, had sought admission to the school from vanity or other ignoble motives. Two warnings, the one by Jochanan ben Zakkai, and the other by Zadok, against those who took part in the study of the Law from self-interest, appear to confirm this supposition. The 339
former said, "If you have acquired much of the Law, do not be proud of it, for you are made for that purpose." The latter said, "Do not use the Law as a crown in order to shine with it, nor as a spade in order to dig with it." Such low ideas Gamaliel endeavored to keep out of the circle of the school.

Both arrangements, the employment of the authority of the Patriarch in maintaining the Halachic decisions, and the precautions for admitting members and disciples, met with opposition, which at first was only timidly expressed. The Patriarch endeavored to keep down contests by the use of excommunication, which he employed with great energy, and with that entire disregard of consequences which arises from deeply rooted conviction. The excommunication (Nidui) had not at that time the gloomy severity of later ages, but was of a mild form; forbidding the interdicted man to hold any close intercourse with others until he had penitently submitted to the required demands. During the interdict, which lasted at least thirty days, the sinner wore a black mourning-garb and kept several mourning observances; if he died during this period without having submitted or repented, the Court of Justice had a stone laid on his coffin. Gamaliel had the courage to excommunicate several of the most important personages of his time, whereby he made many bitter enemies. He acted thus even towards his own brother-in-law, Eliezer ben Hyrcanus. Deeply impressed by the unfortunate results which disunion must bring to Judaism, threatened as it already was by various half-Jewish, half-Christian sects, Gamaliel did not hesitate to proceed with severity against trifling offenses, in order to avoid the destruction of religious unity. There was once a discussion about an oven of peculiar structure, which a decision of the majority had pronounced liable to become unclean, like earthenware 340
vessels. Eliezer, following a special tradition, did not wish to yield to this decision, and acted in opposition to it; at Gamaliel's instigation, Eliezer was excommunicated.

Gamaliel thought that he had united the two schools, and had brought about peace, when his power was destroyed by a man from whom he had not expected any energetic opposition. Joshua, who was of a yielding disposition, and apparently the least dangerous of the opponents of the severe Patriarch, became his worst enemy. Joshua was just as discontented with some of Gamaliel's regulations as Eliezer had been, but he did not venture to show his disapproval on account of his poor and miserable condition, and when he happened to utter any contradictory opinion he quickly withdrew it again. Gamaliel had received the report of two untrustworthy witnesses in order to fix the commencement of the month of Tishri, on which depended the dates of the chief festivals, including the Day of Atonement. Joshua showed that the Patriarch had committed an error in this act, and demanded that the college should change the date of the holiday. Gamaliel remained firm, and sent an order to Joshua that on the day which, according to Joshua's calculation, was the Day of Atonement, the latter should appear before him in workaday clothes, with his staff, knapsack, and money-bag. This dictatorial proceeding seemed so harsh to Joshua, that he complained of it to his most important colleagues, and appeared determined to oppose it. Those, however, who saw the necessity for unity persuaded him to yield. The venerable Dossa ben Harchinas convinced him that the arrangements of a religious chief must be uncontested even if they are erroneous, and that every man must follow them. Joshua allowed himself to be persuaded, and submitted to the Patriarch. His appearance filled Gamaliel with astonishment. He greeted him heartily, and said to him, "Welcome, my teacher and pupil—my 341
teacher in wisdom, my pupil in obedience. Happy is the age in which great men obey inferior ones." But this reconciliation was not of long duration. The severe proceedings of the Patriarch had raised a hostile party against him, which began secretly to act in opposition to him. He knew of this opposition party, and referred to it in public addresses. It is related of him that his mode of opening the sittings of the Synhedrion varied. If none of his opponents were present he would ask the assembly to propound questions; if, however, any of his enemies were present he would not give this invitation. The opposition party seem therefore to have put him in a dilemma at these meetings. Gamaliel may have had reason to consider Joshua as the chief of this party, and often made him feel the power of his own higher position by offensive demeanor and severe treatment. One day the mutual ill-feeling led to an outbreak, and caused a change in the Synhedrion. The Patriarch had once again offended Joshua by his severe manner, and accused him of secret opposition to one of the Halachas. As Joshua at first denied the fact, Gamaliel was so angered that he cried out, "Then stand, so that witnesses may give evidence against you." This was the form of an indictment. The school-house was full of people, amongst whom there arose a tumult at this contemptuous treatment of a member who was respected and loved by the people. The opposition party took courage, and gave utterance to their dissatisfaction. They called out to the Patriarch, "Who is there that has not constantly felt thy severity?" The school was turned into a tribunal, and the college deposed Gamaliel on the spot from the dignity of Patriarch. With his fall ended the regulations made by him. The porter was removed from the door of the school, to which all could now gain unobstructed admission. The members of the Synhedrion immediately 342

sought for another Patriarch, so that this important office might not be unoccupied. They had too much tact to heap fresh contumely on the late Patriarch by choosing Joshua, his chief opponent, and Eliezer, who had a claim to the honor, lay under an interdict. Akiba seemed fitted for the post by his intellect and character. He had quickly risen from ignorance and poverty, had rapidly passed the intervening steps between the degrees of pupil and master, and had obtained admiration even from the profoundest teachers of the Law. But his greatness was only of yesterday; he had no distinguished ancestors to show that he was worthy of the dignity of Patriarch. The college therefore chose a very young member, Eleazar ben Azariah, who at that time must have been only in his sixteenth year. The choice was made on account of his noble descent from a long line of ancestors, which reached to Ezra, the regenerator of Judaism, a further motive for his election being his immense riches and the consideration in which he was held by the Roman authorities. Eleazar was not wanting in character and understanding, and was therefore considered worthy to succeed Gamaliel.

This deposition and election had great results, and the day on which these events took place was considered of such importance by after-comers that it was known by the simple designation, "that day." It seems that the college of the Synhedrion, perhaps on the suggestion of Joshua, again revised those laws which, through the influence of Gamaliel, had been decided according to the spirit of the school of Hillel. The college, which at that time consisted of the extraordinary number of seventy-two members, therefore undertook the revision of one-sided laws, and examined those who were in possession of traditions. More than twenty persons are recorded to have given testimony before the college as to the traditions which had been handed down. In 343
many points the majority of the college took middle ground between the opposing doctrines of the schools of Shammai and Hillel, and they decided "neither like the one nor like the other." With regard to other contested questions it appeared that Hillel himself, or his school, had renounced their own views, and had been inclined to follow the Shammaites. The witnesses with regard to the Halachas seem to have been formally examined, and perhaps their evidence was even written down. The testimony of witnesses on this day bears the name Adoyot (evidence of witnesses), or Bechirta (best choice), and the code drawn up is without doubt the earliest collection. One recognizes in its contents the ancient and primitive form of the traditions. The laws are put together quite promiscuously, and without any other connection than the name of the person who handed them down.

The day of the assembly of witnesses was also of general importance, on account of two questions which were discussed. The first question arose thus. A heathen of Ammonite descent came before the meeting, asking whether he could be legally accepted as a proselyte. Gamaliel had turned him away with the sentence of the written law, "Moabites and Ammonites may not be received into the congregation of God, even in the tenth generation." The disputants treated the question with warmth, and Gamaliel endeavored to have his view carried. Joshua, however, carried his view that the sentence of the Law no longer applied to those times, as, through the aggressions of their conquerors, all nations had become mixed together and confused beyond recognition. The second question concerned the holiness of the two writings ascribed to King Solomon, Ecclesiastes (Kohelet), and the Song of Songs (Shir Hashirim). The school of Shammai 344
had not recognized them as holy. This old contest was now taken up by the College of Seventy-two, which had not approved of the decisions of Hillel, but it is not clearly known with what result. Later on these Halachas were included in the collection (Canon) of the Holy Writings, after which the Canon was completed and several writings in the Hebrew language were rejected as Apocrypha, such as the proverbs of Sirach, the first book of the Maccabees, and several others.

It is a noble characteristic of Gamaliel, which his contemporaries readily recognized, that notwithstanding the many insults he received on "that day," he did not for one moment feel a desire, from petty revenge, to retire from his office of teacher. He took part in the discussions as before, little prospect as there was for him to carry through his ideas in the midst of an assemblage which was so opposed to him. But in the eager controversies of the day he no doubt became convinced that his great severity had estranged the others from him, and that he had thereby suppressed many a true opinion; he felt his courage broken and he determined to yield. He therefore went to the most respected members of the Synhedrion, to apologize for his offensive demeanor. He visited his chief opponent, Joshua, who was following his handicraft of needle-making. Gamaliel, who had grown up in riches, could not suppress his surprise at seeing so learned a man engaged in such heavy work, and said, "Is it thus thou makest thy living?" Joshua took the opportunity frankly to put before him the indifference shown to the sad condition of several worthy men—"It is bad enough," said Joshua, "that thou hast only just discovered it. Woe to the age, whose leader thou art, that thou dost not know of the cares of the learned and what difficulty they have to support themselves." Joshua had uttered the same reproach when Gamaliel had admired his astronomical knowledge; he had modestly repudiated his admiration, 345
and pointed out two pupils who possessed distinguished mathematical attainments, but who hardly had bread and clothes. Gamaliel at last besought his enraged opponent to forgive him, out of consideration for the highly honored house of Hillel. Joshua thereupon expressed himself as satisfied, and promised to work for Gamaliel's reinstatement in the position of Patriarch. The next step was to induce the newly-elected Nasi to give up his dignity, upon which he had only just entered. There was a certain amount of delicacy in making the suggestion to him. Akiba, who was ever ready to be of service, undertook the delicate commission, the execution of which, however, was not made at all difficult for him. For hardly had Eleazar, the newly-elected Patriarch, heard that peace was made between Gamaliel and his chief enemy, than he was immediately prepared to return to private life; he even offered to pay a visit to Gamaliel, attended by the whole College.

The arrangement made between the Patriarch and Eleazar was that the former should always preside for the first two weeks, and hold the classes, and that the latter, as Vice-President, should do the same in the third week.

In this way the strife ended; it had arisen neither from ambition nor pride, but only from an erroneous view of the Patriarch's functions. These disagreements were soon forgotten, and thenceforward Gamaliel lived in peace with the members of the Synhedrion. Perhaps the position of affairs under the Emperor Domitian had diverted the public attention from internal matters, and caused the necessity for union to be felt, in order to avert the dangers which threatened from without.

Gamaliel represented in this circle of scholars that desire for unity and authority which might regulate from one center the entire religious and national life of the people. His brother-in-law, 346
Eliezer, son of Hyrcanus, represented the other party, namely, those who maintained their own views and refused to submit to universally binding enactments. From his earliest youth Eliezer had devoted himself to the acquirement of Halachas, and these he impressed so firmly on his memory that, as he himself said, not a grain of them should be lost. His teacher, Jochanan, therefore called him "a sealed cistern which lets no drop pass." It was in accordance with this method that Eliezer taught at Lydda (Diospolis), a place which had formerly been a race-course. When he was questioned as to a law, he either replied as he had been taught by his teachers, or openly acknowledged "I do not know; I have not been told." During his stay once in Cæsarea Philippi in Upper Galilee, thirty questions were put to him for decision, to which he replied, "To twelve of these I can give the decision which has been handed down to me; for the other eighteen I have no tradition." Being asked whether he only taught what had been handed down to him, he replied, "You compel me now to impart something which has not been communicated to me; for know that in my whole life I have never taught a single word which has not been handed down to me by my teachers." In order to escape troublesome questions which he did not know how to answer, he would put cross-questions from which could be seen his disinclination to discuss the matter. He was once asked whether an illegitimate child could succeed to property, and he asked in return, "Whether it would be legally considered as a brother." To the question whether one might paint a house white after the destruction of the Temple, he put the cross-question whether one would paint a grave, thus keeping firm to his rule never to pronounce a decision which had not been made certain to him by oral tradition. To the keenest deductions he usually opposed the 347
simple reply, "I have not heard it." In order to maintain this peculiar view, he seems to have impressed on his pupils, "Keep your children from searching (Higayon); let them rather be brought up on the knees of the wise."

Eliezer was therefore the conservative element in the Synhedrion; he was the organ of tradition, which retained the Halachas precisely as it received them; he was the "sealed cistern" which did not permit one drop of water to run away, nor one fresh drop to find entrance. His contemporaries and successors gave him the honored name of "Sinai," a living tablet of the Law, inscribed with unchangeable precepts. Greatly as he was respected, however, as a faithful keeper of the traditional Law, he nevertheless was somewhat isolated on account of his clinging exclusively to traditions. His colleagues had gone too far on the road pointed out by Hillel to be satisfied with merely keeping the Law; they desired also to extend and develop it. Eliezer necessarily came into collision with the tendency of the times. He was most strongly opposed to his brother-in-law, Gamaliel, and his method of exclusion in striving for unity. On the one side was authority supported by a powerful will, which kept down any revolt against the law adopted; and on the other side was the secure knowledge which finds its sanction in the past. Such opposites could not be easily reconciled, nor was Eliezer the man to give up his convictions. He was in fact reproached for his unbending character, which refused to submit to others, and which made him express his opinions in harsh terms. The respect which was felt for him personally made it difficult to inform him of the fact that he was excommunicated, but Akiba once more undertook the office of conveying the unpleasant news. Dressed in black, he went to Eliezer and gently broke to him the sentence, and addressed him in these words, "It appears to me that thy 348
comrades shun thee." Eliezer understood the hint, and took the blow without murmuring; he submitted to the excommunication, and lived apart from his friends. He took only a distant interest in the discussions pursued in Jamnia. When he heard any important decision, he used to look among the treasures of the Halachas in order to confirm or dispute it.

Without exercising any influence over affairs or taking part in the development of the Law, Eliezer lived his last years in flourishing material circumstances, but in a dreary state of mind. In his misery he gave utterance to a sentence which is in marked contrast to the sentiments of his comrades. "Warm thyself," he said, "at the fire of the wise, but beware of the coals that thou dost not burn thyself, for their bite is as that of the jackal, their sting like the scorpion's, their tongues like the tongues of snakes, and their words are burning coals." These are the bitter words of a pained spirit, but they do not deny to his opponents a measure of justification.

A striking contrast to the stubbornness of Eliezer, and the no less unbending despotism of Gamaliel, is offered by Joshua ben Chananya. He was the yielding, pliable, peaceable element in this newly constituted Jewish body. He protected the Law and the people from one-sided and exaggerated ideas, and became the promoter of the study of the Law and the benefactor of his people. As a young Levite of the choir he had seen the glory of the Temple, and had sung the psalms in its halls. Together with his teacher he had left Jerusalem, and after the death of the latter had founded a school in Bekiin. Here he taught his pupils, and carried on the humble handicraft of making needles, by which he maintained his family. Through his twofold occupation Joshua was brought into communication both with scholars and the common people; and he 349

endeavored to unite the two, and was the only man who possessed power over the minds and will of the masses. He was personally so ugly that an empress's daughter once asked him how it was so much wisdom was incorporated in so ugly a form. Whereupon Joshua answered that wine was not kept in casks of gold.

Besides an acquaintance with tradition, he seems to have possessed some astronomical knowledge, which enabled him to calculate the irregular course of the comets. This knowledge was once of great use to him when he was on a journey. He had started on a voyage with Gamaliel, and had laid in more provisions than were usually necessary for the journey. The ship took an erratic course for some time, because its captain, deceived by the sight of a certain star, had steered in a wrong direction. Gamaliel's provisions having been consumed, he was astonished that this was not the case with his companion, but that, in fact, he could even spare some for him. Thereupon Joshua informed him that he had calculated on the return of a star (a comet), which reappeared every seventy years, and which would mislead the ignorant sailor, and that therefore he (Joshua) had provided himself with extra food for this emergency. This astronomical knowledge of Joshua appears the more surprising, as the cycles of the comets were known not even to the learned of antiquity. But Joshua was yet more distinguished for his modesty and gentleness than for knowledge and wisdom, and these qualities he displayed also in teaching. He was opposed to all exaggeration and eccentricity, and gave heed to the circumstances of daily life when making a legal decision.

Joshua warmly expressed his disapproval of the numerous measures which the school of Shammai had introduced before the destruction of the Temple, under the name of "the eighteen 350
rules," and which rendered impossible all closer relations or friendly communications with the heathens. He said, "On that day, the school of Shammai went beyond all bounds in their decisions; they behaved as one who pours water into a vessel containing oil; the more water one pours in, the more oil runs off," which meant that, by introducing a number of superfluous details, the really important things were lost. Joshua seems also to have opposed the unmeasured deductions of the Hillelite school. He said that the regulations respecting the Sabbath, festive offerings, and misuse of holy things, have but slight foundation in Holy Writ, but have many Halachas in their support.

The balanced and calm character of Joshua rendered him especially fitted for the part of intermediary between the Jewish nation and Roman intolerance. He was the only teacher who sought and enjoyed the confidence of the Roman rulers; without betraying his trust to the Romans, he yet persuaded the opposing forces to be mutually more yielding. The death of Gamaliel, and the hostile attitude of the Jews towards the Romans during the last years of the Emperor Trajan and the early years of Hadrian's reign, seem to have torn Joshua away from his petty trade, and to have put the public leadership into his hands. It is not improbable that he assumed the patriarchal position; at least the circumstance that he removed the ban from Eliezer after the latter's death, an act which could be performed only by a patriarch, or one equal in authority, affords some ground for this supposition. Joshua's activity during the last years of his life forms an important part of the history of his times.

Amongst the personages of this period, Akiba ben Joseph was unquestionably the most talented, original and influential. His youthful days and mental development are shrouded in 351
darkness, as is often the case with characters who leave their mark in history; but legends have cast sufficient light to show the obscurity of his descent. According to one legend, he was a proselyte, and a descendant of Sisera, who fell through a woman's deceit. Another legend represents him as a servant of Kalba-Sabua, one of the three richest men of Jerusalem, who, by their provisions, wished to prevent for many years the famine occasioned by the siege. The legend adds that the daughter of one of these wealthy men of Jerusalem, named Rachel, had bestowed her love on Akiba, on the condition that he should follow the study of the Law. In those days this meant to acquire culture, and thus, in his fortieth year, Akiba entered a school, in order to take his first lessons to obtain the knowledge in which he was deficient. During the period of his studies the daughter of Kalba-Sabua had remained faithful to him, living in the greatest poverty, to which her father in his anger had reduced her by casting her adrift. Of these stories so much is certain, that Akiba was very ignorant until he was well advanced in years, that he and his wife lived under very straitened circumstances, and he related later on that during the period of his ignorance, he hated those who were versed in the Law.

Meanwhile his slumbering mind did not develop so quickly as the legend relates. One source declares that he was one of the pupils of Eliezer during many years, without ever showing himself worthy of receiving an instructive reply from him. His teacher appears to have regarded him with a certain amount of contempt. Perhaps the peculiar system, pursued by Rabbi Akiba with regard to the newer Halachas, also excited Eliezer's disapproval. Akiba had learned this new system under Nachum of Gimso (or Emmaus), under whom he studied, not, indeed, for two-and-twenty 352
years, as the legend relates. Akiba raised what was incomplete and fragmentary in this school to a complete system, and thus he stands at a turning-point in Jewish history.

The peculiar system of Akiba was built on certain principles, and in fact he may be considered as the only systematic Tanai. In this system the law was not considered as a dead treasure incapable of growth or development, or, as it was in the eyes of Eliezer, a wealth of mere memories, but it formed an everlasting quarry in which, with proper means, new treasures might always be found. New laws were also no longer to be formulated by the voice of a majority, but were to be justified by and founded on the written documents of the Holy Word. As the fundamental doctrine of his system, Akiba maintained that the style of the Torah, especially in parts relating to the laws (Halachas), was quite different from that of other writings. Human

language, besides the indispensable words employed, requires certain expressions, figures of speech, repetitions, and enlargements—in fact it takes a certain form which is almost unnecessary for conveying the writer's meaning, but which is used as a matter of taste, in order to round off the sentences and to make them more finished and artistic. In the language of the Torah, on the other hand, no weight is put on the form; nothing is superfluous, no word, no syllable, not even a letter; every peculiarity of expression, every additional word, every sign is to be regarded as of great importance, as a hint of a deeper meaning that lies buried within. Akiba added a number of explanatory and deductive rules to those of Hillel and Nachum, and his additions afforded fresh means of development for the traditional law. When a deduction had been obtained by the correct use of the rules, such conclusion might again be employed as the foundation for fresh deductions, and so on, in a continuous chain. 353

Akiba was not to be restrained in this course by any consequences whatsoever. He had opened up a new path with his system, and a new point of view. The Oral Law, of which it had been said that it hung on a hair and had no firm ground in Holy Writ, was thus placed on a firmer basis, and the dissensions concerning the Halachas were to a considerable degree diminished. Akiba's contemporaries were surprised, dazzled, and inspired by his theories, which were new and yet old. Tarphon, who had at one time been the superior of Akiba, said to him, "He who departs from thee departs from life eternal; for what has been forgotten in the handing down, that dost thou give afresh in thy explanations." It was acknowledged that the Law would have been forgotten or neglected, had not Akiba given it his support. With exaggerated enthusiasm, it was said that many enactments of law, which were unknown to Moses, were revealed to Akiba.

Just as Akiba had recognized and confirmed the worth of the traditional law, he also assisted in reducing it to a methodical system and order. He laid the foundation for the possible collection of the rich material at hand. It has already been stated that the Halachas were strung together without connection or systematic grouping; it was therefore necessary, in order to retain the entire mass, to maintain years of intimacy with those who were acquainted with the Halachas, to be untiringly industrious, and to have a faithful memory. Akiba, however, facilitated the study of the Halachas by arranging them in groups, and thus assisted the memory. The arranging of the Halachas he carried out in two ways. He put them together according to their context, so that all Halachas concerning the Sabbath, marriage laws, divorces, and property should form 354 independent wholes. Thus the entire matter was divided into six similar parts, each part bearing the name Masechta (Textus—Division). These divisions he arranged according to numbers, so as to give a useful aid to the memory; thus, from four causes injuries to property might occur; five classes of men could be excluded from the tithes of the priests; fifteen classes of women were prevented by consanguinity from intermarrying with their brothers-in-law; thirty-six kinds of sins are recorded in the Holy Writings as being punished by extermination. The collection of the Halachas, instituted by Akiba, was called the Mishna, or more fully Mishna of Rabbi Akiba, to distinguish it from the later collection; in Christian circles it was known under the name of Akiba's Deuterosis. It was also called Midoth (Measures), probably on account of the numbers which form the basis of arrangement. This Mishna or Midoth, though arranged, was not written down; the contents remained as before traditional, but an easier method was employed in classifying them. It is hardly probable that Akiba alone completed and arranged all this material. His pupils no doubt assisted in this collection which, later on, formed the foundation of the code that terminated the whole traditional system.

The older Mishnas (Mishna Rishona) were often separated from the later (Mishna Acharona, or Mishna of Rabbi Akiba), and the latter were taken as the norm. The name of the new founder of the Oral Law became, through his peculiar mode of teaching, one of the most celebrated in the Jewish communities far and wide. His mysterious descent and his lowly origin only heightened the interest felt in him. The number of his hearers is exaggerated by tradition, which fixes it at twelve thousand, and even double that number, but a more modest record represents them as amounting to three hundred. Accompanied by this numerous band of disciples, Akiba again 355 visited his wife Rachel, who for some years had lived apart from him in the greatest poverty. The scene of their meeting is touchingly described, and her hard-hearted father, Kalba-Sabua, proud of such a son-in-law, is said to have bequeathed to him his whole property. From this time Akiba lived in great riches with his wife, who had previously been so poor that she slept on a bed of straw. His gratitude to his sorely tried wife was in proportion to the sacrifices which she had made for him.

Akiba had his fixed domicile in Bene-Berak, where his school was situated. The position of this spot, which, through him, became so celebrated, is supposed to be southeast of Joppa. Others place it yet more to the south, near Ashdod; but Akiba was a member of the Synhedrion in Jabne, and it was but seldom that any measure was determined without him.

In the development of Jewish law, in which Akiba had wrought such changes, Ishmael ben Elisha took an important part. He demanded the explanation of the written law from the common-sense view, and was thus one of the chief opponents of Akiba's system. According to Ishmael, the divine precepts of the Torah are expressed in human language, in which various figures of speech, linguistic repetitions and oratorical modes of expression occur, on which, however, no weight should be laid, as they are a mere matter of form. He thus put aside the various deductions of Akiba, which were based on an apparently superfluous (pleonastic) word, or even letter of the alphabet. Akiba deduced, for example, the punishment of death by fire against the adulterous married daughter of a priest from one letter of the alphabet, on which Ishmael remarked—"On account of one letter of the alphabet thou wouldst inflict death by burning!" Ishmael had his own school, which was known under the name of Be-Rabbi Ishmael. He there 356

developed the rules which were to be employed in explaining and applying the Written Law. He amplified Hillel's seven rules of interpretation into thirteen, by subdividing one into several, while he rejected another, and on his own authority added one which was quite new.

The thirteen deductive rules of Ishmael are recognized as the complete form, but the system of Akiba, although partly opposed to it, was not thereby excluded from use, for both were equally employed by succeeding teachers. There is but little else known of Ishmael. He belongs to a circle which, doubtless for political reasons, was relegated by the Synhedrion from Jabne to Usha. He subsequently paid for his love for his nation and the Law with his life. Akiba, though an opponent of the theories held by him, gave a funeral address in praise of him, and was impressed with the idea that a similar fate would soon befall himself.

These five men—Gamaliel, the arranger; Eliezer, the strict upholder of tradition; Joshua, the conciliator; Akiba, the systematizer; and Ishmael, the clear thinker, were the center-point of that period; they formed the rays which, starting from one point, diverge in order to be finally reunited in another.

The maintaining and cultivation of the inherited Law was a point of union for all men of activity and intelligence, and to it they turned all their energy, mind and power. The numerous teachers of this second generation of Tanaites were called the Armed (Baâle Trêssin), because the Synhedrion and schools constituted a battle-field on which the combatants contested for the Law (machai nomikai). The group was composed partly of members of the Synhedrion who had a voice in every decision; partly of ordained members who, through the ceremony of "laying on of hands," were elevated to the rank of "wise men," from whose midst the college was wont to fill up vacancies; and, lastly, there were disciples who sat on the ground as listeners at "the feet of the masters." 357

Amongst the most important members was Tarphon of Lydda; he was rich and generous, passionate and hasty—a zealous enemy of the Jewish Christians. Further, there were Eliezer of Modin, an authority on Agadic explanations; and José, the Galilæan, whose heart was soft and full of love for humanity. There was also Isebab, the clerk of the Synhedrion; Chuzpit, the public orator or interpreter; Judah ben Baba, the Chassidæan (he probably belonged to the order of the Essenes); Chananya ben Teradion, who, together with those just named, suffered the death of a martyr. Besides these were Eleazar Chasma and Jochanan ben Gudgada, both of whom were celebrated on account of their deep mathematical knowledge and their poverty, but they were put in possession of lucrative posts by the patriarch at the express intervention of Joshua; Jochanan ben Nuri, a zealous disciple of Gamaliel; Joseph ben Kisma, an admirer of the Romans; and, lastly, Ilai and Chalafta, both of whom became better known through their sons. From the class of disciples only four distinguished themselves in history, Samuel, the younger, and three others—all of whom were named Simon. The disciples consisted of those who, for some reason, had not been amongst the ordained, and who were thus excluded from certain functions, such as membership of the Synhedrion and the holding of certain judicial offices. To these was denied the title of Rabbi—equivalent to the title of doctor in our times, but not corresponding to the title of Reverend. The title of Rabbi was, in fact, first used from the time of the destruction of the Temple, and was probably introduced by the disciples of Jochanan ben Zakkai, who were called master by their adherents.

Samuel the Younger (Hakaton) was a man of rare modesty and abnegation, a "true disciple of Hillel"; he was chiefly known for his condemnation of the Jewish Christians, and for the prophetic glance, which, when on his death-bed, he cast into the gloomy future. He uttered the prophetic words: "Simon and Ishmael are doomed to destruction; the nation is threatened with anarchy, and heavy persecutions will follow." Those around knew not what to make of his utterances, but he foresaw the coming troubles under Hadrian. Samuel died childless, and the Patriarch himself delivered an address in his memory. 358

Simon ben Nanos was renowned on account of his intimate acquaintance with the law of the individual, and Ishmael recommended all those who were learned in the Law to cultivate an acquaintance with ben-Nanos. Simon ben Asai was an enemy to marriage, and, together with Simon ben Zoma, he became absorbed in the theosophic speculations of the times. Amongst the great number of teachers of the Law, of whom many lost their lives, only one is named as having deserted his people, and thus having attained to undesirable notoriety. This was Elisha ben Abuya, better known by his apostate name Acher, who became a persecutor of the Law and of those who adhered to it. Outside of Judæa, and particularly in Babylon, there existed centers for the growth of spiritual activity. Judah ben Bathyra, who taught in Nisibis, a town in Babylon, was probably a descendant of the family Bene Bathyra, which, in the time of King Herod, had been at the head of the Synhedrion. In Nahardea, Nehemia is named as the teacher of the traditional Law in Beth-Deli. From this center there seems to have originated, as will be shown later on, the chief opposition to Trajan's plans for conquest in the district of the Euphrates. In Asia Minor, likewise, the study of the Halachas was pursued, though the names of its teachers have not been preserved. Cæsarea, the capital of Cappadocia (also called Mazaca), appears to have been the chief seat of this branch of study. Rabbi Akiba, during his journey in Asia Minor, found in the latter place a man learned in traditions, who held a discussion with him concerning the Halachas. The Jews of Egypt, who had closed the temple of Onias at the command of Vespasian, and had thus lost their seat of learning, appear to have pursued their studies of the Halachas in Alexandria. They continued to occupy themselves with the translation of such writings as resembled the Holy Writ or the Apocryphal Literature. Sirach translated the sayings of his grandfather into Greek, and others translated the book of Susannah and the Letter of Baruch. Additions were also made to the Books of Esther and Daniel. These later additions to Hebrew 359

poetry were considered by Christians as part of the Bible. In Judæa, however, no attention was paid to these foreign schools, but the Synhedrion of Jabne was regarded as the supreme authority.

CHAPTER XIV.

INNER LIFE.

Inner Life of the Jews—Sphere of Action of the Synhedrion and the Patriarch—The Order of Members and Moral Condition of the Common People—Relation of Christianity towards Judaism—Sects—Jewish Christians—Pagan Christians—Ebionites—Nazarenes—The Gnostics—Regulations of the Synhedrion against Christianity—Proselytes at Rome—Aquilas and his translation of the Bible—Berenice and Titus—Domitian—Josephus and the Romans.

The Synhedrion of Jamnia had become the heart of the Jewish nation, whence life and activity streamed forth to the most distant communities. Thence proceeded all arrangements and decisions relating to religious matters, which were to become popular, and the observance of which was to be ensured. The nation regarded the Synhedrion as a remnant of the State, and paid to the Nasi (the President), a member of the house of Hillel and a descendant of David, an amount of reverence such as might be shown to royalty. The Greek title Ethnarch, which means Ruler of the People, and which approaches nearest to the description of a king, seems to show that with the Patriarchate was associated the princely dignity. Therefore the people were proud of the house of Hillel, because through its members the ruling power remained in the house of David, and thus the prediction of the patriarch Jacob was verified, "that the scepter should not depart from the tribe of Judah." After the Patriarch came his representative Ab-beth-din, and the Chacham (the Wise), whose special office is not known. The Patriarch had the right of appointing judges and the officers of the congregation, and probably supervised their actions. The Roman 361
government had not yet interfered with the communal arrangements of the Jews so far as to cause the judicial offices to be performed by Romans. The authority of the Patriarch left the power of the teacher, however, undiminished in certain of the schools; they could confer on their disciples the dignities of judge or teacher of the people, and the assent of the Patriarch was not required. The master laid his hand on the head of the pupil, and this ordination was called *Semicha*, or *Minui*, and meant Nomination, Ordination, or Promotion. The ordained bore the title *Zaken* (Elder), which was almost equivalent to that of Senator, for through this ordination they obtained the right of membership of the Council when the choice should fall on them.

The chief activity of the Patriarch was felt at the public meetings of the Synhedrion. He occupied the highest place, supported by the chief members who were seated around in a half-circle. Behind these members, whose number at this time was probably seventy, there were several rows of the ordained, behind whom stood the pupils, and at the back the people seated on the ground witnessed the proceedings.

The Patriarch opened the meeting either by introducing some subject of discussion from the Laws, or by inviting the members to speak by the formula "Ask." If he himself spoke first, he uttered some sentences softly to the Meturgeman, who then developed and explained them in an oratorical manner. Any person had the right to put questions: while the discussion was being held the assembly would divide into groups and debate on the matter. The president had the right to close the discussion, and to bring about its conclusion by saying, "The subject has been sufficiently discussed." After the conclusion no one was permitted to return to theoretical discussions. It appears that the ordained members also had the right of voting. In voting on 362
criminal cases all votes were taken, the youngest members beginning, so that they, by coming first, might not be guided by the most influential men; in other matters this method was reversed. Such was the procedure at meetings of the Synhedrion when questions were to be answered, disputed laws to be settled, new arrangements introduced, or old ones to be set aside.

The Patriarch also exercised an important function in fixing the dates of the festivals. The Jewish Calendar was not permanently fixed, but had to be regulated from time to time. The year was in fact partly solar, partly lunar, the festivals being dependent on the course of the moon, and on the influence of the sun on the harvests, and the varying course of the solar and lunar years had to be equalized. Thus, when the solar year exceeded the lunar by a month, which occurred every two or three years, a month was inserted, and this leap-year contained thirteen lunar months. The length of the months was also uncertain; a month, according to tradition, was to commence when the new moon became visible, and this period was decided partly by astronomical calculations and partly by the evidence of actual witnesses. As soon as the witnesses reported to the Synhedrion that the first streak of the young moon was visible, that day was fixed as the first day of the month, provided it concurred with calculations made. If no witnesses presented themselves, the doubtful day was counted in the current month. The month thus contained twenty-nine or thirty days. The new moon was celebrated in a solemn manner, and was announced in earlier times by means of bonfires, which could easily be used in a mountainous country throughout the land. Burning torches were seen on the Mount of Olives, as 363
also on Mount Sartaba (Alexandrion), and on Mount Tabor, and so on, as far as Beth-Beltis, on the Babylonian frontier. On the doubtful day between the two months the Babylonian community looked out for the signal, and repeated it for the benefit of those who lived afar. The congregations in Egypt, in Asia Minor and in Greece, however, could not use bonfires, they were uncertain as to the day on which the new moon fell, and, therefore, they kept two days instead of one. The intercalary month was announced by the Patriarch in a circular letter to the community.

The Patriarch Gamaliel introduced the use of set prayers. Although some of the prayers were very ancient, and were used in the Temple at the time of the burnt-offerings, yet the chief prayers

of those days were not formulated, but each man was left to pray in whatever words his feelings dictated to him. Gamaliel introduced the daily prayers, the eighteen *Berachoth* (blessings), which are used in the synagogues at the present day. It is not known by whom the prayers were introduced for the Sabbath and the Festivals. Prayers were universally considered as a substitute for offerings, and were called "the offerings of the heart." The public service was very simple; there were no official readers, any one who had attained a certain age and was of good repute could pray; the congregation called on him to do so, and he was named "the delegate of the community." He stood before the ark in which lay the scrolls of the Law, and, therefore, to pray was called "to go before the ark."

The Law, with the exception of the sacrificial system, was strictly enforced. The tithes were paid to the descendants of Aaron, the corners of the fields were left standing for the poor, and every three years the poor-tithes were paid. In remembrance of the Temple, for whose restoration the most earnest hopes were awakened, many observances were retained, which 364
could only be of meaning there. All those who fulfilled strictly the requirements of the Law, giving up the tenth part of all the fruits which they possessed, formed a sort of order (*Chaburah*), the members of which were called fellows (*Chaberim*).

In contradistinction to this order were the peasants—the slaves of the soil. A striking picture is given of the neglected mental and moral state of these peasants, to which the frequent rebellions during the last years of the Jewish state no doubt contributed. They only observed such laws as appealed to their rude senses, and knew nothing of a higher life. The members of the order would not eat or live with them, and even kept aloof from them, that their clothes might not be made unclean by contact. It was said by contemporaries that the hatred between the two classes was stronger than that felt between Jews and heathens.

Thus left to themselves and cut off from the higher classes and from all share in communal life, without a leader or adviser, the peasants easily fell under the influence of young Christianity. Jesus and his disciples had especially turned towards the unprotected class, and had there found the greater number of their followers. How flattering it must have been to these neglected beings to hear that on their account the Messiah had come, that he had been executed so that they might have a share in the good things of which they had been deprived, more especially of happiness in a better world. The Law deprived them of their rights, while Christianity opened the kingdom of heaven to them!

The teachers of the Law, absorbed in the task of upholding the Law and Jewish life, overlooked the element from which a mighty foe to the Law would arise. Before they realized it they found an enemy on their own ground, who was desirous of obtaining the treasure which they 365
had watched with such devotion. The development of Christianity as a branch of Judaism, drawing sustenance from its roots, constitutes, so long as its followers belonged to the Jewish people, a part of Jewish history.

Of the small group of a hundred and twenty persons, who, after the death of Jesus, had formed his sole followers, a Christian community had been formed, especially through the energy of Paul. He endeavored to win over the heathens by the belief in the resurrection of Christ, and the Jews by the belief that the actual appearance of the Messiah had proved the inefficacy of the Jewish Law. Christianity could no longer be contemptuously overlooked, but began to be a new element in history. But the doctrine of Paul that the Jewish Law was unnecessary, had sown the seed of dissension in primitive Christianity, and the followers of Jesus were divided into two great parties, which were again divided into smaller sects, with special views and modes of life. Sectarianism did not show itself for the first time in Christianity, as is supposed, in the second century, but was present at its very commencement, and was a necessary result of fundamental differences. The two great parties, which were arrayed in sharp opposition, were, on the one hand, the *Jewish* Christians, and, on the other, the *Pagan* Christians. The Jewish Christians, belonging to the original community, which was composed of Jews, were closely connected with Judaism. They observed the Jewish laws in all their details, and pointed to the example of Jesus, who himself had lived according to Jewish laws. They put these words into the mouth of the founder of the religion, "Sooner shall heaven and earth disappear, than that an iota or a grain of the Law shall not be fulfilled"; further, "I have not come to destroy the Law of Moses, but to fulfil it." They entertained a hostile spirit towards the Pagan Christians, and applied to them one of the 366
sayings of Jesus, "He who alters any, even the most trivial of the laws, and teaches mankind accordingly, shall be the last in the kingdom of heaven; but he who obeys them, and teaches them, shall be considered great in the kingdom of heaven." Even the devotion of Jewish Christians to Jesus was not of a nature to separate them from Judaism. They considered him as a holy and morally great man, who was descended in the natural way from the race of David. This son of David had advanced the kingdom of heaven because he taught men to live modestly and in poverty, like the Essenes, from whose midst, in fact, Christianity had sprung. From their contempt of riches and preference for poverty they bore the name of Ebionites or Ebionim (poor), which was travestied by their Christian opponents into a nickname meaning "poor in spirit." Fearing to be eclipsed by the other party, the primitive Jewish Christian community sent out messengers to the foreign communities, in order to impress on them not only the Messianic character of Jesus, but also the duty which they owed to the Law. Thus they founded Judæo-Christian colonies, of which that at Rome in time became the chief.

In opposition to these were the heathen Christians. As the term "Son of God," as used in the language of the prophets, contained an idea entirely incomprehensible to them, they interpreted it according to their own mode of thought, as meaning God's actual Son, a conception which was as clear and acceptable to the heathen as it was strange and repulsive to the Jews. When once

the idea of a Son of God was accepted, it became necessary to eliminate from the life of Jesus all those traits which appertained to him as a human being, such as his natural birth from parents, and thus the statement developed that this Son of God was born of a virgin through the Holy Ghost. The first great difference between the Ebionites and the heathen Christians lay in their 367
views concerning the person of Jesus; the one honoring him as the son of David, the other worshiping him as the Son of God. The second point turned on the stress to be laid on the laws of Judaism. The heathen party paid but little attention to the laws relating to the community of property and contempt for riches, which were the chief ends of Ebionite Christianity. The heathen or Hellenic Christians had their chief seat in Asia Minor, namely, in seven cities, which, in the symbolical language of that time, were called the seven stars and the seven golden lamps. Ephesus was the chief of these heathen Christian congregations. Between the Ebionite and Hellenic congregations, which possessed in common only the name of the founder, there arose strained relations and a mutual dislike, which became more bitter with time. Paul and his disciples were fiercely hated by the Jewish Christians. They did not cease, even after his death, to use expressions of contempt against the circumcised apostle who only spread error. Admiring the unity and solidarity which prevailed in the Jamnian Synhedrion, in contrast to the dissensions which reigned in the Christian community, a Jewish Christian wrote: "Our fellow-tribesmen follow to the present day the same law concerning the unity of God and the proper mode of life, and cannot form a different opinion of the meaning of the Scriptures. It is only according to prescribed rules that they endeavor to bring into agreement the sayings of Scripture, but they do not permit a man to teach unless he has learnt beforehand how to explain the Holy Scriptures. They have but one God, one Law, one hope. If we do not follow the same course, our word of truth will, through the variety of opinion, be shattered. This I know, not as a prophet, but because I see the root of the evil; for some of the heathens have put aside with the Law the prophecies in 368
agreement with it, and have adopted the unlawful and absurd teachings of an enemy (Paul)." These words are placed in the mouth of Peter, the second of the apostles. But the Ebionites not only called Paul's predictions and instructions, of which he thought so much, unlawful and absurd, but gave him a nickname, which was meant to brand him and his followers. They called him Simon Magus, a half-Jewish (Samaritan) wizard, who is said to have bewitched all the world with his words. He was said also to have been baptized, but it was asserted that he had not received his position as apostle through the Holy Ghost from Jesus' disciples, but had sought it through bribes to the Ebionite community. The honor was not only absolutely refused to him, but Simon Peter had threatened him with damnation, for his heart was full of deceit, bitterness, and injustice. The freedom from the Jewish Law inaugurated by Paul was characterized as unbridled license, as the teaching of Balaam, which brought in its train the worship of idols and the pursuit of vice. The leaders of the heathens did not hesitate to reply in a similar strain, and perhaps repaid their opponents with even greater hatred when, to religious opposition, there was added the dislike of the Romans and Greeks to the Jews, even after they had become followers of Jesus. In the larger Christian congregations the two sects often fell into distinct groups and became isolated from each other. In the circular letters, which the chiefs of the various Christian parties were accustomed to send to the communities, they made use of sharp or condemnatory observations against the opponents of the opinions which they held to be the only true ones. Even the stories of the birth of Jesus, his works, sufferings, death and resurrection, which were written down, under the title of the Evangels, only in the first quarter of the second century, were 369
colored by the views of the two parties, who put teachings and sayings into the mouth of the Founder of Christianity, not as he had uttered them, but according to their own views. These narratives were favorable to the Law of the Jews and to the Jews themselves, when they emanated from the Ebionites, and inimical towards both in the accounts written by the followers of Paul, the heathen Christians. The evangelists were thus polemical writers.

The division between the Ebionites and the heathen Christians was by no means confined to religious belief, but had a political background. The Jewish Christians hated Rome, the Romans, the Emperor, and their officials as much as the Jews did. One of their prophets (said to be John, an imitator of the visions of Daniel), who had composed the first Christian Revelation or Apocalypse, was inspired with the deepest hatred towards the town of seven hills, the great Babylon. All the evil in the world, all the depredations and plagues, all the contempt and humiliation were announced and invoked in this first Christian Revelation against sinful Rome. They did not imagine that she would, at a future time, become the capital of Christianity. On the other hand, the followers of Paul not only recommended subjection to the Roman Empire, but even declared it to have been appointed by God. The Christian party, without any regard for those Jews who were imbued with a love of liberty, continually recommended that taxes and tithes should be handed to the Romans. This submission to the existing power, this coqueting with sinful Rome, which the Jewish Christians thought doomed to destruction, was another source of disunion amongst various sects of Christians.

Between the Jews and the Jewish Christians there existed at first tolerable relations. The former called the latter Sectaries (Minim, Minæans). Even the Tanaite and Ebionite teachers 370
mixed freely with each other. The strict Rabbi Eliezer, who refused to the heathens their share and part in life everlasting, had had an interview with the Jewish Christian, Jacob of Kephar-Samia, and quietly listened to his version, as he had received it from Jesus. Once, Bendama, a nephew of Ishmael, having been bitten by a snake, determined to let himself be cured by means of an exorcism uttered by Jacob. The transition from Judaism to Christianity was not a striking one. It is probable that various members of Jewish families belonged to the Jewish-Christian belief without giving rise to dissensions or disturbing the domestic peace. It is related of Hanania, the nephew of Joshua, that he had joined the Christian congregation at Capernaum; but that his uncle, who disapproved, removed him from Christian influences, and sent him to

Babylon.

But the Jewish Christians, also, did not remain content with the simple idea of Jesus as the Messiah. They gradually and unconsciously, like the heathen Christians, adorned him with God-like attributes, and endowed him with miraculous powers. The more the Jewish-Christian conception idealized Jesus, the more it became separated from Judaism, with which it still thought itself at one. There arose mixed sects from among the Ebionites and Hellenites, and one could perceive a gradual descent from the law-abiding Ebionites to the law-despising Antitaktes. The Nazarenes came next to the Ebionites. They also acknowledged the power of the Jewish law in its entirety; but they explained the birth of Jesus in a supernatural manner—from the Virgin and the Holy Ghost—and ascribed to him God-like attributes. Other Jewish Christians went further than the Nazarenes, and gave up the Law, either in part or altogether. After such proceedings, a total breach between Jews and Jewish Christians was inevitable. At length a time 371
arrived when the latter themselves felt that they no longer belonged to the Jewish community, and therefore they entirely withdrew from it. The letter of separation which the Jewish community sent to the parent body is yet in existence. It calls on the Jewish followers of Jesus to separate wholly from their fellow-countrymen. In the Agadic method of that period, the Epistle to the Hebrews sets forth that the crucified Messiah is at the same time the expiatory sacrifice and the atoning priest. It proves from the Law that those sacrifices whose blood was sprinkled in the Holy of Holies, were considered the holiest, and the bodies were burnt outside the Temple. "Therefore"—thus continues the Jewish-Christian monitor—"Jesus, also, that he might sanctify the people through his own blood, suffered without the gate (of Jerusalem). Let us, therefore, go forth unto him without the camp (the Jewish community), bearing his reproach, for we have not here an abiding city (Jerusalem as the symbol of the Jewish religion), but we seek after the city which is to come." When once a decided step had been taken to divide the Nazarenes and the cognate sects from the Jewish community, a deadly hate arose against the Jews and Judaism. Like the heathen Christians, the Nazarenes reviled the Jews and their ways. As the written Law was holy to them also, they directed their shafts against the study of Halachas amongst the Tanaites, who in those days were the very life of Judaism. In Jewish-Christian, as in Jewish circles, men were accustomed to view all events from the point of view of Holy Writ, and to draw counsel from the explanations and references in the prophecies. The Nazarenes, therefore, applied to the Tanaites, whom they called Deuterotes, and more especially to the schools of Hillel and Shammai, a threatening verse of Isaiah (viii. 14): "It shall be a stone of stumbling and the downfall of both the houses of Israel." "By the two houses the prophet meant the two scholastic sects of Shammai 372
and Hillel, from whose midst the Scribes and Pharisees had arisen, and whose successors were Akiba, Jochanan, the son of Zakkai, then Eliezer and Delphon (Tarphon), and then again Joseph the Galilean and Joshua. These are the two houses which do not recognize the Savior; and this shall, therefore, bring them to downfall and destruction." Yet another verse from the same prophet, which runs, "They mock the people through the word" (Is. xxix. 21), the Nazarenes applied to the teachers of the Mishna, "who contemn the nation through their bad traditions." They place taunts in the mouth of Jesus against the teachers of the Law, which might, perhaps, apply to one or another of them, but which as applied to the whole body were a calumnious libel. They make him say, "On the seat of Moses (the Synhedrion) sit the Scribes and Pharisees; all that they say you must follow and do; but their works ye shall not do, for they speak and do not act in accordance.... All their works they do so that people may notice them. They use wide phylacteries and fringes on their garments. They love to have the chief place at meals and in the synagogues, to be greeted by other men in the public places, and to be called Rabbi, Rabbi.... Woe to you, ye hypocritical Scribes and Pharisees, who devour the substance of the widow under the pretense that ye pray long; therefore shall ye receive punishment; ... woe to you, that ye tithe the herbs of the ground—both dill and cummin, and that ye leave undone the weightier matters of the Law, judgment, mercy and faith. The one must be done, but the other should not be omitted. You blind souls who strain at gnats and swallow camels, ... who cleanse the outside of the cups and platters and leave them within full to the brim with extortion and corruption."

Thus the leaders of the Jewish Christians were opposed to the Judaism of the Torah, and thus, 373
without actually desiring it, they played into the hands of the Hellenes. The teaching of Paul thus gained more and more ground, and came at last to be considered as true Christianity, as the catholic, the universal religion. It was, therefore, natural that the various sects of Ebionites and Nazarenes should gradually disappear amongst the ever-increasing numbers of the heathen Christians, and that they should become few in numbers and miserable in condition—an object of contempt both to Jews and Christians. A peculiar phenomenon was offered in this contest of opinions, that the further the Jewish Christians departed from the Law, the nearer did the Hellenes approach to it. In the various epistles and letters which the Christian teachers sent to the congregations, or to their various representatives, they could not sufficiently denounce those who sought to make way for the Law and the Jewish teachings.

Meanwhile, Christianity developed a number of sects with most curious titles, and of the most eccentric tendency. Half a century after the destruction of the Temple, the two forms of religion in the Old World (Judaism and Paganism) underwent a transformation and partial union. Judaism being without a state or point of centralization, endeavored to consolidate itself, whilst the Pagan world, in the full flush of its power, became disintegrated, and a disturbance was caused in men's minds which led to the most extraordinary results.

To the two elements borrowed from Judaism and Christianity there were added others from the Judæan-Alexandrian system of Philo, from Grecian philosophy, and, in fact, from all corners of the earth, whose source can hardly be determined. It was a confusion of the most opposite modes of thought and teachings, Jewish and heathen, old and new, true and false, the lofty and the low,

all in close juxtaposition and fusion. It seemed as though on the advent of Christianity into the world, all the most decided teachings of ancient times had bestowed a part of their contents on it, in order to obtain thereby importance and duration. The old question—whence did evil arise in this world—and how its existence could be reconciled with the idea of a good and just providence, occupied in the liveliest manner all minds which had been made acquainted with Jewish dogmas by means of the Christian apostles. It was only through a new conception of God that it seemed possible to solve this question, and this new belief was pieced together from the most varied religious systems. The higher knowledge of God, His relation to the world and to religious and moral life, was called Gnosis; those who thought that they possessed it called themselves Gnostics, and understood thereby highly gifted beings, who had penetrated the secrets of creation. 374

The Gnostics, or more correctly, the Theosophists, who hovered between Judaism, Christianity and Paganism, and who borrowed their views and forms of thought from these three circles, were drawn also from the adherents of these three religions. So powerful must have been the charm of the Gnostic teaching, that the authorities of the Synagogue and the Church enacted numberless rules and ordinances against it, and were yet powerless to prevent Gnostic teachings and formulæ from gaining ground amongst the Jews and the Christians. Gnosticism spread throughout Judæa, Egypt, Syria, Asia Minor, and flourished especially in Rome—the capital of the world—where all religious views and creeds found followers. The language of the Gnostics was of a mystic-allegorical character, often borrowed from Jewish and Christian confessions of creed, but treated in an entirely different manner. Some of the Gnostic sects exemplified the peculiarities of the tendency of those times. One sect called themselves Cainites, for no other reason than that its disciples, in defiance of the Biblical narrative, regarded the fratricide Cain as superior to Abel. The Cainites also honored the depraved Sodomites, Esau, in spite of his savagery, and the ambitious Korah. The Ophites and Naasites were filled with similar love of opposition to the Biblical accounts, but they assigned to it a better motive than that of the Cainites. They took their name from the Greek word Ophis and the Hebrew Nahash (Naas) serpent, and honored this animal very highly, because in the Bible the serpent is considered as the origin of evil, and, according to the ideas of those times, was looked upon as the symbol of evil, and as the form taken by Satan. The Ophites gave thanks to the serpent, by whose means the first human pair were led into disobedience against God, and thus to the recognition of good and evil and of consciousness in general. 375

Varied and contradictory as were the tendencies of the Gnostic sects, they yet had doctrines in common. The fundamental Gnostic doctrines concerned the actual knowledge of God, which its founders developed in opposition to the idea of God formulated by Judaism. The Gnostics pictured to themselves the Divine Being as divided into two principles of a God and a Creator, the one subordinate to the other. God they called Silence or Rest, and depicted him as enthroned in the empyrean heights, without relation to the world. His fundamental attributes were grace, love, mercy. From him proceeded emanations which revealed a portion of his essence; these emanations were called æons (worlds). Beneath this highest of all beings they set the Creator of the world (Demiurge), whom they also called Ruler. To him they assigned the work of creation; he directed the world, he had delivered the people of Israel, and given them the Law. As to the highest God appertain love and mercy, which harmonize with freedom, so to the fundamental character of the world's creator appertain justice and severity, which he causes to be felt through laws and obligations. According to the usual practice of the age, the Gnostics found a passage of Scripture to illustrate these relations between the God of justice and the God of grace. Isaiah vii. 6 reads: "We will go up to Judah, and instal another king, the son of the good God (Tab-El)." They depict the Creator as forming the world out of primeval matter by means of wisdom (Achamot). "Wisdom," as it is expressed in their allegorical language, "became allied with primeval matter which existed from eternity, and a variety of forms were brought forth; but wisdom became thereby bedimmed and darkened." According to this exposition, the Gnostics assumed that there were three original Beings—the highest God, the Creator, and Primeval Matter, and from these they developed the various conditions and stages in the spiritual and actual world. All that is good and noble is accounted an emanation from God; justice and law come from the Creator; but what is imperfect, bad, or crippled in this world is the result of the primeval matter. 376

In correspondence with this Gnostic division of the three powers of the world, there are also amongst mankind three classes or castes, which are in the service of these three principles. There are spiritual men (Pneumatics); they are as a rule and law to themselves, and do not need guidance or guardianship; to this class belong the prophets, and the possessors of the true Gnosis. There are, secondly, material men (Psychics), who are in the service of the lawgiving Demiurge; they stand under the yoke of the Law, by means of which they keep themselves aloof from what is worldly, without, however, rising to the height of spiritual men. Lastly, there are earthly men (Choics), who, like the lower animals, are bound in the fetters of earth and matter. As types of these three classes of men the Gnostics gave the three sons of Adam; Seth was the origin of the Pneumatic, Abel the type of the law-abiding man, and Cain the picture of the earthly man. Some of the Gnostics also classified the three religions according to this scheme—Christianity was the offspring of the highest God, Judaism of the Demiurge, and, lastly, Paganism was a product of earthly matter. 377

A by no means insignificant number of Jews allowed themselves to be blinded by the uncertain light of the new teachings, in which truth and falsehood were so wonderfully commingled, and to be thus drawn away from the parent body. The secession of one man, Elisha ben Abuya, subsequently had very sad results. The reasons which induced this teacher of the Law, who was not behind his fellows in knowledge, to fall away, give proof of the important

influence exercised by the false teachings of theosophy on Jewish circles. Legend has, however, embellished the story, in order to explain how one who was versed in the Law could take so strange a step as to despise the Law. It is not to be doubted that Elisha ben Abuya was well acquainted with Gnostic literature, as also with Grecian songs, and with the writings of the Minæans. It is also certain that he knew of the fundamental doctrine of the Gnostics, which represented God as a dual being, and that, like the Gnostics, he despised the Jewish Law. He is also said to have adopted practically the evil Gnostic morality, and to have given himself up to a dissolute life. Having thus fallen away from Judaism he received, as a mark of his apostasy, the name Acher (another), as though by going over to other principles he had really become another man. Acher was considered in Jewish circles as a striking example of apostasy—as a man who employed his knowledge of the Law to persecute it the more energetically.

Against such incursions as were committed by Christianity Judaism had to defend itself, in order to maintain its existence and continuance. Inimical powers thronged its Temple, desecrated the holy things, dimmed its clear belief in God, falsified and misapplied its teachings, turned away its disciples, and filled them with hate and contempt for what they had formerly honored. The time of the Hellenists in the Maccabean period, who had first brought dissension into the house of Israel, seemed to have returned with renewed horror. Once again sons conspired against their own mother. The narrow circle of the Tanaites felt the danger most severely; it hoped for nothing good from the teachings of the Minæans, and recognized that their writings exercised a seductive influence on the masses. Tarphon (Tryphon) spoke of this dangerous influence with the deepest conviction. "The Evangels (Gilion), and all the writings of the Minæans deserve to be burnt, even with the holy name of God, which occurs therein; for Paganism is less dangerous than the Jewish-Christian sects, because the former does not recognize the truths of Judaism from want of knowledge, whilst the others, on the contrary, deny what they fully know." He would therefore rather flee for safety to a heathen temple than to the meeting-house of the Minæans. Ishmael, whose character was less violent than that of Tarphon, displayed the same feeling against that Jewish Christianity which had shown itself so false to its origin. He said that one need not hesitate to burn the name of God in the Evangels, for these writings only stir up anger between the Jewish people and its God. Those who professed Christianity were also reproached with seeking to damage their fellow-countrymen with the Roman authorities by tale-bearing and accusations. Perhaps by this means the Jewish Christians sought to recommend themselves to their superiors, and to show that they had no connection with the Jews. Their contemporaries therefore always considered the name Minæans as meaning tale-bearers.

It is related as a fact that high officers of one of the emperors, probably Domitian, came into the school of Gamaliel, in order to find out what instruction was given with regard to the heathens. The Synhedrion of Jamnia must have occupied itself with the question what position the Jewish Christians should occupy in the Jewish community, and whether they should in fact be considered as Jews at all. There is no resolution of the Synhedrion extant with regard to the Minæans, but the regulations which were introduced with regard to them give evidence as to its existence. An actual line of separation was drawn between Jews and Jewish Christians; the latter were placed below the sect of Samaritans, and in some respects below heathens. It was forbidden to partake of meat, bread, and wine with the Jewish Christians, as had been the case shortly before the destruction of the Temple with regard to the heathens, and to the same end—that of preventing closer intercourse with them. The Christian writings were condemned, and were put on a par with books of magic. Even to enter into business relations, or to receive menial services, was strictly forbidden, especially the use of magical cures which the Christians performed on animals or men in the name of Jesus was prohibited. A form of curse (which bore the name of Birchath ha-Minim) was likewise employed against the Minæans in the daily prayers, as also against the informers. The Patriarch, Gamaliel, confided the composition of this prayer to Samuel the Younger. This circumstance confirmed the idea that the various ordinances against the Jewish Christians, even if not proceeding direct from the Patriarch, yet had his consent. The form of curse appears to have been a sort of trial of faith in order to recognize those who secretly adhered to Christianity. For, in connection with it, it was decreed that whosoever refrained at the public prayers from pronouncing the curse, or from praying for the restoration of the Jewish State, was to be dismissed from his office of precentor. The Synhedrion published all the enactments against the Jewish Christian sects by circular letters to the communities. On the part of the Christians the Jews were accused of cursing Jesus three times a day—namely, at the morning, afternoon, and evening prayers. This reproach is quite unfounded, and, like many another made against the Jews, is based on a misunderstanding. The curse uttered in the prayers was not directed against the founder of the Christian religion, nor against the entire body of Christians, but against the Minæan informers.

The separation of the Jewish Christian sects from the Jewish community did not efface the results of the influence which for a time they had exercised. Certain Gnostic, that is to say semi-Christian views, had found their way into Jewish circles. Ideas regarding the primeval forces, the æons, the predestined differences of caste among men, even the teaching as to the two-fold existence of God as a God of kindness and a God of justice, had been adopted by many, and had become so firmly fixed as to find expression in the prayers. Certain expressions were employed in the prayers which bore reference to the Gnostic or Christian ideas. Forms of prayer as, "The good praise thee, O God; Thy name is named for good"; the repetition of the expression, "Thee, O God, we praise"; the use of two names,—all these bore a reference to the Theosophic theory, which dwelt on the grace of God at the expense of His justice, and thus endangered the fundamental principles of Judaism. An impetus was given to this train of thought by researches into the chapter concerning the creation of the world, and the throne of God as described in the Prophet

Ezekiel, (*Maas'se Bereshith*, *Maas'se Merkaba*). The exploration of this dubitable ground gave full scope to the imagination, and, with the assistance of the Agada, allusions were detected and made to apply to any subject, however far it might lie outside the true meaning of the text. Researches into such themes, the darker the more attractive, became a favorite occupation; such profound meditations, in the mystic language of metaphor, were called "entering into paradise." Various teachers of the Law are said to have been admitted to this higher wisdom, but it was not denied that this occupation brought with it many dangers for the Jewish religion. These dangers are hinted at in the statement that of those who devoted themselves to the study, Ben Soma and Ben Asai brought upon themselves respectively the one an attack of madness, the other early death, Acher fell away from Judaism, and Akiba alone fortunately escaped the danger, as, in spite of his theosophic researches, he yet remained on the territory of Judaism.

In point of fact Akiba had formed the purest conception of God, of his rule, and of the duty of man; and thus offered a sharp contrast to the ideas of the Gnostics. He uttered a saying which is noteworthy on account of its comprehensiveness and its brevity. He said: "There is a providence in all things; free will is given to man; the world is ruled by kindness, and the merit of man consists in the multitude of good deeds" (that is to say, not merely in knowledge). Every word in this saying bears witness against the errors of that time. As the far-seeing Tanaites did not shut their eyes to the dangers arising to Judaism from these inquiries into the highest truths, they made preparations to avert the same. Akiba especially insisted on placing boundaries to the unregulated theories which led to a falling-off from Judaism and to the wildest immorality. He 382
was of opinion that the passages concerning the theory of creation and the cloud-chariot of Ezekiel should not be expounded before the whole people, but should be reserved for a few chosen hearers. Those who could be initiated into higher wisdom must have the knowledge to understand hints and dark sayings, and, above all, must have passed their thirtieth year. Akiba endeavored to put an end to the study of literature which was opposed to Judaism, by denying to those who took part in it a portion in the future world, as was decreed against those who denied the resurrection and the divinity of the Jewish Law. The introduction of such forms of prayer as bore the impress of the teachings of the Minæans was wholly repressed. These measures against the introduction of Gnostic Christian theories bore fruit; the pure beliefs of Judaism, with regard to God, His relation to the world, and the moral conditions of men, remained in Jewish circles untainted, as fruitful ideas for the future. To the Tanaites of this period must be given the credit that, like the prophets of old, they protected Judaism from the falsehoods and errors which threatened to overwhelm it. Following the natural instinct of self-preservation, they, on the one hand, shut out the Jewish Christian sects from the Jewish community, and, on the other hand, strengthened Judaism, and armed it with a strong power, which upheld it in the storms which, through centuries, threatened it with destruction.

Thus strengthened and concentrated, Judaism was enabled to exercise some external influence. If Christianity, which had sprung from such slight elements, was proud of the vast number of Pagans who had joined it, and given up their national deities for the sake of an unknown God, Judaism had yet more reason to be proud. A great part of the conquests which Christianity gained in the Pagan world were due to the Jewish religion, whose fundamental truths 383
and moral teachings had often facilitated the conversion of the heathens. It was only through the truths of Judaism that those apostles who desired to convert the heathens laid bare the inconsistent perversions of the Greeks and Romans, for they made use of the words of scorn employed by the prophets against the worship of idols, and the immorality arising therefrom. But Judaism celebrated its independent triumphs over Paganism, which appear the more brilliant when it is remembered that it lacked all the means and advantages which facilitated the conversions from Paganism to Christianity. The Christians sent out zealous messengers, and, following the example of Paul, sought to make converts by eloquence and so-called miraculous cures. They imposed no heavy duties on the newly-made converts, and even permitted them to retain their former habits of life, and, in part, their old views, without separating themselves from their family circle, their relations, or from intercourse with those dear to them.

With Judaism it was different; it possessed no eloquent proselytizing apostle; on the contrary it dissuaded those who were willing to come over, by reminding them of the heavy ordeal through which they would have to pass. Jewish proselytes had to overcome immense difficulties; they were not accounted converts unless they submitted to the operation of circumcision; they had to separate from their families and from the friends of their youth in eating and drinking and in daily intercourse. Nevertheless, it is an extraordinary fact that during the half-century after the destruction of the Jewish State, there were everywhere conversions of heathens to Judaism, both in the East and in Asia Minor, but especially in Rome. The question arose as to whether the Ammonites could be admitted to the community, or whether the Biblical command with regard to 384
the Moabites and Ammonites, which forbade their admission into a congregation of God, still held good. Further, a contest arose as to whether proselytes from Tadmor (Palmyra) could be admitted, the prejudice against them being strong. An entire portion of the Law treats of proselytes (*Masechet-Gerim*), and in the daily prayers the true converts were included (*Gere-ha-Zedek*). Several converted Pagans acquired a knowledge of the Halachas. Akiba had two proselytes amongst his disciples.

The greatest number of converts were to be found in Rome, and this in spite of the hatred felt for the Jews by the Romans. The clear-headed historian, Tacitus, could not explain the fact that the Romans of his time could submit to circumcision, could renounce their country, disregard their parents, their children and relations, in order to go over to Judaism. The severe laws of the Emperor Domitian against proselytes suggest an inference as to their frequent occurrence. Josephus relates, as an eye-witness, that in his time, amongst the heathens, there arose great

enthusiasm for Jewish customs, and that many of the people observed the Feast of Dedication (Chanuka), the Sabbath, and the dietary laws, and that a strong feeling existed in favor of the Jewish religion. "If each man thinks of his own country and his own family," says Josephus, "he will find that my assertion is correct. Even if we do not fully value the excellence of our laws, we should respect them, on account of the numbers of people who respect them." Different opinions were held as to the admission of proselytes by the severe Eliezer and the mild Joshua. Whilst the former held circumcision to be absolutely necessary for admission to Judaism, the latter considered a baptism, that is, bathing in the presence of qualified witnesses, to be sufficient. The milder view seems to have prevailed. Many of those Romans who joined Judaism, probably did not undergo the operation. The historian, Josephus,—who, in his "Apology for Judaism and the Jewish Race," and, perhaps, also by his intimacy with the higher grades of Roman society, endeavored to gain over the heathens to the Jewish religion, and was, probably, successful in his attempts,—did not consider circumcision as imperative.

385

The pride of Judaism was the proselyte Akylas (Aquila). He came from the district of Pontus, and owned rich estates. Well acquainted with the Greek language, and with philosophy, Akylas, at a mature age, forsook the heathen customs in order to join the heathen Christians, who were proud of such a disciple. Soon, however, he gave up Christianity, in order to go over to Judaism. This secession was as painful an event to the Christians as his former conversion had been a joyful one, and they spread evil reports concerning him. As a Jew, Akylas associated with Gamaliel, Eliezer and Joshua, and with Akiba, whose disciple he became. The proselyte of Pontus became strongly attached to Judaism, and observed a yet higher degree of Levitical purity than even the Patriarch. After the death of his father, when the heritage was divided between him and his brothers, he would not take the equivalent for the idols which became his brothers' share, but threw the money into the sea.

Akylas became celebrated through his new Greek translation of the Holy Scriptures. The license with which the Christians treated the old Greek version appears to have awakened him to the necessity of a simple but fixed form of translation. As the Christians read the Holy Scriptures at their service, and employed the Alexandrian translation of the so-called Seventy (Septuaginta), they were anxious to deduce from this text numerous references to Christ. They changed various sentences and added others, in order to obtain the desired prophecies about Christ from the Greek text, which they held sacred. Several passages may be found employed by the teachers of the Church in confirmation of the teachings of Christ, which cannot be found either in the Hebrew or in the original form of the Greek text. The Gnostic sects, for their part, did not fail to make the needful additions, so as to give their teachings the authority of the Bible. The school of one Artemion is expressly named as having defaced the Greek translation. The Jews, on the other hand, startled at the alterations made in order to confirm the Christian point of view, did not hesitate to introduce changes of their own in order to remove all apparent allusions to Christ. The Septuagint was, therefore, the meeting-place for violent encounters, and the traces of the contest are plainly to be seen in the maimed condition of the text.

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A good Greek translation of the Bible was likewise a necessity for every Greek-speaking Jew. At that time it was a universal custom to interpret the portions read from the Bible into the language of the country. On these grounds, Akylas, who had a perfect knowledge of the Hebrew and Greek languages, began a new translation, in order to counteract the unlicensed violence done to the text. For this purpose, while translating, he kept strictly to the original Hebrew text, and with excessive caution rendered word for word, without regard to the fact that thereby the sense became incomprehensible to the Greek readers. The literalness of Akylas' translation, which has become proverbial, extended to such particles as have a twofold sense in Hebrew, and these ambiguities he desired to retain in his rendering. He wished to make the meaning contained in the Hebrew perceptible in its Greek form. It was known in Greek as the "Kat' akribeian" (the perfect fitting). This translation, on account of its exactness, set at rest all doubts, and comforted the consciences of the pious. The teachers of the Law used it universally for public readings. The Ebionites, to whom the older translation was also objectionable, employed that of Akylas in their services. An Aramæan translation was made partly from that of Akylas on account of its simplicity, and was called Targum Onkelos.

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A great sensation was at that time created in Rome by the conversion to Judaism of Flavius Clemens and his wife Flavia Domitilla. Flavius was a cousin of the Emperor Domitian; he was also a member of the Senate, and Consul. His wife was also a near relative of the Emperor. Their two sons had been named as Cæsars by Domitian, therefore one of them would have become emperor. What a brilliant prospect for the Jews that a near relative of the Emperor Titus should reconstruct the Temple which the latter had destroyed! Although Clemens probably kept his adherence to Judaism secret, yet it was known to the Jews in Rome, and to the leaders in Palestine. On receipt of the news, together with the information that a decree of extermination had been passed against the Jews residing in the provinces of the Roman Empire, the four chiefs, the Patriarch Gamaliel and his coadjutor Eliezer, the son of Azariah, Joshua and Akiba, set out on the journey to Rome. When not far from the capital of the world they heard the thousand-voiced noises of the city, and were painfully affected when they thought of the desolate silence which reigned on the Mount in Jerusalem. They shed tears at the contrast. Akiba alone maintained his cheerful demeanor, and consoled his sorrowing friends with the words: "Why do you weep? If God does so much for His enemies, what will He not do for His favorites?"

In Rome they were treated with great reverence, both by the Jews and the proselytes, and they had an opportunity of answering many religious questions. But they had arrived at an unfavorable moment. Domitian was at the height of his bloodthirsty tyranny.

388

The period of favor towards the Jews on the part of the Flavian house was at an end. Even Titus, Domitian's predecessor, had already wiped away from his mind the recollection of all he owed to them. His love for the Jewish Princess Berenice he suppressed. When Titus became sole ruler, Berenice journeyed a second time to Rome to remind him of his promise of marriage; but she came too soon or too late. Titus at that time played the part of a reformed sinner, and wished to show the Romans that he had put aside the past. He banished Berenice from Rome, who, as was said, left, but with a broken heart. Berenice personified the relation of Rome to the Jewish people, who were first in high favor, and afterwards cast into banishment and misery. It is not known for how long a time the Jewish Princess survived her disgrace. Titus showed no more gratitude to her brother, Agrippa II. He left to Agrippa his kingdom or principality as it had hitherto existed, but did not enlarge it as his father had done. Domitian, the third of the Flavians, had no reason for displaying any favor to Agrippa. When the latter, the last of the Judæan kings, died (92), the Emperor appropriated his territories, and made them into a province of Syria.

Domitian, who, like Titus at his accession, had promised to bring back a golden era, became, during the course of his government, just as sinful and bloodthirsty as Tiberius, Caligula, and Nero. He was worthy of his nation and his times, of which the poet Juvenal said—"It would be difficult to avoid satirizing them." The Jews had to suffer bitterly under this reign of blood. Domitian insisted on the payment of the Jews' poll tax, and levied it in the most humiliating 389
manner, and under circumstances of peculiar severity. Severe, however, as he was towards the Jews, Domitian was doubly hard towards the proselytes, and suffered them to feel the full weight of his tyrannical power. Those who were accused of a bias for Judaism were, by the emperor's command, dragged before a tribunal, and if their fault was proved against them, they were visited with the full punishment of the Roman law against irreligion. Proselytes were, therefore, despoiled of their property, sent into exile, or condemned to death. Tacitus relates, in his inimitable style, that executions not only took place from time to time and at long intervals, but that they occurred in continuous succession. At this time (95) Flavius Clemens was condemned to death, Domitian having heard of his leaning towards Judaism. Neither his relationship with Domitian nor his high rank could protect him. The four teachers of the Law from Palestine, who had come to Rome on his account, and who expected a brighter future from him, were witnesses of his death. His wife, Domitilla, who was exiled to the island of Pandataria, is said to have declared to the teachers of the Law that Clemens had been circumcised before his death.

Josephus, the Jewish historian, with his friendly feelings towards Rome, appears to have taken part in the lawsuit against Flavius Clemens and the other Jewish proselytes. He stood in high favor with the Emperor Domitian and the Empress Domitia; but owing to the position which, during the last Jewish war, he assumed towards the Romans, he became so hated by his countrymen that constant complaints about him were made to the emperor. Once he was even accused of treason to Domitian by the teacher of his own son. In his spare time Josephus occupied himself with a comprehensive work on Jewish history from its commencement to the period before the war, and this he completed in twenty books in the thirteenth year of Domitian's 390
reign (93). With much trouble and at great expense he had collected and used non-Jewish sources, had brought them into unison with the historical accounts of Holy Writ, and thus erected a national monument, by which the deeds and thoughts of the Jewish nation became known to the cultured world. But soon after he erected for himself a monument of shame. Justus of Tiberias, his former enemy, had meanwhile written his history of the Judæan wars, in which he represented Josephus as an enemy to the Romans, a statement which might have led to unpleasant consequences. Josephus felt that his honor was attacked and his life threatened. Not much was needed for the suspicious tyrant Domitian to cast a man from the highest grade of his favor to the abyss of a disgraceful fall. In order to justify himself against the accusations of his enemy, Justus of Tiberias, Josephus appended to his history a description of the events of his own life, describing his conduct during the war. To clear himself from the imputations cast on him, he represents his own character in a most unfavorable light, as though he had always held with the Romans and betrayed his own people. But in his fourth work, published in 93 or 94, Josephus, though he could not entirely redeem his character, yet clearly evinced his deep love for his religion and his race, and thereby earned for himself the thanks of his people. In two books against the Greeks and against Apion, he opposes, with deep conviction, the accusations made against Judaism and the Jewish race, and upholds the religious and moral superiority of the Jewish law. These two books are probably intended to win over enlightened heathens to Judaism. Josephus points out with joy that many of the heathens amongst the Greeks and Romans already honored the God of Israel and followed His laws. These books were dedicated to his friend 391
Epaphroditos, a learned Greek, who was strongly inclined towards Judaism. No doubt Josephus endeavored personally to win over proselytes. He must have associated with Flavius Clemens, as he lived in the Flavian palace. When Domitian carried into effect the sentences pronounced against his cousin Clemens and the followers of Judaism, it is probable that a prosecution was commenced against Josephus for having led them astray. A philosophical essay concerning the laws of Judaism, which he promised to publish in his last books, remained unwritten, as his thread of life was cut short probably by Domitian. The Jewish patriots, however, were so embittered against Josephus that they did not express any sorrow at his death, which was probably that of a martyr. Nor was it referred to by the four teachers of the Law, who left oral traditions as to the death of Flavius Clemens.

A complete contrast to the character of Domitian was presented by his successor Nerva. Just, wise and humane, he was only wanting in the freshness and courage of youth, in order to give effect to his wise ordinances, and to restore the Roman empire, shattered as it had been by Domitian's cruelty and caprice.

The Jews and proselytes immediately felt the effect of the change of ruler. During the short period of his reign—which only lasted sixteen months, from September 96, till January 98—Nerva, who had to put an end to various perversions and abuses in the constitution, yet found time to occupy himself with the Jews. He permitted every man to acknowledge his faith as a Jew, without thereby incurring the punishment of an atheist. The Jews' tax also, if not quite set aside, was levied with kindness and forethought, and accusations against those who avoided this tax were not listened to. This act of toleration on Nerva's part appears to have been of so great importance that a coin was struck in order to commemorate it. This coin, which is still preserved, 392
represents on the one side the Emperor Nerva, and on the other a palm-tree (symbol for Jews), with the inscription, "Fisci Judaici calumnia sublata" ("Accusations on account of the Jews' tax are at an end"). It is probable that the four Tanaites, who were still in Rome at the time of the death of Domitian and the accession of Nerva, had furthered this favorable turn of events by opposing the complaints against Judaism, and by inducing those in power to form a better opinion of it. This reign, which was of but too short duration, terminated the period of favor shown towards the Jews, and with Nerva's successor there began afresh the old hatred between the Romans and the Jews, and soon both nations again stood, sword in hand, arrayed against one another.

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CHAPTER XV.

REVOLT OF THE JEWS AGAINST TRAJAN AND HIS SUCCESSORS.

Trajan and Asia—Revolt of the Jews—Hadrian—The Jewish Sibylline Books—The Attempted Rebuilding of the Temple—The Ordinances of Usha—Bar-Cochba—Akiba's Part in the War—Bar-Cochba's Victories—Suppression of the Revolt—Siege and Fall of Bethar.

96–138 C. E.

Nerva had chosen the Spaniard Ulpianus Trajan as his successor. This emperor, who was nearly sixty years old, set about realizing his favorite idea of annexing the territories lying between the Euphrates and Tigris and the Indus and Ganges to the Roman Empire, so as to win laurels similar to those obtained by Alexander the Great. In the Parthian lands he had an easy conquest; for this ancient kingdom—partly of Greek and partly of Persian origin—was torn asunder by the various pretenders to the throne, and offered but little resistance to the conqueror. Only the Jews, who lived in great numbers in this district, under the leadership of the Prince of the Captivity, possessed a certain amount of independence, and offered resistance to the Roman conqueror. The Babylonian Jews beheld in Trajan the descendant of those who had destroyed the Temple and condemned their brethren to miserable slavery, and armed themselves as if for a holy war. The town of Nisibis, which had always possessed a numerous Jewish population, displayed such obstinate resistance that it could be subdued only after a lengthy siege. The district of Adiabene, on the center branch of the Tigris, obeyed a ruler whose ancestors, scarcely a century before, had adopted Judaism. Mebarsapes, who was now on the 394
throne of Adiabene, was, perhaps, also inclined towards Judaism. He fought bravely against Trajan, but was overcome by the Roman forces. Trajan, unlike any of his predecessors, witnessed after a very short space of time the glorious results of his campaign. Conquests seem to have met him half-way. When he withdrew into his winter quarters in Antioch (115–116), in order to receive homage, the chief campaign was almost at an end. In the spring he again set forth, in order to crush any opposition, and to carry into effect the long-cherished plan of conquering the Jews. But hardly had Trajan set out when the conquered people on the twin rivers revolted again. The Jews had a great share in this uprising; they spread anarchy through a great portion of the Roman Empire. Not alone the Babylonian Jews, but also the Jews of Egypt, Cyrenaica, Lybia, and those in the island of Cyprus were seized with the idea of shaking off the Roman yoke. As if possessed by an overwhelming power, the Jews of this far-lying district seized their weapons, as though to show the enemy that their power was not destroyed nor their courage broken, and that they were not willing to share the weakness and degradation of the times, and to sink without an effort amongst the masses of enslaved nations. Such unanimous action presupposes a concerted plan and a powerful leader. From Judæa the rebellion spread through the neighboring countries to the Euphrates and Egypt (116–117). In half a century after the fall of the Jewish State a new race had arisen, who inherited the zealous spirit of their fathers, and who bore in their hearts a vivid remembrance of their former independence. The hope of the Tanaite teacher, "Soon the Temple will be rebuilt," had kept alive a love of freedom in the Jewish youths, who had not lost
the habit of using weapons in the schools. A legend relates that Trajan's wife (Plotina) had given 395
birth to a son on the ninth of Ab, and lost it on the feast of Dedication, which the Jews kept in memory of the victory of the Hasmonæans, and she had interpreted their sorrowing as the hatred of an enemy, and their rejoicing as joy for her loss. The Empress therefore wrote to Trajan, "Instead of subduing the barbarians, you should rather punish the Jews who revolt against you."

In Judæa the leaders of the rebellion appear to have been two courageous men from Alexandria, Julianus and Pappus. The former seems to have been the Alabarch of Alexandria, or his relative, and a descendant of the celebrated Alexander Lysimachus. He and his companion enjoyed a princely position amongst the Jews. The meeting place of the revolutionary troops in Judæa was the plain of Rimmon, or the great plain of Jezreel. There exists but a dim picture of the proceedings, and only the issue of the revolt is known with certainty. In Cyrene, whose Jewish inhabitants had been encouraged to revolt against the Romans immediately after their defeat, the rebellion was at its height. They had a leader named Andreias, also called Lucuas, one of whose names was, perhaps, of an allegorical nature.

The Egyptian Jews, who in former times had been loyal to the Romans, this time made common cause with the rebels, and conducted operations as in every other revolution. They first attacked the neighboring towns, killed the Romans and Greeks, and avenged the destruction of their nationality on their nearest enemies. Encouraged by the result, they collected in troops and attacked the Roman army under the Roman general Lupus, who commanded the legions against the Jews. In the first encounter the wild enthusiasm gave the Jews an advantage over the
Romans, and Lupus was defeated. The results of this victory were scenes of horror and barbarity 396
on both sides, as was naturally the case in a racial war between people who carried in their hearts an ancient hatred which, when it came to a fiery outburst, could only be quenched by blood. The heathens who had taken flight after the defeat of the Roman army marched against Alexandria. The Jewish inhabitants who could bear arms, and who had joined in the revolt, were taken prisoners and killed amidst fearful tortures. The conquering Jewish troops felt themselves filled with a desire for revenge. In despair they invaded the Egyptian territories, imprisoned the inhabitants, and repaid cruelties with fresh cruelties. The Greek and Roman fugitives took to their boats, in order to escape pursuit on the bosom of the Nile; but armed Jews followed close behind them. The historian Appian, at that time an official in Alexandria, sought safety by taking

flight at night, and would have fallen into the hands of his Jewish pursuers, had he not missed his way along the coast. The short description of his flight and his unexpected deliverance gives some idea of the terror excited by the Jewish populations, who had suffered so long at the hands of their enemies. The Jews are said to have eaten the flesh of the captive Greeks and Romans, to have smeared themselves with their blood, and to have wrapped themselves in the skins torn off them. These horrors are quite foreign to Jewish character and customs, but it is probably true that the Jews made the Romans and Greeks fight with wild animals or in the arena. This was a sad reprisal for the horrible drama to which Vespasian and Titus had condemned the captive Jews. In Cyrenaica 200,000 Greeks and Romans were slain by the Jews, and Lybia, the strip of land to the east of Egypt, was so utterly devastated that, some years later, new colonies had to be sent thither.

In the Island of Cyprus, which had for a long time previous been inhabited by Jews, who 397
owned synagogues there, a certain Artemion headed the uprising against the Romans. The number of rebels was very great, and was probably strengthened by the discontented heathen inhabitants of the island. The Cyprian Jews are said to have destroyed Salamis, the capital of the island, and to have killed 240,000 Greeks.

Trajan, who was then in Babylon, greatly feared the outbreak of a revolt, and sent an army, proportionate in numbers to the anticipated danger. He entrusted an important force by land and sea to Martius Turbo, in order that he might quell the smouldering troubles of war which existed in Egypt, Cyrenaica, and on the island of Cyprus.

In the district of the Euphrates, where the Jews, notwithstanding the nearness of the Emperor's crushing army, had taken up a threatening position, he gave the chief command to his favorite general, Quietus, a Moorish prince of cruel disposition, whom he had appointed as his successor. It is not known who led the Jews of Babylon. Maximus, a Roman general, lost his life in the battle; Quietus had received orders to entirely annihilate the Jews of his district, so great was the fear and hatred of the Emperor of a nation whose power he seems in no way to have rightly estimated. Thus Trajan had to oppose the Jews on three sides, and had they united and mutually supported each other, the colossal Roman empire would perhaps have received a deadly blow. Martius Turbo, who had to oppose the Egyptian and Cyrenean revolts, went himself in his ships to the threatened spots, which he reached in five days. He avoided meeting the hostile forces in a sudden attack, coolly calculating that this would only give the victory to a people who were guided more by enthusiasm for an idea than by principles of military tactics. He preferred to 398
weaken the rebels by repeated onslaughts, which gradually wearied them and thinned their ranks. The Jews, however, did not submit without making a brave defense. The heathen authorities, who were against the Jews, acknowledge that it was only after a contest of long duration that the Romans became masters of the situation. It was inevitable that the Romans should conquer in the end, as they had greater multitudes and greater skill in war, and especially as their cavalry had to encounter only half-armed foot-soldiers. Turbo displayed an amount of cruelty to the captives which was not strange to the Romans. The legions surrounded the prisoners and cut them to pieces, the women were lashed, and those who offered resistance were killed. The ancient Alexandrian synagogue, a marvel of Egyptian architecture, a basilica, was destroyed. From that time, says a Jewish source, the glory of Israel departed. In the massacre which Martius Turbo set on foot amongst the African Jews, the same source relates that the blood of the slain stained the sea to the island of Cyprus. This refers to the sea of blood which the Roman general shed amongst the Cyprian Jews.

Turbo, after the end of this African revolt, led his legions against Cyprus. Concerning the particulars of this war, authorities are silent. The contest, however, must have been a bitter one, for a deadly hatred arose in Cyprus against the Jews. This hatred was expressed in a barbarous law, according to which no Jew might approach the island of Cyprus, even if he suffered shipwreck on that coast.

The war of destruction waged by Lucius Quietus against the Babylonian and Mesopotamian Jews is but little known in its individual features. Only so much is certain, that he destroyed many thousands, and that he laid waste the towns of Nisibis and Edessa, which were inhabited by Jews. The houses, streets and roads were strewn with corpses. As a reward for the great services 399
rendered by this general in fighting the Jews, Trajan named him governor of Palestine, with unlimited power, so that he might suppress the revolt in the Jewish fatherland. Trajan himself was unsuccessful in his encounters; he had to leave Babylon, give up the siege of the town of Atra, and relinquish the idea of converting the Parthian land into a Roman province.

Through the failure of his favorite plan, the emperor fell ill, and was brought to Antioch, and he died a few months later at Cilicia. His desire that his faithful general, Quietus, should succeed, was also not fulfilled. His astute wife, Plotina, set aside his last wishes, and assured the army that Trajan had, before his death, accepted his near relation, Ælius Hadrian, as his son and successor.

Hadrian, at his accession (August, 117), found that various nations were on the eve of a rebellion, and that others were taking measures to break the fetters of all-powerful Rome. Hardly had the report of Trajan's death been spread than the flames of rebellion burst forth both in the East and the West, and the wish of the nations to free themselves from the Roman yoke, in a violent manner, made itself known.

The Parthian lands, where Trajan had just established the semblance of the Roman rule, some of the districts of Asia Minor, whose agricultural wealth had been appropriated by the officers of the emperor, Mauritania and Sarmatia, and distant Britain—all seized upon this moment of weakness to strive for independence.

The Jews of Palestine, whose hatred towards the Romans was yet stronger, had already organized a rebellion, for the suppression of which Quietus had been sent out by Trajan, after he had completed his work in the lands of the Euphrates. He had not yet succeeded in mastering the revolt when Hadrian became ruler. Historians are silent as to the nature of the war in Judæa. The 400
Jewish sources call this second rebellion "the war of Quietus" (Polemos shel Kitos). It appears to have taken an unfavorable turn for the Jews, for fresh signs of public mourning were added to those observed for the destruction of the Temple by the teachers of the Law. It was forbidden that brides should wear wreaths on their weddings, or that the Jews should learn Greek. It is not clear whether this prohibition was directed against the Greek language or the Greek customs; as little is it possible to discover the connection between this war and a distaste for what was Greek. Perhaps the Greeks of Palestine became false to their allies, and left the Jews in the lurch. The Synhedrion of Jamnia appears to have been destroyed under Quietus, but the Jewish people were soon delivered from the merciless oppressor, whose plans for their annihilation could not be carried into effect. The new emperor himself put an end to his general's career. Hadrian, who had more ambition than warlike courage, and whose innermost aspiration was for the nimbus of royal authority rather than for a rough and troublesome military existence, drew back at the prospect of so many revolts, and from the chance of a long and wearisome war. Already envious of the reputation of his predecessor, with whom he had no sympathy, and whom the Senate had been unwearied in granting triumphs, Hadrian, for the first time, swerved from the hard and fast line of Roman politics, and was inclined to be yielding. In the same spirit, he permitted the Parthians to be ruled by their own prince, renounced all claims on them, and appears to have made concessions to the other provinces, and to have granted the Jews their apparently harmless requests. Amongst these they expressed a wish for the removal of the heartless Quietus and the restoration of the Temple. The all-powerful general was deposed; and though the jealousy of the 401
emperor with regard to this great and powerful ruler was a chief reason for his removal, it yet was made to appear as if it were done to favor the Jews, and to do away with their chief grievance. Before Quietus fell into disgrace he was about to pronounce sentence of death on the two Jewish leaders, Julianus and Pappus, who had fallen into his hands; they were to be executed in Laodicea. He had said to them, "If your God is powerful, as you assert, He may rescue you from my hands." To which they replied, "Thou art scarcely worthy that God should perform a miracle for thy sake, who art not even an independent ruler, but only the servant of one higher." At the very moment when the two prisoners were being led to a martyr's death, the order came from Rome which deposed their executioner from the governorship of Judæa.

Quietus left Palestine, and was soon afterwards executed at the command of Hadrian. The day of the release of Julianus and Pappus, 12th Adar (Feb.-March, 118), was celebrated as a memorable event, and the college appointed it as a half-holiday, under the name of Trajan's day (Yom Trajanus). It is not to be doubted that the Jews made the re-erection of the Temple on its former site a condition of their laying down arms. A Jewish source relates this fact in clear terms, and Christian accounts positively aver that the Jews on several occasions endeavored to restore the Temple, and this can only refer to the early years of Hadrian's reign. The superintendence of the building of the town, Hadrian is said to have entrusted to the proselyte Akylas. Great was the delight of the Jews at the prospect of again possessing a holy fane. Fifty years had elapsed since the destruction of the Temple, just the same period as had formed the interval between the destruction of the first sanctuary and the return from Babylon. The keenest hopes were aroused by Hadrian's assent. A Jewish-Alexandrian poet expresses in Greek verse the feelings which filled 402
every breast. The unknown poet places his words in the mouth of a heathen prophetess, the Sibyl, the sister of Isis. She first recites, in enigmatic references, the names of a long line of Roman conquerors from the time of Cæsar—

... and after him there came
As king a man who wore a silver helm—the name
He bore was of a sea—a worthy man, far-seeing,
And 'neath thee—thou good and splendid raven-locked,
And 'neath thy race, this happened for all times,
That there arose a god-like race, indwellers of heaven,
Who e'en on earth surround the town of God,
And unto Joppa surround it with high walls,
And boldly raise their towers to heaven's heights.
No more the death sound of the trumpet's cry—
No more they perish at the foe's rash hands;
But trophies shall float in the world o'er evil.
Torment thy heart no more, nor pierce with sword thy breast,
Thou godly one, too rich, thou much-loved flower,
Thou light so good and bright, desired and holy goal!
Dear Jewish land! fair town, inspired of songs,
No more shall unclean foot of Greeks within thy bounds
Go forth.
But in honor thy faithful ones shall hold thee;
And they shall serve thy board with holy words,
With varied offerings, and with welcome prayers.
Those who remorseless send ill words to heaven
Shall cease to raise their voices in thy midst,
Shall hide away until the world has changed.
For from the heavenly land a happy man comes forth,

Within whose hands a scepter given by God;
And over all he rules with glory, and to the good
Again he giveth riches, bereft of them by others gone before,
The towns by fire leveled to the very earth,
And burnt the homes of men who once did evil.
But the town beloved of God he made
Brighter than stars or sun, and than the moon,
Adorned them brightly, and reared a holy Temple.

The great expectations formed with regard to the restoration, which had appeared like a pleasant dream, paled before the stern reality. Scarcely had Hadrian taken a firm footing in his kingdom and calmed the unruly nations, when, like other weak princes, he began to diminish his promises, and to prevaricate. One report relates that the Samaritans—who were jealous that the 403
object of their aversion, the Temple of Jerusalem, should again rise from the dust—endeavored to represent to the Emperor the danger of such a restoration; as their forefathers had formerly demonstrated to the Persian rulers, so they endeavored to prove to the Roman emperor that the building of the Temple was a mere subterfuge to bring about a total separation from Rome. Hadrian, however, would probably have come to this conclusion without the interposition of the Samaritans. In any case, while he did not venture wholly to retract his word, he began to bargain. It is said by some that he gave the Jews to understand that the Temple must be erected on a different place from that on which stood the ruins of the former building, or that it must be built on a smaller scale. The Jews, who well understood this temporizing, and saw therein only a retractation of the imperial promise, were not inclined to let themselves be played with.

When matters had reached this pass, many people armed themselves and assembled again in the valley of Rimmon, on the plain of Jezreel. When the royal epistle was read out the masses burst into tears. A rebellion and an embittered war seemed imminent. But there were still lovers of peace amongst the people, who recognized that a rebellion, under the circumstances then existing, would be dangerous. At the head of this party was Joshua. He was immediately sent for to tranquillize the excited populace by his influence and eloquence. Joshua addressed the people in a manner which has always appealed to the masses. He related a fable, and drew a moral which applied to existing circumstances: "A lion had once regaled himself on his prey, but a bone remained sticking in his throat. In terror he promised a great reward to any one who would extract the bone. A crane with a long neck presented himself, performed the operation and 404
claimed his reward. The lion, however, said mockingly, Rejoice that thou hast withdrawn thy head unharmed from the lion's jaws. In like manner," said Joshua, "let us be glad that we have escaped unscathed from the Roman, and not insist on the fulfilment of his promise." Through these and similar exhortations he prevented an immediate outbreak. But the nation was filled with the idea of rebellion, and adhered to it in a manner worthy of a better fortune.

Joshua was the chief leader of the people in the time of Hadrian, and appears to have performed the duties of Patriarch, for Gamaliel had probably died at the commencement of Hadrian's reign. The honors paid to his dead body show the high esteem in which he was regarded by the people. Joshua, Eliezer, and his disciples mourned for him; Akylas the proselyte —as was customary at royal funerals—burnt clothes and furniture to the amount of seventy minas. When reproached for this extravagance he said, "Gamaliel is worth more than a hundred kings, from whom the world gains nothing." A striking contrast to this display was afforded by the simplicity of the shroud which Gamaliel had expressly ordered before his death. It was customary at that time to clothe the corpse in costly garments, an expense which fell so heavily on those of small means, that many deserted their dead relations in order to avoid the outlay. To prevent such expense, Gamaliel ordered in his last will that he should be buried in simple white linen. From that time greater simplicity was observed, and it became the custom at funeral feasts to drink a cup to the memory of Gamaliel. He left sons, but the eldest, Simon, appears to have been too young to undertake the patriarchate, which, therefore, devolved on Joshua probably (as his representative, Ab-bet-din). After Gamaliel's death Joshua was desirous of abolishing various ordinances which the former had enforced, but he was opposed by Jochanan ben Nuri, who was 405
supported by most of the Tanaites.

It is hardly possible to doubt that the Jamnian Synhedrion removed to Upper Galilee after the death of Gamaliel, and Usha (El-Uz) in the vicinity of Shefaram (Shefa-Amar), between Acco and Safet, became the seat of the Synhedrion. Ishmael is mentioned amongst those who emigrated to Usha. Here the Synhedrion made various enactments of high moral and historical importance, which took the form of laws, under the title of Ordinances of Usha (Tekanoth Usha). One of these laws decreed that a father must support his young children—the boys until their twelfth year, and the girls until they married. Before this time the provision for children had been left to the option of parents. Another law enacted that if a father during his own lifetime gave up all his property to his son, it followed, as a matter of course, that the son must support both his father and the wife of his father. A third law limited the reckless devoting of the whole of a man's property to charitable purposes, which custom prevailed at that time. This law prescribed that only a fifth part of the property might be given away. Isebab, who afterwards died the death of a martyr, was desirous of dividing his whole property amongst the poor, but Akiba opposed him, referring him to this law respecting property. One decision of Usha seems to have been directed against Gamaliel's severe employment of the interdict. It decreed that no member of the College should in future be excommunicated unless he actually despised and revolted against the whole Law, like King Jeroboam. This circumstance shows that the unity of the Law was so established that a difference of opinion no longer implied, as formerly, a total break, and Joshua, no doubt, had

contributed to this result.

The tolerable relations between Hadrian and the Jews did not last much more than a decade. 406
He could not forget that he had been compelled to make concessions to the despised nation, and the latter could not forget that he had broken faith with them, and had deprived them of their fairest hopes. This mutual antipathy displayed itself during Hadrian's journey through Judæa. The emperor, urged by vanity, and a desire to be called the father of his country, and impelled by a restlessness and want of occupation, which drove him from one spot to another, had visited nearly all the provinces of the great Roman empire, for the purpose of seeing everything with his own eyes. Hadrian's petty curiosity led him to concern himself with all manner of things, to desire to be considered as a philosopher, and better informed than his contemporaries in all matters. Whether he judged the condition of other provinces correctly may be doubted; he certainly was deceived in his hasty judgment of the Jews. During his visit to Judæa (130), it is probable that those people, such as the Romans, Samaritans, and Christians, who disliked the original inhabitants (the Jews), approached him with subservience, in order to greet him as a demi-god, or even as a god. A pantomimic conversation, which was held between a Christian and a representative of Judaism, Joshua ben Chananya, in Hadrian's presence, describes their respective positions. The former showed by gestures that the God of Israel had hidden His face from the Jews; the latter showed, by a movement of the arm, that God still stretched forth His hand to protect Israel, and this pantomime Hadrian desired to have explained to him. He seems to have had many interviews with Joshua. Several conversations between Hadrian and the Tanaite have been handed down, of which one appears to be credible. He asked him, "If you are as wise as you assert, tell me what I shall behold this night in my dreams." Joshua replied, "Thou wilt dream that the Persians (Parthians) will subdue thee, and compel thee to guard low animals 407
with a golden scepter." This retort was well chosen, for the superstitious emperor feared the Parthians beyond all nations, and did his utmost to maintain peace with them.

Hadrian thought that he had nothing to fear from Judæa. He informed the Roman Senate of the peaceful disposition of the Jews, and they perpetuated their credulity by various coins, in which the emperor is represented dressed in a toga, raising a kneeling Jew from his humble position. Three boys (probably emblematic of the districts of Judæa, Samaria, and Galilee) hand him palm branches. He thus cherished the expectation that racial and religious differences would soon disappear, and that the inhabitants would merge their identity in that of the Romans. In order to induce such a state of things he drew up a plan, which could not have been more unfortunately conceived. Jerusalem was to be rebuilt, but as a pagan city. Whilst he repaired to Egypt to commit other follies, the desecration of the holy city was commenced. The Jews naturally did not remain unmoved at this act, which was to erase their name as a nation and a religious body from the book of the living, and a bitter feeling overcame them. Joshua again appears to have endeavored to bring about a reconciliation in order to frustrate the thoughtless plan of the emperor, and to allay the discontent of the people. Though an aged man, he traveled to Egypt in order to induce the emperor to alter his mind.

But his prudent suggestions were ridiculed; the emperor would only mock at the Jewish, Samaritan, and Christian religions, with which he thought himself thoroughly acquainted. He wrote at this time to his brother-in-law, "No president of the synagogue (Rabbi) of the Jews, no Samaritan, no Christian priest, honors anything but Serapis. Even that patriarch who has come to 408
Egypt [probably Joshua] was compelled by some to worship Serapis, and by others to worship Christ." Joshua returned to Judæa after his fruitless visit, and appears to have died soon after of grief and old age. It was justly said of him that with his death wisdom and prudent moderation came to an end. After his decease there occurred wide-spread movements and contests in Judæa, which were among the most memorable in its history, and there was no one to stem the tide.

So long as Hadrian remained in Syria (130–131) the malcontents did not commence the revolt for which they had probably been long preparing. The weapons prepared by the Jewish smiths for the Romans were made (in anticipation of their being used against themselves) weak and useless. In the hollow chalk mountains of Judæa the insurgents silently prepared underground passages and refuges, which were used as secret armories before the war, and afterwards as secret ambushes, from which the enemy could be attacked. Akiba seems to have developed a silent but effective activity in his preparation for a revolt. After the death of Joshua he was recognized as the head of the Jewish community. Hadrian, lulled into security, discovered the conspiracy only when it broke out at the various points of the Roman empire, so skilfully had the Roman spies been deceived. When the revolt was about to commence everything was in readiness. There were stores of arms, means of communication, warriors, and even a powerful leader, who, through his strange position, infused religious enthusiasm and warlike courage. It was considered as a favorable sign for their daring undertaking that two of the stations of the Roman legions had been destroyed. Cæsarea and Emmaus had been swallowed up some years before by an earthquake. Cæsarea was the Roman capital of Judæa, the dwelling-place of the governor, and, 409
like Rome, it brought down the hatred of the Jews on itself. The peculiar idea was entertained, that, as the greatness of Cæsarea had dated from the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, so from the fall of Cæsarea Jerusalem would again attain to power. Emmaus had been the dwelling-place of eight hundred soldiers of Vespasian who had served there; it therefore had been used as a second citadel.

The chief hero of the revolt was Bar-Cochba, who inspired the Roman empire in its then state of weakness with as much terror as Brennus and Hannibal had formerly done.

Not a trace, however slight, can be found of the descent and early life of this much reviled and misunderstood personage. Like the hero of every revolution, he suddenly appeared as the

perfect incarnation of the nation's will and the nation's hate, spreading terror around, and standing as the center-point of an eventful movement. His real name was Bar-Kosiba, doubtless from the town of Kosiba, and was not a nickname meaning "son of lies." Bar-Cochba was a symbolical Messianic name which Akiba had given him. When Akiba, actively engaged in the deliverance of the Jewish people, first saw Bar-Cochba, he was so impressed with the appearance of the man that he said, "That is a Messianic king." Akiba applied to him the verse of Scripture, "Kosiba has arisen as a star (Cochba) in Jacob." Akiba was confirmed, by the imposing personality of Bar-Cochba, in his hopes that the Roman power would soon be overthrown, and that the splendors of Israel would once more shine forth, and he looked forward through this means to the speedy establishment of the Messianic kingdom. He cited the verse of the prophet Haggai with regard to this (ii. 21), "Yet a little and I will shake heaven and earth."

All did not, however, share Akiba's pious enthusiasm. Jochanan ben Torta, a teacher of the Law, replied dubiously to his high-flying hopes, "Sooner shall grass grow from thy chin, Akiba, than that the Messiah will appear." The respect and attention, however, which Akiba displayed towards Bar-Cochba were sufficient to surround him with a halo, as of a higher God-given power, which gave him unquestioned authority, and increased the means at his disposal. 410

There is no record in Jewish sources of miracles performed by the Messianic king for the gratification of the populace. But an account of the enemy relates how Bar-Cochba puffed forth burning tow from his mouth to give himself the appearance of spitting fire. The Jewish accounts speak of his enormous bodily strength. They relate that he cast back with his knees the huge stones thrown by the Romans by means of machines on the Jewish army. There is no hint given that he pursued any selfish end by his Messianism; he was actuated only by the wish to win back freedom for his people, to restore the tarnished glory of the Jewish state, and to throw off at once and for ever the foreign rule which, during two centuries, had interfered with the interests of Judaism. So energetic a mind, combined with great military talent, even though it failed to secure a favorable result, should have received juster recognition from posterity, and certainly does not deserve the prejudice which it met with from interested contemporaries. The Jewish warriors from all countries poured forth to aid the Messianic king, and the revolt became one of great dimensions. Even the Samaritans joined their former opponents, as the chronicles relate. Heathens themselves made common cause with the Jews, impelled by a desire to shake off the unbearable Roman yoke. It seemed as if the whole Roman empire were about to receive a heavy blow, by which the various members of its gigantic body were to be rent asunder. From these facts the number of the warriors cannot be considered as exaggerated if the Jewish sources put them down as 400,000, whilst the Pagan historian Dio Cassius rates them even at 580,000. Bar-Cochba felt so confident in his own courage and the numerous warriors at his command, that he is said to have uttered the blasphemy, "Lord, if thou dost not help us, at least do not help our enemies, and we shall not be defeated." 411

Tinnius Rufus, the Governor of Judæa, was not prepared for the enormous military power opposed to him, and he soon had to retreat before the troops of the warlike Messiah. Rufus withdrew from one citadel to another, and in one year (132–133) fifty fortified places and 985 cities and villages fell into the hands of the rebels. It appears that the whole of Judæa, together with Samaria and Galilee, were evacuated by the Romans, and fell into the possession of the Jews. When Hadrian received the first news of the revolt in Judæa, he laid no great weight upon it; but when one report after another of the defeat of the Roman troops reached him, he sent relays and his best generals to the scene of action; these, however, had no better fortune than Rufus. It is not to be doubted that Jerusalem fell into the hands of the Jewish victors, who may have contemplated the restoration of the Temple; but in the midst of the war, and continually harassed by the Roman legions, they had no time to undertake so extensive a work. Bar-Cochba, in order to announce national independence, performed a sovereign act of power by causing Jewish coins to be struck. These were called Bar-Cochba coins, and also coins of the Revolution.

Notwithstanding the deep hatred entertained by the Jews for their enemies, they did not avenge themselves upon such as fell into their hands. It was only against the Jewish Christians who lived in Judæa that Bar-Cochba displayed his hostility, because they were considered as blasphemers and as spies. This hatred against the Jewish Christians was increased because they refused to take part in the national war, and were the only idle lookers-on at the fearful spectacle. One of the oldest Christian sources relates that Bar-Cochba had demanded of the Christians to deny Jesus, and to take part in the war with the Romans, and that those who refused to do so were punished with heavy penalties. 412

When the State was restored and all laws again came into force, the Jewish authorities felt themselves justified in summoning those of their countrymen before the justice-seat who not only denied the Law but held it up to ridicule. It is nowhere related that the Christians were compelled to recognize and believe in Bar-Cochba as a new Christ. Such compulsion seems to have been foreign to the new Jewish State. Later Christian chronicles, in their usual manner, have greatly exaggerated the floggings to which the Jewish Christians were subjected, until they assumed the proportions of actual persecution, accompanied by death and martyrdom, for which there is no historical basis. The Evangelists, who, before the appearance of Bar-Cochba, had spoken of the warlike preparations, and all events of the time, in a veiled but perfectly comprehensible manner, alone relate the position of the Jewish population towards the Christians. They seem to hint that even in the midst of Christianity there was great dissension, and that some who were eager for the cause of liberty, reported their more indifferent coreligionists with much zeal to the Jewish authorities. These Evangelists make Jesus utter a prophecy which foretold a coming change, as though he, amidst these stormy days, would appear

in the flesh at the Last Judgment.

This prophecy of Jesus displays the gloomy tendency of the times of Bar-Cochba. The words run: 413

> For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And when ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars, be ye not troubled: for such things must needs be; but the end shall not be yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these are the beginnings of sorrows. But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them. And the gospel must first be published among all nations. But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate; but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost. Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and the children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

Thus a father of the Church comforted the Christian community in Judæa. It appears that the Synhedrion of the time of Bar-Cochba introduced some innovations in order to work against the increasing spread of the worship of Jesus amongst the Jewish Christians, and to promote a means of recognizing those who were for them or against them. It had been the habit for centuries past never to pronounce the sacred name of God, IHW, but to substitute the word Lord (Adonaï). The Christians, however, had accustomed themselves to call Jesus "Lord." To counteract this, the Synhedrion enacted that the name of God should be used as in ancient times, and that this name should be introduced even into the formula of greeting.

The newly founded kingdom of Bar-Cochba had already subsisted during two years (132–134). With deep concern Hadrian beheld the continuous progress of the Jewish revolution. It had taken a course and an extent which opened up a vista of unlooked-for results. Every auxiliary force which he had sent to join in the contest suffered defeat, and every fresh general left his 414
reputation on a Jewish battle-field. Hadrian was obliged to summon his greatest general, who at that time was repressing the revolt of a nation who loved freedom equally well, namely, the Britons. Julius Severus was recalled to Judæa, as he seemed to be the only man who could measure swords with the great hero, Bar-Cochba. Severus, on his arrival, found the military position of the Jews so secure and inaccessible that he did not venture to give them battle immediately. The chief stronghold of the Jews during this war was the district around the Mediterranean Sea which had for its central point the town of Bethar (Bither). This fortress, the ruins of which are still to be seen, is only one Roman mile (four-fifths of a geographical mile) distant from the sea.

Besides Bethar, Bar-Cochba had fortified several other towns, which were probably placed under special commanders. In the north, at the foot of the Galilean highlands, at the entrance to the great plain of Jezreel (Esdraelon) there were three cities, which formed a triangle of fortresses from the Mediterranean to the Sea of Galilee. To the west near Acco there was Cabul, or Chabulon; three miles from this, towards the southeast, there was the fortified town of Sichin, near to Sepphoris, in a fruitful plain. About three miles further, to the east of Galilee, and on the lake of the same name, stood Magdala (Tarichæa). All three towns, Cabul, Sichin and Magdala, are described as having been densely populated, and they formed the outposts which were to prevent the invasion of the Romans on the side of Syria and Upper Galilee. The inhabitants of Sepphoris appear to have secretly maintained their devotion to the Romans, as they had formerly done under Vespasian and Trajan. Full confidence was not placed in them, but the more reliable towns of the neighborhood were chosen as meeting-places. A second line of fortifications was in 415
the middle of the Jewish territory, and was greatly favored by the conformation of the ground. One of the chief fortresses which Bar-Cochba probably again put in a state of defense was Tur-Simon, doubtless named after Simon the Hasmonæan. This fortress was also said to have so numerous a population that, every Friday, three hundred large baskets of loaves were distributed amongst the army. Here, according to legend, the revolt broke out, on account of an offense given by the Romans to the inhabitants.

Julius, whose rapid glance no doubt perceived the difficulty of obtaining a victory, owing to the strong fortifications, the number of warriors and their fanatical courage, avoided a decided battle, which would have been desired by Bar-Cochba, who relied on the number and devotion of his troops. Like Vespasian, Severus purposely prolonged the war by divers attacks. He reckoned more especially on the scarcity of food which must inevitably ensue in a land-locked territory, when the hands which should hold the plow were engaged with the sword. He contented himself with depriving the enemy of food, with attacking the separate bodies of Jewish troops, and harassing them with his cavalry. These tactics fully succeeded, more especially as all prisoners were immediately put to death.

The particulars of this revolutionary war were no doubt as memorable as those of the war with the Zealots, but no account has been preserved to tell posterity of the death-struggle of the Jewish nation. The heroic deeds of the Zealots—Bar-Giora and John of Gischala—have been immortalized by their greatest enemy, against his will, but no pen was found to commemorate on the tablets of history the warlike deeds of the last of the Jewish heroes. It almost seemed that the remembrance of their prowess, destined as the new generations were to forget the arts of war,

was to be totally forgotten Only a few traits have been preserved to us of the war, which bear witness, not only to the courage of the Jews but also to their all-defying enthusiasm for the cause of their race. 416

If, as the geographical position of Judæa demanded, the first attack of the Romans was made on the north, on the Syrian and Phœnician side, the three northernmost citadels of Cabul, Sichin and Magdala must have been first attacked. The Jewish sources which have handed down the details of the war, as given by survivors, relate the manner of the destruction of these three cities, and the circumstances which led to their downfall. Cabul fell through internal dissensions; Sichin through sorcery, by which an unlooked-for attack was probably meant; lastly, Magdala, the birthplace of the penitent Mary Magdalene, fell, weakened through the vices of its inhabitants. After the fall of the three strongholds on the borders, the war was virtually at an end, just as in the first revolution, after the subjection of Jotapata and Gischala, the land was considered as subdued. The plain of Rimmon seems to have been another seat of the war, for the Roman legions had to traverse this plain in order to reach the interior of the land. On this plain a terrible battle seems to have taken place, which became the subject-matter of many a legend. The next campaign of the Romans was evidently directed against the cities in the mountains. Legend relates how 100,000 Romans marched into the citadel of Tur-Simon with drawn swords, and how, during three days and nights, they massacred the inhabitants. The fifty fortified places occupied by the Jews fell one after another into the hands of the enemy, and the Roman generals gave battle to the Jewish army on fifty-two, or, according to some authorities, on fifty-four occasions. The circle drawn round Bethar, where Bar-Cochba and the flower of his army had retreated, became ever narrower. All fugitives had betaken themselves to his side, in order to 417 escape the sword of destruction and to find a place of refuge. On this spot, where the two greatest generals of the time—Julius Severus and Bar-Cochba—were opposed, the decisive conflict was to take place.

Bethar was, no doubt, filled to overflowing by the contingents who came in from all sides. The sources could not speak with sufficient hyperbole of this final scene of the defense; they relate, amongst other things, that several hundreds of schools existed in Bethar, and that the numbers of the pupils were so great that they boasted that they could overthrow the enemy with their writing-reeds. The siege of Bethar probably lasted for a year, and the duration of the whole war was about three years and a-half. We are left in uncertainty as to the various incidents of the siege, as also regarding the causes which led to the fall of the citadel. A Jewish authority relates that the river Joredethha-Zalmon faithlessly deprived the besieged of its waters, which may mean that the summer heat dried it up. A somewhat vague account from Samaritan sources recounts that the food-supplies, which had been secretly conveyed into the town, were suddenly cut off; this agrees with the Jewish accounts, which relate that Bethar fell through the stratagems of the Samaritans. The Jewish sources assert that Eleazar of Modin prayed in sackcloth and ashes that Bethar might be spared; and perhaps his piety inspired the besieged with endurance and courage.

Hadrian, or his general, being wearied with the long contest, was about to raise the siege, when a Samaritan promised to aid him, and told him that Eleazar was the guardian spirit of the citadel, adding that "so long as that hen cackles in ashes Bethar is impregnable." Thereupon the Samaritan, passing through a subterranean passage, approached Eleazar whilst he was engaged in prayer, and whispered in his ear. The spectators, whose suspicions were aroused by this 418 secrecy, led him to Bar-Cochba and related the incident. The spy, when questioned, declared: "If I tell thee the truth, my master will kill me; and if I keep it from thee, thou wilt kill me; but I would rather die by thy hand than by my masters." Bar-Cochba, suspecting a traitorous understanding between Eleazar and the enemy, summoned him to appear, and questioned him as to his meeting with the Samaritan. Eleazar, who had been absorbed in his devotions, and had hardly noticed the Samaritan, could only reply that he knew nothing of the matter. Bar-Cochba, who thought that he was being deceived, struck Eleazar a blow with his foot, and, enfeebled as he was by fasting, Eleazar fell down dead. Then a voice was heard: "Thou hast lamed the arm of Israel and blinded his eyes; therefore shall thine arm and thine eye lose their power."

The Samaritan sources describe the conquest of Bethar as similar to that of Jerusalem. Hadrian, they assert, who had laid siege to the city, had already raised the siege, as the inhabitants had obtained supplies, which they showed to the enemy. Then two Samaritan brothers, who were held imprisoned by the Jews, contrived to throw over the wall a letter wrapped in linen to Julius, saying that if the exits were guarded the inhabitants of the town would certainly die of starvation. He followed their advice, and entered the city on a Sabbath. So much is certain, that the Romans, introduced by a traitor into a subterranean way, massacred the people of Bethar. This is described with fearful detail. Horses were said to wade to the nozzle in blood—a river of blood flowed into the distant sea, carrying bodies along with it. One can scarcely credit the numbers said to have been slain, and yet they are confirmed both by Jewish and by Greek historians. The authentic historian Dio Cassius relates that besides those who died 419 of hunger and fire, there fell half a million Jews.

The loss of the Romans was equally great, and Hadrian did not dare employ in his message to the Senate the usual formula, "I and the army are well." The Senate did not decree the Emperor a triumph, but a medal was struck in commemoration of the services rendered by the army. This coin bore the inscription, "Exercitus Judaicus. Thanks to the army victorious over the Jews." Bethar fell, as tradition relates, on the 9th Ab, the date on which the Temple had twice been reduced to ashes. The end of the mighty Bar-Cochba is not known. One who brought his head to the Roman General boasted that he had killed him. His body, however, was found crushed by a

snake. On this the conqueror said, "Had not God's hand killed him, a human hand could not have injured him." Hadrian established three military stations to capture the fugitives, in Chamath (Ammaus near Tiberias), in Kephar Lekitaja, and in Bethel. Whoever escaped the one garrison was captured by the other. Thus all the warriors were destroyed, all towns and villages laid waste, and the land was literally converted into a desert. The prisoners, mostly women and children, were dragged by thousands to the slave markets of Hebron and Gaza, where they were sold. There were, however, some fugitives who lived in caves in order to escape the enemy. But even this miserable existence was not permitted to them. Heralds announced that to those who voluntarily yielded themselves up, mercy would be granted. Many listened to the temptation, but were carried off to the plain of Rimmon, and the victors were commanded to massacre their prisoners before Hadrian tasted food. Many fugitives, however, fled to Arabia, whence that country obtained its Jewish population, which afterward played so important a part in its history. Hadrian also caused foreign Jews to feel the weight of his anger, and imposed on them a tax much heavier than that exacted by Vespasian. In memory of this last revolt, the Jews, as a sign of mourning, decreed that brides should no longer be carried in beautiful sedan-chairs into the houses of their bridegrooms.

CHAPTER XVI.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE WAR OF BAR-COCHBA.

Turnus Rufus persecutes the Jews—The Ten Martyrs—The Book of Tobit—Relations between Judaism and Christianity—The Return of the Schools to Palestine—The Synod at Usha—Meïr—Simon ben Jochai—The Babylonian Synhedrion—Antoninus Pius and Aurelius Verus—The Revolt against Rome—The Patriarchate of Simon.

135–170 C. E.

Hadrian, who during the war had lived in a terror-stricken condition, did not content himself with merely crushing all revolt, but he desired to root out the possibility of a future uprising. For this purpose he caused a number of laws to be brought into operation, every one of which was intended to destroy Judaism, the spiritual life of the nation, in the hearts of the survivors. Hadrian named Rufus as the executor of his edicts—a man incapable of attacking an armed foe, but more competent to carry on a war of petty persecution and spying. Severus having been sent back to Britain at the end of his campaign, Rufus had the plow drawn over the town of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount, as a sign that another city should be built there. This occurred on the eventful 9th Ab, perhaps a year after the fall of Bethar.

Hadrian had the city rebuilt more towards the north, where formerly the suburbs had been. He populated the newly erected city with a colony of soldiers who had served their time, Phœnicians and Syrians. The city, Ælia Capitolina, was built in the Grecian style, with two market-places, a theater, and other public buildings, and was divided into seven quarters. Thus Hadrian succeeded in his preconceived plan of turning Jerusalem into a heathen city. On the 422
Temple Mount a column was erected in honor of Hadrian, and a heathen temple in honor of Jupiter Capitolinus. Other statues of Roman, Greek, and Phœnician gods adorned, or rather defiled, Jerusalem. In all public edicts Jerusalem figured under its new name Ælia, and so completely was its identity forgotten, that a hundred years later a governor of Palestine asked a bishop, who said he came from Jerusalem, where that town was situated. At the south gate leading to Bethlehem a swine's head was erected in half relief, as a special annoyance to the Jews, and it was forbidden them on pain of death to pass within the outer wall of this city. Hadrian erected a shrine to Jupiter on Mount Gerizim, where the Samaritans formerly had had their temple, a place they considered as holy. On Mount Golgotha, opposite Jerusalem, a temple was erected to Venus, and in a cave at Bethlehem a statue of Adonis was worshiped. Hadrian followed the old policy of the Syrian Antiochus Epiphanes, who desecrated the Jewish holy places from prejudice and revenge, and endeavored to graft Paganism on Judaism by force of arms. He thought most effectually to break down the stubborn independence of the Jews if he could succeed in weaning them from their peculiar religious life. A decree was issued in Judæa which inflicted the severest punishments on all those who permitted themselves to be circumcised, to keep the Sabbath, or to follow the Jewish law. Only in one point did Hadrian differ from Epiphanes—he did not compel the worship of the Roman gods. All customs and habits which bore ever so slight a tinge of a religious character were, however, interdicted, such as the letter of separation for divorced wives, marriages on Wednesday, and other customs. This extension of the edict may have been a commentary of the Roman authorities in Judæa, who were better 423
acquainted with the spirit of the Jews, and determined to enforce the imperial command in order to attain the desired end. The weary years through which Judaism passed, from the fall of Bethar till after the death of Hadrian, were called the epoch of Religious Compulsion, Danger and Persecution. The stern decrees, and a sterner enforcement of them, were a heavy blow for those who remained. The more conscientious were undecided how to behave in their critical position, whether they should keep to the hard and fast line of custom, or whether, in consideration of their thinned ranks, they should save their own lives by yielding to the exigencies of the moment.

There was probably no actual Synhedrion at that time to take up the question and give them the guidance they desired. The surviving teachers of the Law assembled in a garret in Lydda, and deliberated on this question of life and death. Amongst the members present at this assemblage were Akiba, Tarphon, and Joseph the Galilean. Doubtless Ishmael, who resembled R. Joshua in character, was also present on that occasion. There was a difference of opinion with regard to this important question. The strict elements appear to have considered that every Jew, rather than become guilty of the slightest infringement of a law, however heavy (important) or light (less important), should be ready to die the death of a martyr. Ishmael supported the opposite view. He considered that, outwardly and under compulsion, one might transgress the Law in order to preserve one's life, for the Torah enacted that its followers should live by it and not die through it. The assembly at Lydda, as usual, adopted the middle course, that a difference should be made between important precepts and those which were less weighty. The matter was put to the vote, and the decision was reached, that in order to avoid death by torture, all laws might be 424
broken, with the exception of those prohibiting idolatry, adultery, and murder. This decision, which gives evidence of the desperate condition in which the Jews at that time found themselves, appears also to have contained a secret clause, that in case of need the Law might be evaded or neglected, but that it should be observed as far as it was possible to do so. There were many who obeyed, but who dissimulated in presence of the Roman spies and overseers. It was touching to note the petty tricks and pious frauds by which they endeavored to avoid death and yet to satisfy their conscience. The mental tortures which they suffered daily and hourly made them skilful in discovering loopholes of escape. Even Akiba on one occasion when he saw himself surrounded by

Roman spies, gave a sign to his disciples to say the Shema softly and almost inaudibly, for the Roman authorities ruthlessly fulfilled the letter of their edict. A Roman inspector (quæsitor), who surprised a certain Artaban, as he was fastening Mezzuzoth to the door-posts, compelled him to pay 1000 denars for this act. Another man, Elisha, probably a survivor of the Essenes, was condemned to have his skull broken, because he was putting on Tephillin. It was dangerous even to wear the Jewish garb. Two pupils of Joshua therefore adopted the dress of the country, and when questioned on the subject they replied, "that to oppose the Imperial behest would be to commit suicide."

Ishmael describes this dreary time, when martyrdom and death dogged their every step, in the following words: "Since sinful Rome has inflicted severe laws on us, disturbed us in the performance of our religious duties, and especially prohibited the act of circumcision, we really ought not to marry, in order that we may not have children. But then the race of Abraham would die out. Therefore it is better that, for a time, the religious laws should be transgressed, rather than that a state of things should be brought about which the people would not submit to." 425

There were, however, many whose conscience did not permit them to make use of the freedom permitted by the Lyddan Assembly, or to employ the subterfuges which were adopted by others. They observed rigorously the religious precepts, even at the risk of suffering martyrdom. One of the younger witnesses of this sad time describes, almost in a dramatic way, the ruthlessness of the Roman authorities, who inflicted some cruel punishment for each religious ceremony. "Why shouldst thou be flogged? Because I used a lulab. Why shouldst thou be crucified? Because I ate unleavened bread at Passover. Why should ye be condemned to death by fire or by the sword? Because we read the Torah, and permitted our children to be circumcised." Yet more terrible were the deaths inflicted on the accused by the Roman tribunals, which can only be paralleled by those inflicted by the Inquisition. Red-hot balls were placed in the arm-pits, or spiked tubes passed under the nails, or damp wool was laid on the heart of one who was being burnt to death, or the skin was taken off—horrors which cause an involuntary shudder at their mere enumeration.

Notwithstanding the watchfulness of the Roman officials, it would have been possible to deceive them, had there not been Jewish renegades who betrayed to the Roman overseers the various stratagems and devices employed. These spies probably belonged to an unscrupulous class of men, who would do anything for gain, or they were Jewish Christians, who by this means thought to find favor with the Roman authorities, and to show that they were distinct from the Jews. Lastly, there were those who considered it a good work to assist in the destruction of the Jewish Law. Amongst these was Acher, who was imbued with contempt for the Law. It is said that 426
he gave information to the Roman authorities to enable them to distinguish between religious ceremonies and those which were of no moment. For example, if the Jews were compelled to work on the Sabbath, and one had to carry a load, in order to ease his conscience, would get an assistant, and thus lessen the desecration of the Sabbath, Acher would draw attention to this ruse. Thus the Roman spies, who initiated the overseers in the various rites, were keen to notice every attempt at a religious observance.

Hadrian or his representatives directed their strictest attention to, and inflicted the severest punishments in, two especial cases—the assembling of schools and the ordination of disciples. It may have been suggested to him that the continuance of the Law depended on these two functions. If the instruction of pupils by the teachers could be stopped, and the ordination of pupils as independent teachers could be prevented, then naturally a stoppage must occur in the life-current of Judaism. It must be confessed that the Roman policy was well carried out by its supporters, and that they knew how to strike at the most vital point of Judaism. Severe sentences of death were inflicted upon those teachers who maintained schools, and on those who ordained disciples; even the communities were made answerable for them. The town and its environs, where an ordination took place, were condemned to destruction. It is possible that Acher instigated this persecution; at any rate, it is related of him that he handed over the teachers of the Law to death, and that he frightened away disciples from the study of the Law.

Amongst the friends of peace who even advised subservience to these decrees was José ben Kisma, who honored patience as the highest virtue, and hoped to effect more by submission than by bold opposition and useless self-destruction. He once met Chanina ben Teradion, who 427
belonged to the party who were determined to give up their life for the Law. He was teaching his pupils from a scroll of the Law, which he held in his lap. José said warningly, "Seest thou, my brother, that even Heaven is favorable to the Roman empire. The Temple is destroyed; the pious are cut down, the best men are exterminated, and yet this empire exists! How canst thou dare to teach against the Imperial law? It would not surprise me if thou wert condemned to the stake together with the holy books." José was in high favor at the court of the Governor of Judæa, and when he died several persons of high rank followed his body.

Most of the Tanaites were of a different opinion, and decided rather to suffer death than to give up their meetings at the schools; they considered it of greater importance to study the Law than to observe religious precepts. A special ordinance was passed in the garret at Lydda that to teach was far more important than to merely practise the Law. As far as compulsory abstention from religious observances was concerned, the teachers of the Law had set an example of submission for the time being; but in order to preserve the knowledge of the Law itself they pressed forward to a martyr's death, as though that must be the holiest part of Judaism, to be defended even at the expense of life.

An old account speaks of ten martyrs who bled for the Law. But the names of only seven have been preserved; of the others the accounts are untrustworthy. The first to be executed was

Ishmael, son of the high priest Elisha, who formulated the Thirteen Rules; with him was a certain Simon (of which name there were several). Elisha was unwilling to advise others to undergo martyrdom, but he joyfully underwent it himself. Akiba gave addresses, in which he described 428
how Ishmael and Simon, both free from sin, had served as examples, and fallen by the hands of the executioner; and in conclusion he exhorted his scholars with these words, "Prepare for death, for terrible days are awaiting us." Akiba's turn soon came, for he held discourses in secret. On the third day of Tishri he was thrown into prison. In vain had Pappos ben Judah, one of those who advised submission at any price, warned him to give up his meetings with his pupils, because the eyes of spies were directed to the most secret places. Chance brought him and this very Pappos together in prison. Pappos lamented that he was only condemned for a worldly matter, and that he could not comfort himself with the idea that he was suffering for a great cause. Rufus, the governor and executioner, acted towards Akiba, whom he considered as the head and leader, with even greater severity than towards the others. He kept him for a long time in the prison, which was so securely guarded that no one could gain admission. The remaining teachers of the Law, who felt utterly deserted and helpless without Akiba, took all possible pains to obtain his advice in doubtful cases. Once they gave 300 denars to a messenger, who could only with great difficulty obtain access to Akiba.

At last, however, the hour of his execution came. Rufus inflicted the cruelest tortures on him, and caused his skin to be torn off with irons. The great martyr, whilst under torture, recited the Shema with a peaceful smile on his face. Rufus, astonished at his extraordinary courage, asked him if he was a sorcerer, that he could so easily overcome the pain he was suffering. To which Akiba replied, "I am no sorcerer, but I rejoice that I am permitted to love God with my life." Akiba breathed forth his soul with the last words of the prayer which contains the essence of Judaism—God is One. Akiba's death, which was as remarkable as his life had been, left a terrible void. His 429
contemporaries mourned, for with him was destroyed the arm of the Law and the source of wisdom. He left one son and several disciples, who honored his name, and considered his mode of teaching as the only permissible one.

The fourth martyr who heroically bore his death was Chanina ben Teradion. Regardless of the warnings of José ben Kisma, he continued to hold his lectures until he was dragged to the tribunal. He was asked why he had acted in opposition to the imperial command, and he boldly answered, "Because God has so commanded me." He was wrapped up in a scroll of the Law and burnt on a stake of fresh rushes. Chanina's wife was also sentenced to death, and his daughter condemned to degradation.

The martyrdom of Chuzpit, the speaker (Meturgeman) of the Synhedrion of Jamnia, and Isebab, the secretary of the Synhedrion, are merely noted without details; doubtless they were discovered teaching the Law. Judah ben Baba is said to have been the last of the martyrs. Before his death he resolved to invest the seven remaining pupils of Akiba with the necessary authority to continue the propagation of the traditional Law. He selected for the function the valley between Usha and Shefaram, but despite this secrecy he was surprised by the Romans. His disciples refused to leave him, and it was only after repeated entreaties that they fled. The enemy found the old man alone, and he gave himself up to death without opposition. He was pierced by lances. From fear of Rufus's bloodthirsty vengeance, the usual address was omitted at the funeral of Judah ben Baba. Neither the name nor the mode of death of the remaining martyrs is known with certainty. Thus ends the second generation of Tanaites; it was rich in great men, rich in great minds, and rich in trouble and sorrow. The end of Bar-Cochba's revolt formed the turning- 430
point of this epoch, and the fact that a temple to Jupiter Capitolinus occupied the site of the ancient Jewish Temple seemed to the Jewish Christians to presage the last day and the return of the Messiah.

Hadrian and Rufus's cruel measures were directed not against the survivors alone, but also against the dead. The heaps of dead bodies were not permitted to be interred, but the horrible sight was intended as a warning to the survivors, that they should no longer dream of deliverance from the Roman yoke. The rulers did not trouble themselves as to the pestilential condition of the air, or the depressing effect of beholding so many corpses lying in the sunshine; or perhaps they rejoiced that pestilence and despair should be added to the horrors inflicted on the Jewish nation. To pious and gentle hearts the thought was unbearable that the remains of those who had fallen, which were especially to be honored by Jewish custom, should be left as a prey to wild beasts and birds and to decay in the sunlight. It appears that a pious man desired to impress on the survivors who had made peace with the Romans, and who lived in seclusion, the necessity of interring the corpses in the darkness of the night, even at the cost of their own happiness and peace. To this end he composed a book—the Book of Tobit—in which great weight is laid on the duty of secretly interring the bodies of those whom the tyrants doomed to disgrace; and at the same time it was hinted that the danger attending this duty would bring a rich reward. In evidence of this the case was cited of the pious Tobit, who after suffering many misfortunes as the result of his labor of love, was in the end rewarded with rich blessings. The contents of the Book of Tobit undeniably indicate that it was composed in the reign of Hadrian.

Hadrian's severe persecution also fell upon the Jewish Christians—perhaps on all Christians —although they had separated from the Jewish community; for the reason that the Roman 431
authorities did not consider the differences of dogma between Jews and Christians. The Evangelists paint in the darkest colors the horrors of persecution with which the Christians were attacked. "Then you will behold the terrors of desolation (predicted by the prophet Daniel) where they should not be; he who is in Judæa will flee to the mountains; woe to the pregnant and to the sucklings. Pray, however, that your flight may not take place in winter or on a Sabbath."

Both sects of Christians were anxious to be recognized as a body separate from the Jews, both politically and religiously, so as to avoid the doom impending over the latter. Two teachers of the Church, Quadratus and Aristides, are said to have handed to Hadrian a petition, in which they demonstrated that Christianity had no connection with Judaism. From this time dates the unity and identity of most of the Jewish-Christian and heathen-Christian sects. The Jewish Christians gave up the Jewish laws which they had hitherto kept, in a greater or less degree, adopting the dogmatic precepts of Christianity as they had been developed under heathen-Christian views, and as proof of their sincere convictions, they for the first time placed an uncircumcised bishop at the head of the community. From the time of Hadrian all connection between Jews and Christians ceased, and they no longer occupied the position of two hostile bodies belonging to the same house, but they became two entirely distinct bodies.

Through the war against Hadrian and the edict of persecution a terrible time had arisen for Judæa. The towns were destroyed, the land laid waste, the inhabitants were killed either on the battle-field or on the scaffold, or led a miserable life as refugees, while some were scattered in more hospitable territories.

The disciples of the Law, more especially the seven disciples of Akiba, had, with broken 432
hearts, sought refuge in Nisibis and Nahardea, and if the persecution had lasted longer, Babylon would even at this time have attained that importance for Judaism which it reached a century later. Hadrian's death, which occurred three years after the fall of Bethar, brought about a favorable turn. The pious beheld in the miserable death of this emperor, who, next to Antiochus Epiphanes, became the incarnation of the Jews' hatred, and the mention of whose name was always accompanied by the curse, "May God reduce his remains to dust," a divine visitation for the evils he had wrought on the Jewish nation. Those who had escaped destruction endeavored to obtain from Hadrian's successor the revocation of the cruel edicts. Titus Aurelius Antoninus, who received the name of Pius, although the adopted son of Hadrian, was of a somewhat more humane and beneficent character, and a milder treatment seemed likely at his hands. A noble Roman lady of Cæsarea or Antioch, who had pity on the sufferings of the Jews, advised them to petition the Roman authorities that the persecutions might cease. This lady was perhaps the wife of Rufus, and is said to have had inclination towards Judaism. Following this advice, a few men, headed by Jehudah ben Shamua, repaired to the governor to beg for mercy. In the gloomy darkness of their desolation they lamented—"O heavens, are we not your brothers, the sons of the same father? Why do you inflict on us unendurable sufferings?" Such lamentations appear to have induced the governor to petition the Emperor to pursue a milder course of conduct towards the Jews.

On the 15th Ab (August) the joyous news is said to have come that the heaped-up corpses of the Jewish warriors might be buried. On the 28th Adar (March, 139 or 140), the yet more joyful tidings came that the decrees of Hadrian were revoked, and this day was commemorated in the 433
calendar. A Roman source relates that the Emperor Antoninus Pius conceded to the Jews the rite of circumcision; but they were not permitted to perform it on other nationalities; that is, they were not allowed to make proselytes. Thus the persecution on account of religion was ended. Antoninus Pius, however, did not repeal the law forbidding the Jews to enter Jerusalem.

This unexpected end of the persecution recalled the fugitives to their native land. The seven disciples of Akiba—the only heirs to the spiritual heritage of former times—who, for the most part, had emigrated to Babylon, now returned. These were Meïr, Judah ben Ilai, José ben Chalafta, Jochanan of Alexandria, Simon ben Jochai, Eleazar ben Jacob (or ben Shamua) and Nehemiah. They repaired directly to the plain of Rimmon, made notable during the Revolution, to consider the introduction of a leap year, the calendar probably having become incorrect. At the first meeting a fierce contest ensued, probably with reference to one of the Halachas of Akiba, but the dispute terminated in a friendly settlement.

They reassembled in Usha, the native town of Judah, which even previous to the revolution of Bar-Cochba, had been, for a short time, the seat of the college, and they invited all the remaining teachers of the Law in Galilee to meet there. Many came at the invitation, and the inhabitants of Usha endeavored to provide the guests with all that they required. The business of the Synod was to reinstate and renew the traditions which had fallen into disuse during the persecutions. After several days passed in Usha, the chief organizers of the meeting dismissed their guests with solemn addresses. Judah thanked the strangers, who had taken the trouble to come to the meeting from a distance of several miles. The other members of the council thanked the 434
inhabitants of Usha for the hospitality displayed towards them. Thus did the nation, whose destruction had seemed imminent, again revive, and the Law was once again the curative measure, bringing with it health and strength.

The members of the Tanaite circle pursued the work of their predecessors with great self-sacrifice, in order to restore the broken chain of tradition, but their numbers were less, and their mental activity inferior to that of the former generation. The chief of those who took part in affairs were Simon II., son of the Patriarch Gamaliel, Nathan of Babylon, Meïr and Simon ben Jochai. The first of these, as was related, escaped in a wonderful manner from the massacre at Bethar, as also from the persecution with which he was threatened. The quæsitor, who had been appointed by Rufus to imprison him, gave him a hint of the threatened danger, on which Simon escaped and took refuge in Babylon. How long he remained there, and under what circumstances he assumed his hereditary dignities, is not known.

Simon seems to have been desirous of raising the dignity of Patriarch to special importance and grandeur, probably in imitation of the Babylonian Prince of the Captivity. He does not appear to have been at the first Synod in Usha, nor to have taken part in the discourses given there from

time to time, but to have taken up his residence at Jabne, a place endeared to him by the memory of his father, in the neighborhood of which he probably owned property. The disciples of Akiba, the chief supporters of the Law, appear to have preferred Usha—or they desired to proclaim their independence of the patriarch. Thus Simon, in order not to remain alone, had to repair to the Galilean Synod. The College was completed by Nathan and Meïr as speaker. The patriarch had almost brought on himself the fate of his father through disregarding the equality which reigned 435
amongst the members of the College. Of his bearing towards the traditional law only so much is known, that he taught the universally acknowledged Halachas, and the doubtful ones he had referred to himself. In contested cases he gave the preference to former decisions, and laid no weight on theoretical discussions. On the authority of the numerous teachers of the Law in past times certain practices had obtained amongst their surroundings and had become an authority amongst the people, and these practices Simon desired to maintain. The decision of a court of justice, in such cases where a mistaken judgment was given, was to hold good, for otherwise Simon feared that respect for such decisions would cease. His high-mindedness Simon showed in the beautiful saying, "The world subsists on three conditions, truth, justice and peace."

The most original personage of this period was unquestionably Meïr, whose great intellect, thoroughness of purpose and knowledge remind us of his teacher Akiba. His real but forgotten name was Miasa or Moise (the Greek for Moses). According to an unauthenticated legend he was said to be descended from a converted family, from the Emperor Nero in fact, who was believed in the East to have escaped his murderers and to have become converted to Judaism.

It is certain that Meïr's birthplace was in Asia Minor, probably in the Cappadocian Cæsarea. He made his livelihood through writing and copying Holy Writ. He was so intimately acquainted with the orthographical rules of the Hebrew language, which render the transcription of the Holy Books almost a science, that he once wrote from memory the whole book of Esther without making a mistake. By this means he earned three shekels per week, two-thirds of which he devoted to his family and one-third to the support of poor fellow-students. He married Bruria (or 436
Valeria), the learned daughter of Chanina ben Teradion, whose Halachic knowledge was praised even by Joshua. Meïr was for a time a pupil of Ishmael, but his simple mode of teaching did not please him so well as the more intelligent method of Akiba, whose system, which was ultimately adopted by him, exercised the most decided influence over his mode of thought. Akiba soon ordained his favorite pupil, and gave him the preference over Simon, but on account of his youth he did not meet with much respect as an independent teacher. Meïr was severe on such petty conduct, which did not look to the qualifications of a man, but to his age. "Look not," he said wittily, "to the vessel, but to its contents. Many a new vessel contains old wine, but there are old casks which do not contain even new wine." Several sensible sayings are recorded of him; he became celebrated as a writer of fables, and composed 300 on the fox alone—a favorite subject of Eastern imagery. The submission to God of Meïr and his wife on the occasion of the death of their two children has become known through a poetical account of the event. It is related that his two sons, having died suddenly on the Sabbath, during their father's absence at the school, his tender-hearted wife did not tell him of the deaths, in order that he might not be grieved by sad tidings on the holy day. When the Sabbath was over she asked him whether that which was lent must necessarily be returned to the lender, and on receiving an affirmative answer she led him to where their two children lay dead, and consoled him with what he had said, that they had only been confided to their care, and were now reclaimed by the owner. Meïr's modesty was as great as his submissiveness to God. His favorite saying was, "Occupy thyself less with gain than with the Law, and be humble to all men."

His contemporaries and successors could not sufficiently praise Meïr's wisdom and character. 437
José depicts him to his townspeople, the inhabitants of Sepphoris, as a pious, morally strict and holy man. It became proverbial that "He who touches Meïr's staff becomes wise." He obtained his deep knowledge of men by mixing with those against whom prejudice prevailed. He even sought out the apostate and traitor Acher, in order that he might be instructed by him. When Meïr was reproached for his intimacy with a traitor to the Law, he said, "When I see a juicy pomegranate I enjoy its contents and throw away the skin."

One Sabbath he accompanied Acher, who was on horseback, whilst Meïr was on foot, discussing a rendering of the Scriptures. Suddenly Acher said to him, "Thou canst go thus far and not farther, for here is the limit of thy Sabbath walk. Return." Meïr, seizing the opportunity, said to Acher, "Return thou also." But Acher said, "If for all sinners there be pardon, for me the gates of mercy are closed, because I have turned the gifts given me by God to evil uses." Later, when Acher was ill, Meïr again endeavored to win him over, and flattered himself that he had induced Acher to repent before his death. A legend relates that Meïr spread his mantle over Acher's grave, from which there arose a pillar of smoke, and in imitation of a verse of Scripture (Ruth iii. 13) he exclaimed, "Rest here in the night; in the dawn of happiness the God of mercy will deliver thee; if not, I will be thy redeemer."

Meïr also was intimate with a heathen philosopher, Euonymus of Gadara. In Jewish circles it was said, "Be not surprised to find amongst the heathens a knowledge of God, for God had inspired Balaam and Euonymus, two of the greatest philosophers of heathendom, with His wisdom, so that they might teach the people." When Euonymus mourned for the death of his 438
parents, Meïr visited him in order to condole with him, for he held that a heathen who occupied himself with the Torah was as worthy as a high priest of Judaism, for it says in Holy Writ, "These laws man shall observe in order to live," by which Meïr explained that Jews were not exclusively appointed to enjoy eternal happiness.

Through intercourse with men of learning Meïr appears to have become acquainted with the

Stoic philosophy, which was at that time the ruling power in the Roman world. But all the perfections which, according to philosophy, were due to the Stoic theory, he attributed to the Torah, which helps man to attain the ideal, if he devotes himself to it from pure love and without interested motives. "The Torah," he says, "makes him who familiarizes himself with it worthy to all the world; he becomes the favorite of all; it inspires him with love to God and man; clothes him in modesty and fear of God; makes him pious, honest, and true; removes him from sin; brings him near to virtue; endows him with kingly dignity; makes him moral, long-suffering, forgetful of injury, and raises and carries him above all things." This was his ideal of a truly wise man. In treating the Halachic traditions Meïr copied his teacher Akiba's system of dialectics. The rules of deduction used by his predecessors he employed as formulas which could establish or abolish legal enactments. His contemporaries relate of him that they could never reach the real meaning of Meïr's decisions, because he brought forward a number of proofs for and against an ordinance, and he was able through similes and deductions to turn a law, as it was laid down, into one of an opposite meaning. Whether these sophistic arguments were to be taken seriously, or whether they were only intended by the speaker for dialectic purposes in order to show both sides of the question, is not now known, as even those who lived in former times were doubtful on the subject.

Yet the injurious method of treating the Halachas, which was called Talmudic dialectics, became later on still more developed; in fact, the closer apprehension of the Halachas was deemed impossible without it. Nevertheless, Meïr's exposition of the Law was decidedly serious and strict. Amongst other things he asserts that he who gives his wife less dowry than is usual, acts wrongly; for he thereby makes divorce more easy to obtain. Further, he asserts that any one who in the smallest degree should deviate from the law laid down for divorce would render the act illegal, and his children from the second marriage would be considered as illegitimate. Meïr further controverted the law which was universally respected, that what was forbidden or permitted should be inferred from such cases as most commonly occurred in life, without regard to exceptional circumstances; he considered that certain circumstances should conscientiously be reckoned exceptional. For this reason when he heard that some Samaritans continued to worship idols, which according to Hadrian's edict they had formerly been compelled to do, when they brought him libations of wine, he refused to permit the use of wine amongst his hearers. This abstinence, had it been consistently observed, would have put an end to much industry and pleasure and rendered them legally impossible. For other misdeeds, as for example usury, he imposed heavy fines. But his regulations were not carried out, his contemporaries and succeeding generations did not acknowledge Meïr's ordinances and imposts in their entirety. He was, however, most severe against himself, and once said—"Even if I hold something as permissible to others, I cannot allow it to hold good for myself, if I am convinced that my colleagues would be of a different opinion." As in the treatment of Halachas, so in ordinary things, Meïr followed in the footsteps of Akiba; he completed the collection of the Mishnas, but appears to have arranged their component parts more according to their contents than their number. These arrangements of Meïr and his colleagues made no pretense to being a code, but each teacher of the Law having a circle of disciples, treated the material before him in the manner which seemed most suitable and convenient to himself. Meïr had assembled a not insignificant number of pupils round him, who were drawn towards him by his intelligent renderings and interesting lectures. He was in the habit of alternating the dry matter of the Halachas with the attractive Agadahs, and of illustrating them by fables.

Amongst Meïr's disciples was one named Symmachos ben Joseph, who adopted and exaggerated his method to such an extent that it was said of him that he could argue well, but could not come to any practical decision. It was even said of him that his forefathers could not have been present at the Revelation on Sinai. After Meïr's death both Symmachos and his disciples were excluded from the school, because they did not seek for truth, but only to dispute sophistically. It is probable that Meïr repaired to the Synhedrion of Usha when important questions were under discussion. He did not live on good terms with the Patriarch Simon.

Simon ben Jochai of Galilee was as striking but not so many-sided a personage as Meïr, and he was falsely reported to be a worker of miracles—a mystic and a Cabbalist. Few facts of his life are known, but we may infer from what is recorded that he was rather of a matter-of-fact than of an imaginative turn of mind. Nothing is known of Simon's youth, and later, after his return with others from the exile imposed on them under Hadrian's rule, his activity seems to have spent itself on the newly organized Synhedrion at Usha. In opposition to his father, Jochai, who stood in favor with the Roman authorities, the son was a decided enemy of Rome, and was not much liked by them. For uttering a truthful censure on the Roman Governor, he was sentenced to death, and could save himself only by flight, and upon this fact legend has seized in order to surround Simon with wonders and miracles. Amongst the various legal decisions, sayings and remarks which have been preserved of him there is no trace of a mystical tendency. On the contrary his reasoning with regard to biblical laws was always of a simple nature. The system of following out the reasoning of the Law, and thence drawing deductions, was peculiar to Simon.

This was an improvement on Akiba's system, which consisted in drawing from pleonastic words, syllables and letters, the principles of legal deductions. The following are instances of Simon's method. The Bible forbids the distraint of a widow's goods; Simon restricted the reference to cases of poor widows. Simon drew his conclusion in the following manner:—The biblical law which enacts that a widow should be spared all legal seizure of goods could only apply to poor widows. A rich woman had no cause for being so spared. Further, that the prohibition against intermarrying with the seven Canaanite races must also be extended to all idolatrous nations, as the law was actually intended to prevent the people from being drawn into

idolatry.

Another opinion of Simon's shows how far removed he was from all exaggerated religious theories. He had a curious saying that the fulfilment of the Law was only possible to those who lived on manna or the tithes. Unlike most teachers of the Law, Simon pursued no occupation or business; he was at that time the only man whose life's business was the study of the Law. Simon's dwelling-place and school-house were in the fertile oil district of Tekoa, in Galilee. He had his circle of disciples, and because he survived his colleagues he became the only authority of the following period.

Another important name was that of Judah ben Ilai of Usha, whose character bore a similarity 442
to that of Joshua. Modest, wise, diplomatic, eloquent, he knew how to bridge over the breach which existed between the Roman and the Jewish nature. He was therefore especially designated "the wise," or "the first speaker." Judah was not a man of property, but, like Joshua, he supported himself by an occupation of which he was not ashamed. He often used the expression—"The work honors the laborer. He who does not teach his son a handicraft designs him to be a robber." His mode of teaching had no especially pronounced characteristics.

As with Judah we have no distinctive features recorded, so also of the life of José ben Chalafta of Sepphoris but little is known. He also followed a trade, and one of the lowest kind. He was a worker in leather. Unlike his contemporaries, José devoted himself to the collection of the annals of Jewish history, and left an account from the creation of the world to the war of Bar Cochba, under the name of Seder Olam. He endeavored to fix the various dates correctly from the historical records of the Bible. He tried to render clear the doubtful passages, and to fill up the gaps in traditions. On the other hand, from the time of Alexander the Great, we find that this chronicle of José gives independent and trustworthy, but very scanty information.

But little that is noteworthy is known of the other disciples of Akiba. Besides the Galilean circle of scholars there was yet another in the extreme south of Judæa (Darom) who continued Ishmael's mode of teaching; only two members of this circle, Josiah and Jonathan, are known.

Nathan, a Babylonian, and a son of the Prince of the Captivity, was a man of special interest. 443
It is not known where he received instruction in the Halachas, nor what occasioned him to remove to Judæa, or to give up the more favorable position that he occupied in his native country. The foreign teachers of the Law at this period were Judah ben Bathyra of Nisibis, who appears to have sheltered the fugitives from Judæa; also Chananya, nephew of Joshua, in Nahar-Pakod, who had been sent by his uncle to Babylon, so as to remove him from the influence of the Jewish Christians; and, lastly, Matiah ben Charash in Rome, who first transplanted the knowledge of the Jewish Law from Asia to Europe.

Whilst the teachers of the Law in Galilee endeavored to reanimate the body of the nation, to re-establish the Synhedrion, and to secure and spread traditions by collecting and classifying them, but little was needed to cause a deep schism which threatened to separate the Babylonian congregation entirely from the main body.

The wisdom of the Patriarch Simon II. deftly avoided this breach. Chananya established a sort of Synhedrion in Nahar-Pakod, probably in the neighborhood of Nahardea, of which he was the president, whilst a certain Nechunyan, perhaps the Prince of the Captivity, appears to have supported him. The Babylonian community, until then under the control of Judæa, and now left uncared for through the destruction of all religious institutions in the fatherland, welcomed a Synhedrion in their midst as of joyful import, and gratefully accepted its ordinances and decisions. Chananya immediately introduced a leap year, and the celebration of the festivals as had been customary in Judæa. But when the Synhedrion had been established in Usha it was no longer possible to continue the existence of a body which threatened the unity of Judaism, and tended to divide it into an eastern and western Judaism. In order to avoid such a division the Patriarch Simon sent two ambassadors, Isaac and Nathan, with flattering messages to Chananya, 444
with the unusual superscription, "To his holiness Chananya." The president of the Babylonian Synhedrion, who had not expected such friendliness, received the Jewish ambassadors in the kindest manner, and introduced them with flattering speeches to the assembly. Having secured the confidence of the nation, they named the ultimate reason of their embassage. At the public service they read from the Book of Laws, "Such are the feast days of Chananya" (instead of God). Another read from the prophets—"From Babylon shall the light go forth, and the word of the Lord from Nahar Pakod" (instead of Zion and Jerusalem). The audience, whose attention was drawn through these ironical allusions, and who felt that an independent Synhedrion in Babylon would be contrary to the spirit of the Law, felt their consciences disturbed. Chananya vainly endeavored to weaken the impression by implicating the ambassadors. They replied that to establish an opposition Synhedrion in Babylon was tantamount to building an altar, at which Chananya and Nechunya would officiate as unauthorized priests, and was in fact equal to disavowing the God of Israel. Chananya, however, doubted the continuance of a Synhedrion in Judæa, saying that the teachers of the Law there did not enjoy any authority, to which the ambassadors replied, "The little ones whom thou hast deserted have meanwhile grown up." Chananya, however, did not relinquish his design until Judah ben Bathyra, in Nisibis, pointed out to him that in holy things unqualified obedience must be paid to the Judæan Synhedrion. Finding no response or interest anywhere, he countermanded the festivals as arranged by himself, and the Babylonian Synhedrion came to an end.

Dissensions arose at the College of Usha, which threatened to have similar results to the contest between Gamaliel and Joshua. The Patriarch Simon, in order to increase his dignity, 445
endeavored to introduce a special etiquette, in order to remove the equality previously existing

between all officials. In the absence of the Ab-beth-din Nathan and the speaker Meïr, he instituted a new order of rank, which would definitely recognize him as the superior head. This distinction lay herein, that at all public sittings of the Synhedrion the people, who were accustomed to rise at the entrance of the president and other important officials, and to remain standing until the sign was given them to be seated, should reserve this mark of honor in future for the President alone; in honor of his substitute only the first rows were to stand until he had taken his seat; and still less ceremony was to be observed towards the speaker (the Chacham).

When Nathan and Meïr for the first time attended the meeting and noticed the new arrangements they secretly determined to conspire against Simon, and to deprive him of his office. For this purpose, however, the consent of the nation, with whom the appointment of Patriarch rested, became necessary. They determined to puzzle Simon by difficult questions (on the Halachas), and he seems to have been inferior to them in knowledge of traditional lore, and when they had revealed his weakness before the whole assemblage they intended proposing the deposition of a Patriarch who was not conversant with all branches of the Law. They also determined that Nathan, who belonged to the family of the Prince of the Captivity, and who was also of the race of David, should become Patriarch, and that Meïr should be second in rank as substitute. This plot, however, was betrayed to Simon, and the conspirators found him prepared.

The Patriarch, on revealing the scheme against him, succeeded in having the two expelled from the Synhedrion. But they made their absence felt by writing difficult questions and distributing them amongst the assembly, whom they thereby placed in an awkward position. 446
Referring to these two José afterwards said, "We are in the house of the Law, but the Law is outside." They were readmitted, but Simon arranged that their names should not be recorded in the ordinances enacted by him. R. Nathan subsequently made peace with the Patriarch, but the breach with Meïr endured. Simon at length excommunicated him, but Meïr was not as submissive as he who, without a word, had accepted Gamaliel's sentence. Referring to a former resolution of the Synhedrion in Usha, that no member could be excommunicated, Meïr replied, "I do not care for your sentence until you prove to me on whom, on what grounds, and under what conditions it can be imposed." In proud recognition of his own worth, Meïr is said on his death-bed to have uttered the words: "Tell the sons of the Holy Land that their Messiah has died in a foreign land." According to his last will, his body was buried on the sea-shore.

Simon's patriarchate was not free from the disturbances and oppressions which the Roman officials permitted themselves to perpetrate towards the Jewish people. The mutual hatred of Jews and Romans, which had followed from the revolt of Bar-Cochba and Hadrian's persecution, was so great that the powerful victors could not do otherwise than make their power felt by those whom they had conquered. Simon ben Gamaliel notes the daily tortures and oppressions: "Our forefathers only scented trouble from afar; we, however, have suffered from them through many days, years, periods, and cycles; we have more right to become impatient than our forefathers. If, as formerly, we desired to record our troubles and temporary relief on a scroll, we should not find space enough." The hatred of the Romans on the one hand, and the endurance of the Jews on the other, appear to have ended in a fresh revolution in Judæa, which took place in the last year 447
of the reign of the Emperor Antoninus Pius (161), but its rise, scene of action, and results are not known. The attempt at a new call to arms appears to have been connected with the warlike preparations commenced by the Parthians against Rome. Though often deceived, the Judæans still hoped for the help of the Parthians, as a means of deliverance from the Roman yoke. Simon b. Jochai, who heartily despised the hypocritical policy of the Romans, said, "When thou seest a Persian (Parthian) steed tied to an Israelite tombstone, then canst thou believe in the advent of the Messiah." Meanwhile, the badly-organized revolt was soon suppressed by the Governor of Syria before the Parthians could come to the rescue. The Parthian war, which lasted several years (161–165), began shortly after the death of the Emperor Antoninus Pius, when the Roman Empire for the first time was governed by two rulers, the philosophical but impractical Marcus Aurelius Antoninus and the dissolute Verus Commodus. At the first attack the Parthians, under their king Vologeses, entered Syria, defeated the governor, Atidius Cornelianus, who had just repressed the Jewish revolt, put his legions to flight, and devastated the country. The second emperor, Verus, was sent with fresh troops to the East, though he was eminently unfitted to conduct a war. The conquest of the Parthians was therefore undertaken by capable generals, whilst the emperor gave himself up to dissipation in Antioch, Laodicea, and Daphne.

Fresh persecutions appear to have been instituted by the Emperor Verus against the Jews of Palestine. First they lost the right of using their own courts of justice. It is not certain whether Jewish judicial functions were set aside, or whether the Jewish judges were deposed. Simon ben Jochai thanked God for the interference of the Romans, as he, like his contemporaries, did not 448
feel himself fitted to exercise judicial rights. Notwithstanding that the chiefs of the Synhedrion had taken no part in the revolution, they yet seem to have been suspected and watched by the Roman authorities. A conversation was once reported which took place between Judah, José and Simon ben Jochai at Usha, where, it appears, a discussion was held with regard to the Roman policy. Judah, who, like Joshua, endeavored to calm those who stood around, had been praising Rome for her actions. "How useful this nation has been; everywhere it has erected towns with market-places; it has put bridges over rivers, and built bath-houses for the preservation of health." José kept silent, neither giving praise nor blame. Simon ben Jochai, on the other hand, could not repress his displeasure. "What the Romans do," he said, "they only do for the sake of selfishness and gain. They keep houses of bad repute in the cities, misuse the bathing-places, and levy toll for the bridges." A proselyte, Judah, repeated this, perhaps without desiring to make mischief. Judah, however, the eulogist of Rome, was loaded with honors, José was banished to Laodicea, and Simon was condemned to death. In consequence of these events the Synhedrion at

Usha seems to have been dissolved, for the most important members were withdrawn, and its proceedings watched.

Simon, who had taken refuge, as before stated, in a cave, became the hero of various miracles. He is said to have spent years in this cave, supporting himself on carob-beans and spring water, in consequence of which his skin became full of boils. When he learnt that affairs had taken a favorable turn, probably through the death of the Emperor Verus (169), he took this as a sign that he might venture out, and by bathing in the warm springs of Tiberias his shattered health became restored. Out of gratitude he declared the town of Tiberias, which had hitherto 449
been avoided by the pious, because buildings had been erected over graves, as clean and suitable for a dwelling-place. This aroused the anger of the pious who lived in Magdala (Tarichea), who considered this decision as a frivolous innovation. After his return Simon ben Jochai was asked to repair to Rome, and to intercede with the Emperor Marcus Aurelius for the abolition of the laws against the Jews. Simon took as his companion on this journey Eleazar, the son of José, probably because he was acquainted with the Latin language. When they arrived in Rome, assisted by various influential Roman Jews, they probably succeeded in obtaining from Marcus Aurelius the concession sought. Christian teachers also addressed petitions to the Emperor and requested him to show mercy on Christendom. The legend relating to Simon attributes the attainment of the emperor's favor to a miracle; he had, namely, delivered the daughter of the emperor, Lucilla, from a demon (Bartholomaion), and out of gratitude the emperor permitted him and his followers to take from the state archives whatever they chose, and they took out the inhuman decree against the Jews and destroyed it. There appear to have been actual grounds for this story, for Eleazar ben Joseph, Simon's friend, boasted that he had seen in the room the vessels of the Temple, the frontal of the high priest, and the curtain of the Holy of Holies, which Titus had carried off as trophies, and which could be seen only by those especially favored.

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CHAPTER XVII.

THE PATRIARCHATE OF JUDAH I.

The Patriarch Judah I.—His Authority and Reputation—Completion of the Mishna—The Last Generation of Tanaites—Condition of the Jews under Marcus Aurelius, Commodus, Septimius Severus, and Antoninus Caracalla—Character and contents of the Mishna—Death of Judah.

175–219 C. E.

The last generation of the Tanaites had come back to the same point from which they first had started, thus completing the whole circle. In the same way as the first had found complete expression in a single personality, Jochanan ben Zaccai, so also the last culminated in one standard-bearer, who formed the central point of his times. The former had been followed by several disciples, each possessing his peculiar school, tendency, and system; and thus the material of tradition was divided into a multiplicity of fractional parts. It was the Patriarch Judah, the son of Simon II., who reunited them, and thus brought the activity of the Tanaites to a conclusion. He was the chief authority of the last generation, compared with whom the other teachers of the Law were of no importance; he abandoned the old tendencies and prepared the way for a new departure. In spite of the important position which he occupies in Jewish history but little is known of Judah's life. It was during a time of great affliction, when the calamitous consequences of the Bar-Cochba war were still being felt, that his superior talents and great parts developed themselves. He so distinguished himself by mature questions and striking answers that his father and the college advanced him to the foremost rank of the disciples while he was still in his first youth. As though he felt that his vocation was to be the collecting and 451
arranging of the most dissimilar opinions, Judah did not confine himself to any one school, but sought the society of several teachers of the Law. This it was that saved him from that one-sidedness and narrowness of mind which is given to upholding, with more fidelity than love of truth, the words of one teacher against all other doctrines. The most important of his teachers were Simon ben Jochai and Eleazar ben Shamua, whose school was so crowded with students that six of them were obliged to content themselves with one seat.

Judah was elevated to the dignity of Patriarch upon his father's decease, and the cessation of the persecutions after Verus's death. He was blessed with such extraordinary gifts of fortune that it used to be said proverbially, "Judah's cattle-stalls are worth more than the treasure-chambers of the King of Persia." Living very simply himself, he made but small use of this wealth for his personal gratification, but employed it in the maintenance of the disciples who during his Patriarchate gathered around him in numbers from at home and abroad, and were supported entirely at his cost. At the time of the awful famine, which, together with the plague, raged for several years during the reign of Marcus Aurelius throughout the whole extent of the Roman empire, the Jewish prince threw open his storehouses and distributed corn to the needy. At first he decided that those only should be succored who were occupied in some way with the study of the Law, thus excluding from his charity the rude and uneducated populace. It was only when his over-conscientious disciple, Jonathan ben Amram, refused to derive any material benefit from his knowledge of the Law, exclaiming, "Succor me not because I am learned in the Law, but as you would feed a hungry raven," that Judah perceived the mistake of trying to set bounds to his 452
charity, and he thenceforth distributed his gifts without distinction. On another occasion Judah also yielded to his better convictions and overcame his nature, which seems not to have been entirely free from a touch of harshness. The daughters of Acher, a man who had held the Law in contempt, having fallen into distress, came to Judah for help. At first he repulsed them uncharitably, remarking that the orphans of such a father deserved no pity. But when they reminded him of their father's profound knowledge of the Law, he immediately altered his mind.

Distinguished by his wealth and his intimate knowledge of the subject-matter of the Halachas, he succeeded without trouble in doing that which his predecessors had striven in vain to accomplish, namely, to invest the Patriarchate with autocratic power, unfettered by the presence of any rival authority, and to transfer the powers of the Synhedrion to the person of the Patriarch. The seat of the principal school and of the Synhedrion during the time of Judah, and after Usha had lost its importance (a short time previously it seems to have been the neighboring town of Shefaram), was first at Beth-Shearim, northeast of Sepphoris, and later on at Sepphoris itself. Judah chose this latter town for his residence, on account of its elevated and healthy situation, in the hopes of recovering from a complaint from which he had suffered for several years. In Sepphoris there seems to have existed a complete council of seventy members, which was entrusted with the decision of religious questions according to the adopted routine. Judah's reputation was so great, however, that the college itself transferred to him the sovereign power which up till then had belonged to the whole body or to individual members. It was rightly observed of Judah that since the time of Moses, knowledge of the Law and possession of authority 453
had not been united in any one person as in him. A most important function which was conferred upon this Patriarch, or rather which he got conferred on him, was that of appointing the disciples as judges and teachers of the Law. He was allowed to exercise this power without consulting the College, but on the other hand the nominations of the high Council were invalid without the Patriarch's confirmation. The nomination of spiritual guides of the communities, the appointments to the judicial offices, the filling up of vacancies in the Synhedrion, in a word, all Judæa and the communities abroad, fell in this manner into dependence on the Patriarch. That

which his father and grandfather had striven in vain to accomplish, came about, so to speak, at his touch. In his time there was no longer a deputy (Ab-Beth-Din), nor a public speaker (Chacham). Judah, the Prince (ha-Nassi), alone was all in all. Even the Synhedrion itself had resigned its authority, and continued to exist henceforward only in name; the Patriarch decided everything. By reason of his great importance he was called simply Rabbi, as if, when compared with him, no teacher of the Law were of any consequence, and he himself were the personification of the Law.

He soon further increased his powers by deciding that even the most capable were not competent to pronounce on any religious question without having first been expressly authorized by him. How great was the importance of this act may be seen from the circumstance that the foreign communities, as well as those of Judæa, were obliged to put themselves in direct communication with the Patriarch in order to obtain their officials, judges, and teachers. The community of Simonias, which lay to the south of Sepphoris, begged the Patriarch to send them a man who should give public lectures, decide questions of law, superintend the Synagogue, prepare copies of authentic writings, teach their sons, and generally supply all the wants of the 454
community. He recommended to them for this purpose his best pupil, Levi bar Sissi. It may be seen from this example how great were the requirements demanded of the instructors of the people. Another disciple of Judah, Rabba bar Chana by name, a native of Cafri in Babylon, was obliged to obtain the authorization of the Patriarch before being able to decide any questions of religion and law in his native land. In the same manner a third of his disciples, Abba Areka, also a native of Babylon, who later on became a great authority with the Babylonian communities, obtained this influence solely by Judah's nomination. One dignity alone, that of the Prince of the Captivity in Babylon, was on an equal footing with the Patriarchate, and Judah was all the more jealous thereof on account of its being conferred and upheld by the Parthian authorities, while his office was at most merely tolerated by the Roman rulers.

Invested with this autocratic power, Judah manifested unusual severity towards his disciples, and displayed so great an irritability with them that he never pardoned the least offense offered, even in jest, to his dignity. The course of conduct which he enjoined upon his son from his death-bed, namely, to treat his scholars with strict severity, was the one which he himself had pursued all through the Patriarchate. Among the numerous Babylonians who crowded to the Academy at Sepphoris was a distinguished disciple, by name Chiya (an abbreviation of Achiya), whom his contemporaries could hardly praise enough for his natural gifts, his pious conduct, and his untiring endeavors to spread the teachings of religion among the people. Judah himself valued him very highly, and said of him: "From a land far off there came to me the man of good counsel." But even him the Patriarch could not pardon an insignificant jest. Judah had once said to him, "If 455
Huna, the Prince of the Captivity, were to come to Judæa, I should certainly not carry my self-denial so far as to abdicate my office to him, but I would honor him as a descendant in the male line from David." When Huna died and his body was taken to Judæa, Chiya observed to the Patriarch, "Huna is coming." Judah grew pale at the news, and when he found that Chiya was referring to the corpse of Huna, he punished the joke by excluding Chiya from his presence for thirty days. Judah showed himself equally sensitive in his conduct towards Simon Bar-Kappara, one of his disciples, who, with his knowledge of the Law, combined at the same time poetical talent and a vein of delicate satire; as far as is known, he was the only Hebrew poet of that period. The little that remains of the productions of Bar-Kappara's muse indicates ready manipulation of the Hebrew tongue in a regenerated form, and in all its pristine purity and vigor; he composed fables, of which, however, no trace now remains. On the occasion of a merry meeting, the witty Bar-Kappara indulged in a jest at the expense of a certain Bar-Eleaza, the rich but proud and ignorant son-in-law of the Patriarch. All the guests had put questions to Judah, except the simple-minded Bar-Eleaza. Bar-Kappara incited him to ask one as well, and in a whisper suggested one to him in the form of a riddle. This riddle, to which no answer has been found to the present day, contained in all likelihood allusions to certain persons closely connected with Judah. It ran somewhat as follows:—

She looks from heaven on high,
And ceaseless is her cry,
  Whom wingéd beings shun;
Youth doth she fright away.
And men with old age gray,
  And loud shriek they who run.
But whom her net hath lured
Can ne'er of the sin be cured.

In all simplicity, Bar-Eleaza propounded this riddle. Judah must have seen, however, by the 456
satirical smile on Bar-Kappara's lips that it was intended to banter him, and he therefore exclaimed angrily to Bar-Kappara: "I refuse to recognize you as an appointed teacher." It was not till later on, when Bar-Kappara failed to obtain his appointment as an independent teacher of the Law, that he realized to the full the meaning of these words.

One of the most celebrated of the Babylonian disciples, Samuel by name, by whose medical treatment Judah had been cured of his long illness, was unable to obtain the nomination necessary in order to become a teacher of the Law. Judah was once desirous of excusing himself for this slight to Samuel, to whom he owed the restoration of his health, whereupon the latter answered him pleasantly, that it was so decreed in the book of Adam, "that Samuel would be a wise man, but not appointed Rabbi, and that thy illness should be cured by me." Chanina bar Chama, another disciple, who, later on, was also regarded as an authority, once remarked that a

word which occurred in the Prophets ought to be pronounced otherwise than Judah read it. Offended thereat, Judah asked him where he had heard this; to which Chanina answered, "At the house of Hamnuna, in Babylon." "Well, then," retorted Judah, "when you go again to Hamnuna, tell him that I recognize you as a sage"; which was equivalent to telling Chanina that Judah would never authorize him to be a teacher. This irritability of the Patriarch, who was in all other respects a noble character, was his one weak point. It is possible, indeed, that this susceptibility was the result of his ill-health. However that may be, it did not fail to arouse a certain dissatisfaction and discontent, which never found public expression on account of the deep reverence in which the Patriarch was held.

Once at a banquet, when the wine had loosened men's tongues and made the guests oblivious of respect, the twin sons of Chiya gave utterance to this feeling of discontent. These highly talented youths, by name Judah and Chiskiya, whom the Patriarch himself had incited to gaiety and loquacity, expressed it as their opinion "that the Messiah could not appear until the fall of the two princely houses of Israel—the house of the Patriarch in Judæa, and that of the Prince of the Captivity in Babylon." The wine had caused them to betray their most secret thoughts. 457

In consideration of the altered circumstances of his time, Judah, by virtue of his independence and authority, abolished several rites and customs which seemed to the people to be hallowed by age, and carried through his design with perseverance, regardless of all consequences. Contrary to the principles of his teacher and predecessor, who had treated the Samaritans as heathens, Judah decreed that the evidence of a Samaritan in matters concerning marriage was admissible and of equal weight with the testimony of an Israelite. The views of these teachers of the Law of Moses, who agreed on the chief principles of their religion, varied in other matters according to the predominance of friendly or inimical feelings towards the heathens. For some time past difficulties had been constantly occurring between the Jews and the Samaritans. Eleazar, the son of Simon ben Jochai, and a contemporary of Judah, who had made himself acquainted with the Samaritan Torah, reproached them with having altered certain passages of the holy text. The peaceable relations between Jew and Cuthæan since the war of Hadrian were gradually changed to a state of ill-feeling, which was as bitter on the one side as on the other. One day when Ishmael b. José was passing through Neapolis (Shechem) in order to go and pray at Jerusalem (for which purpose the Jews seem to have required the permission of Marcus Aurelius), the Samaritans jeered at the tenacity of the Jews, saying that it was certainly better to pray upon their holy mount (Gerizim) than upon the heap of ruins at Jerusalem. Traveling through the land of Samaria must have now become less dangerous than it had formerly been. The teachers of the Law had frequently to pass through the strip of land lying between Judæa and Sepphoris. Although the seat of the Synhedrion was now in Galilee, and Sepphoris was thus to a certain extent the center of the entire Jewish community, nevertheless Judæa was, for various reasons, regarded as holier than the northern district. The patriarch could not officiate in person when the appearance of the new moon was announced, but had to send a representative for the purpose (which office Chiya once filled); the place where the announcement was made was at this time Ain-tab, probably in the province of Judæa. This trifling superiority was still left to that district, the scene of so many holy ceremonies and ancient memories. The journey to Ain-tab was made through Samaria. 458

On another point, also, Judah deviated from the ancient customs and the Halachic laws: he rendered less oppressive the laws relating to the year of release and to the tithes. In spite of the fall of the Jewish state, and of the numerous catastrophes which had befallen the Jews, these laws still continued in unimpaired force, and were doubly oppressive to a people impoverished by the disturbances of war, by taxes, and by the extortion of money. The Patriarch therefore turned his attention to this matter, and determined, if not entirely to abrogate, at least to moderate the harshness of these laws. Furthermore he decreed that the territory of certain border cities, which had up till then been considered as forming a part of Judæa, should henceforth not enjoy the privilege of sanctity which attached to Jewish ground. This in so far constituted a relief, as these cities were thereby exempted from the payment of tithes, and doubtless also from the laws relating to the year of release. For the most part these border cities were inhabited by Greeks and Romans, and had not always been subject to Jewish rule. These alleviations of the burdens of the people drew down reproaches on the Patriarch from certain of his relatives, to whom he replied that his predecessors had left this duty to him. He had even the intention of entirely abolishing the laws relative to the year of release, but was unwilling to take so important a step without first consulting such persons as were likely to entertain scruples on this point. At that time Pinchas ben Jaïr was regarded as the model of austere piety. He was a son-in-law of Simon ben Jochai, and possessed so gloomy a disposition as to cause him to entertain doubts as to the efficacy of any human institutions. He used to remark that, "since the destruction of the Temple the members and the freemen are put to shame, those who conform to the Law are confused, violence and sycophancy carry the day, and no one cares for those who are deserted; we have no hope but in God." In particular, Pinchas adhered strictly to the prescriptions of the law relating to the tithes, and for this reason never accepted any invitation to a meal. It was with this same Pinchas that Judah took counsel relative to the abolition of the year of release. It is probable that a year of scarcity necessitated the adoption of some such measure. To the Patriarch's question, "How goes it with the corn?" Pinchas answered reprovingly, "There will be a very good crop of endives," meaning that if necessary it was better to live on herbs rather than abrogate the Law. In consequence of Pinchas' dislike of this scheme Judah abandoned his project entirely. But the Zealot, having noticed some mules in the court of the Patriarch's house, to keep which was not in exact accordance with the Law, refused to accept Judah's invitation, and left him on the spot, vowing never to come near him again. 459 460

But the most important of Judah's acts, a work on which reposes his claim to an enduring

name, and whereby he created a concluding epoch, was the completion of the Mishna (about 189). Since the completion, two generations before, of the oldest compilation under the name of Adoyot, the subject-matter of the Law had accumulated to an enormous extent. New cases, some drawn from older ones, others deduced from the Scripture, had helped to swell the mass. The various schools and systems had left many points of law in doubt, which now awaited decision. Judah therefore based his compilation on Akiba's partially arranged collection of laws as taught and corrected by Meïr, retaining the same order. He examined the arguments for and against every opinion, and established the Halachic precepts according to certain ordinances and principles. He endeavored to observe a certain systematic order in dealing with the various traditional laws relating to the prayers, to benedictions, taxes on agricultural produce, the Sabbath, festivals and fasts, marriage customs, vows and Nazarites, civil and criminal jurisdiction, the system of sacrifices, levitical purity, and many other points. His efforts were not, however, crowned with complete success, partly on account of the various parts of his subject being by their nature incapable of connection, and partly by reason of his desire to retain the order and divisions already employed. The style of Judah's Mishna is concise, well rounded, and intelligent, and is thereby well adapted to impress itself firmly on the memory. He in no way intended his Mishna, however, to be regarded as the sole standard, having in fact only composed it, like his predecessors and contemporaries, for his own use, in order to possess a text-book for 461
his lectures. But by reason of his great authority with his disciples and contemporaries his compilation gradually obtained exclusive authority, and finally superseded all previous collections, which for that reason have fallen into oblivion. It retained the ancient name of *Mishna*, but at first with the addition of the words "di Rabbi Judah." Gradually, however, these words were dropped, and it began to be considered as the sole legitimate, recognized and authorized Mishna. His disciples disseminated it through distant lands, using it as a text-book for their lectures, and as a religious and judicial code. This Mishna, however, like the older compilations, was not committed to writing, it being at that time regarded as a religious offense to put on paper the precepts of tradition; it was thus handed down for many centuries by word of mouth. The Agadas only were now and then collected and written down, and even this was severely censured by various teachers of the Law. It is true that scarce or remarkable Halachas were sometimes written upon scrolls by certain teachers, but this was done so secretly, that they acquired from this circumstance the name of "Secret Scrolls."

In his old age Judah undertook another revision of his compilation, and made certain alterations which brought his Mishna into harmony with his new views. Various additions were also made after his death by his son. The language in which the Mishna is written is Hebrew in a rejuvenated form, interspersed with many Aramaic, Greek, and Latin words in general use. Judah evinced a predilection for the Hebrew tongue, despising Syriac, which was then indigenous to Galilee, on account of its characteristic inexactness. Syriac, he asserted, was superfluous in Judæa, and that either Hebrew or Greek should be spoken by every one. As a matter of fact, the Hebrew language was in nowise foreign to the population of Judæa, especially to such of them as 462
lived in the towns. Even Judah's female domestic slave and tyrant was so well acquainted with Hebrew that many a foreign scholar applied to her for information respecting certain words of which he was ignorant. The Hebrew language was so easily and fluently spoken that many legal terms and delicate distinctions, which were the outcome of the spirit of the times, found their way into Jewish circles, and were there provided with proper Hebrew equivalents.

Thus tradition was at last codified and sanctioned. During the four centuries since the time of the Maccabees, when the doctrine of the father, as handed down to the son, had first begun to acquire an influence on the development of history, tradition had remained, so to speak, in suspense. Accepted by the Pharisees, rejected by the Sadducees, confined by Shammai's school within narrow boundaries, extended in its application by the school of Hillel, and greatly enriched by the followers of the latter, it was through Judah that tradition first acquired a settled form, and was able to exercise, by means of its contents and its mode of exposition, a spiritual influence during a number of centuries. Concurrently with the Bible, the Mishna was the principal source of intellectual activity and research; it sometimes even succeeded in entirely supplanting the Scripture, and in asserting its claim to sole authority. It was the intellectual bond which held together the scattered members of the Jewish nation. The Mishna—the child of the Patriarchate—by which it had been brought into the world and endowed with authority, slew, so to speak, its own parent, for the latter dignity lost by degrees its importance and influence.

The appearance of the Mishna brought the line of Tanaites to a conclusion, and put an end to independent teaching. "Nathan and Judah are the last of the Tanaites," says a Sibylline chronicle, the apocryphal book of Adam. The Mishna necessitated henceforth the employment of a new 463
method of study, which possessed but little similarity with the Tanaite mode of teaching.

The period of the compilation of the Mishna was by no means a happy one for the Jews. Marcus Aurelius, the best and most moral of the Roman emperors, bore them no good will; he seems even to have cherished a special aversion to them. When he came to Judæa, in the summer of 175, after the death of the rebel Avidius Cassius, he found the Jews clamorous; they had not come respectfully to pay him homage, but to ask exemption from the heavy taxes imposed on them; and he, greatly vexed at this want of reverence, is reported to have exclaimed, "At last I have discovered a people who are more restless than the Marcomani, the Quadi, or the Sarmati!" In Judah's time, the communities in Judæa were subjected to a tax, called the "crown money" (aurum coronarium), which was so oppressive that the inhabitants of Tiberias took to flight in order to escape its burden. There is not in existence a single law of Marcus Aurelius in favor of the Jews.

But few Jews can have taken part in the short-lived rebellion of Avidius Cassius (175). With the sensual and bloodthirsty blockhead, Commodus (180–192), the son of the Emperor philosopher, ends the series of good or tolerable emperors, and there opens a succession of tyrants who cut one another's throats. In his reign Judæa was doubtless exposed to all sorts of extortions and oppression. The barbarous, savage and dissolute Pescennius Niger, who after the murder of the two preceding rulers set up as emperor in company with Severus and a third candidate (193,) and took up his residence in Antioch, displayed especial harshness to the Jews. Once when they prayed him to lighten their burden of taxes, which had now become intolerable, he answered them in the following words: "You ask me to relieve your lands of their taxes; would 464
that I were able to tax the very air that you breathe!"

In the war that ensued between him and Severus, the latter was victorious, and his opponent's adherents paid heavily for their mistake. During his short stay in Palestine (200), after he had wasted, but not subdued, the country of the Parthians, Adiabene, and Mesopotamia, Severus promulgated several laws, which were certainly not favorable to Palestine. Amongst these laws was one forbidding heathens, under penalty of severe punishment, to embrace Judaism, or even Christianity. He permitted those, however, who were "imbued with the Jewish superstitions" to hold unpaid municipal offices and to be invested with the dignities of the magistracy; but they were obliged to submit to the claims made on them by reason of their occupation of these posts, such as providing costly plays and supporting various other heavy expenses, as long as no violation of their religion was thereby occasioned.

The numerous bands of marauders which had collected together during the war between Severus and Niger do not seem to have been entirely suppressed in Judæa, but continued to exist in this land after the departure of Severus. The Romans, who regarded these marauders as highwaymen, dispatched troops to hunt them out of their hiding-places in the mountains, but were unable to disperse them entirely. Two famous teachers of the Law of this period, Eleazar, the son of Simon ben Jochai (who in his time had been hostile to the Romans), and Ishmael, the son of José the Prudent, were induced to aid the Romans, to keep a watch over the Jewish freebooters, and to deliver them into the hands of the Roman authorities, who put them to death. Public opinion, however, was loud in its blame of these men for thus allowing themselves to become the tools of the Roman tyrants against their own countrymen. Joshua b. Karcha 465
(according to certain authorities the son of Akiba) reproached Eleazar most bitterly for his behavior. "Oh, thou vinegar!" he exclaimed, "the produce of wine (unworthy son of a worthy father), how much longer dost thou intend to deliver up God's people to the executioner?" When Eleazar attempted to excuse himself by saying that he only desired "to clear the vineyard of thorns," Joshua retorted: "Let the lord of the vineyard root out the thorns himself." Later on Eleazar repented of his share in the pursuit of the Jewish freebooters, and is said to have done penance in the most painful manner. Although he was an Halachic authority, to whom at times the Patriarch submitted, the feeling which he had excited by affording assistance to the Romans was so bitter that he was afraid that after his death the last honors would be denied his corpse by the teachers of the Law. He therefore enjoined upon his wife not to bury him immediately, but to allow his body to remain in a room for several days. When after his death Judah the Patriarch sought his widow in marriage, she rejected his suit, annoyed probably at the slight inflicted on her husband, and answered him: "A vessel intended for holy purposes must not be put to profane uses."

Ishmael ben José was also visited with the disapprobation of the people on account of his prosecution of the Jewish marauders. His excuse that he had received an order from the Roman authorities, of which he was unable to relieve himself, was met by the retort: "Did not thy father flee? Thou also then wast able to escape."

Judah, the Patriarch, was a witness of all these sad scenes after having held his office for more than thirty years. With great equanimity he prepared to die, awaiting his dissolution with tranquillity. He summoned his sons and learned comrades before him, and informed them of his last wishes. He conferred the dignity of Patriarch on Gamaliel, his elder son, and appointed 466
Simon the younger to the office of Chacham (speaker). To both of them he recommended his widow, who was doubtless their stepmother, and commanded them to pay her all respect after his death, and to make no alterations in his domestic establishment. He strongly impressed on the future Patriarch the policy of treating his disciples with severity, but recommended a departure from his principle of only allowing two disciples to be ordained, and suggested that all who were capable and deserving should be admitted to ordination. He particularly enjoined on Gamaliel the obligation of conferring the dignity of teacher, first and foremost on Chanina bar Chama, to whom he believed himself indebted. His two servants, José, of Phaeno, and Simon the Parthian, who served him with great affection during his lifetime, were commanded to take charge of his corpse after his death. He besought the Synhedrion to bury him without any great pomp, to allow no mourning ceremonies to be performed for him in the towns, and to re-open the Assembly of Teachers after the short interval of thirty days. Many of the inhabitants of the neighboring towns had gathered in Sepphoris at the news of the Patriarch's approaching death, in order to show him their sympathy. As if it were impossible that he could die, the populace threatened to put to death whosoever should announce the sad news to them. The suspense and agitation were, in fact, so great that some violent explosion of the grief of the crowd was apprehended. The intelligence of the Patriarch's death was, however, indirectly communicated to the people by Bar-Kappara. With his head veiled and his garments torn, he spoke the following words: "Angels and mortals contended for the ark of the covenant; the angels have conquered, and the ark has vanished." Hereupon the people uttered a cry of pain and exclaimed "He is dead," 467
to which Bar-Kappara made answer, "Ye have said it." Their lamentations are said to have been

heard at Gabbata, three miles from Sepphoris. A numerous funeral train accompanied Judah's corpse from Sepphoris to Beth-Shearim, and memorial sermons were preached for him in eighteen different synagogues. Even the descendants of Aaron paid the last honors to his corpse, although this was in direct opposition to the Law. "For this day," it was said, "the consecrated character of the priests is suspended." Synhedrion and priests readily subordinated themselves to him who represented the Law in his own person. After his death he was called "the Holy" (ha-Kadosh), though later generations seem to have been unable to offer any explanation of the title.

History has little more to relate of Judah's successor, Gamaliel III (about 210 to 225) than that he faithfully executed his father's commands. Such of his sayings as have been preserved are well worthy of consideration, as throwing a strong light on the state of the times. "It is good to be occupied in the study of religion, if some secular business is carried on at the same time; the labor devoted to both prevents sin from gaining ground. The study of the Law, when prosecuted without some other occupation, must ultimately be lost and is productive of sin. He who attends to the affairs of the community should do so for the sake of his duty to God, and without any selfish motives of his own; then will the merit of his forefathers second his efforts, and his righteousness will endure to all eternity. To you, however," he said to his disciples, "I promise as great a reward as if your efforts had been directed to practical ends. Act cautiously in all your relations with the (Roman) powers that be, for they only flatter you to further their own purposes; they are your friends when they can derive any benefit from your friendship, but they never stand 468
by you in trouble. Do God's will in such a manner that you prefer His will to yours; then will he make your will His own." The admonition thus given to his disciples, to exercise caution in their dealings with the Roman authorities, and not to allow themselves to be seduced by their promises, evidently contained an underlying political meaning. For after the death of the harsh Severus, the Roman empire acquired, and outwardly retained, for nearly a quarter of a century, through the influence of three emperors and their Syrian mothers, a certain Syrian appearance which was nearly allied with that of Judæa; servile Rome adopted Syrian habits, and filled her Pantheon with Eastern gods. By this means the gulf existing between Roman and Jew was to a certain extent narrowed. Julia Domna (Martha), the wife of Severus, was a native of Emesa in Syria, and her son Caracalla, who was officially called Antoninus (211–217), was in nowise ashamed of his Syrian descent. It was he who extended the full right of citizenship to every inhabitant of the Roman Empire, and although this law was merely intended to allow the imposition of heavier taxes on the population of the provinces, it had the good effect of abolishing the marked distinction between Roman and non-Roman. Although Caracalla and his pretended son Elegabalus so disgraced the purple and humanity itself by their vices, that Roman history of this period has nothing to relate but assassinations and unnatural excesses such as allow of no other explanation than the derangement of the minds of these two emperors, there was still a certain method in their madness. They contemplated the gradual effacement of Roman gods and Roman customs by the introduction of Syrian fashions. It does not appear that Caracalla possessed special tenderness for the Jews. This much is certain, however, that the condition of the Jews under this emperor was at least tolerable, and that, although they enjoyed no especial 469
favors, they at any rate had not to complain of excessive oppression. This intermediate and tolerable position of the Jews, equally removed from happiness and persecution, is described by Jannaï, one of Judah's disciples, in the following words: "We neither enjoy the happiness of the wicked, nor endure the misfortunes of the just."

A certain religious law which this same Jannaï was at this time induced to repeal, proves that the condition of the Jews of Palestine was not too enviable during the period in question. They were obliged to pay their taxes, even during the year of Release, in natural produce, destined for the use of the standing army. Up till then they had been exempted, by virtue of a special favor originally accorded them by Julius Cæsar, from delivering these supplies in every seventh year, by reason of the fact that no harvest was gathered in this year, it being the one during which the land was commanded by the Law to be left fallow. In consequence of this dictatorial measure, and probably during Caracalla's campaign in Parthia (in 216, which just happened to be a year of Release), Jannaï, who was the authority of that period, issued a proclamation, in which he declared that henceforward it would be permissible to cultivate the land during the year of Release. He laid especial stress on the circumstance that it was only permissible to transgress the Law relative to the year of Release on account of the payment of the tax being required of them, and that its abrogation was in nowise intended.

The youthful emperor Elegabalus, formerly priest of the Sun-god in Emesa, whom Mæsa, his crafty grandmother, had put forward as Caracalla's son, was entirely devoid of any predilection for the Jews, although appearances seem to lend color to the opposite view. This living epitome of 470
all vices, who disgraced the Roman world for four years (218–222), and who seems to have possessed no other vocation in history than publicly to degrade his heathen gods and Roman Cæsarism, and to convince every one of their worthlessness, seems, in fact, to have done and attempted many things in his methodical madness that bear a Jewish complexion. He offered himself for circumcision, and refused to partake of pork, only in obedience, however, to the commands of his Sun-god. He proposed to introduce the Jewish, Samaritan, and Christian worshipers publicly into Rome, but to subordinate them to his Sun-god, Baal.

During the reigns of these two emperors, Caracalla and Elegabalus, the younger contemporaries of Judah had ample time to continue his work. The Mishnaic compilation had not, in fact, included many laws, partly because they were not possessed of absolute legal force, and partly because they were as special cases included in the general formulæ. These neglected Halachas were collected by Judah's successors, as a supplement to the Mishna. Among these collectors may be named Jannaï, whose academy was at Acbara; Chiya, and his twin-sons, Judah

and Chiskiya, Bar-Kappara, Levi bar Sissi, Ushaya the elder, surnamed "the father of the Mishna"; and finally Abba-Areka (Rab); all of them half-Tanaites. Judah's compilation had, however, obtained so undisputed an authority that its votaries considered every word of it to be sacred, and contended that not a line ought to be added to it. The new compilation therefore possessed but a secondary value in comparison with the principal Mishna, and their mutual relations were of such a character that the former were referred to as "the apocryphal Mishnas" (Matnita boraïta, or simply Boraïta), in the same way as the books not included in the canonical Bible are called "the Apocrypha" (apocryphal books). The compilations of Chiya and Ushaya alone 471
acquired an authority nearly equal to that of the principal Mishna, on account of their contents.

The distinctive feature of the Mishna, which was accepted as the recognized code, is the severely legal and even judicial character which it impressed on Judaism for all time. Everything comprised in Judaism—the commandments and prohibitions, the precepts contained in the Pentateuch and those deduced from it—all are considered by the Mishna as edicts and decrees of God, which may neither be criticized nor questioned; they must be carried out in strict accordance with the letter. It is impossible not to perceive that the conflicts which had convulsed Judaism, the violent attacks of Hellenism under Antiochus Epiphanes, the bitter opposition of the Sadducees, the allegorical misinterpretation and the subtleties of the Alexandrian philosophers, and, finally, the attitude of hostility to the Law assumed by Pauline Christianity and the Gnostics, had all assisted to bring out and accentuate the strictly legal character of the Jewish faith. In direct opposition to the tendency of the Alexandrian and Gnostic schools to give especial prominence to the view that God's love was the characteristic feature of Judaism, the Mishna, the first positive code of Judaism, cautions its readers against this opinion, and orders silence to be imposed on one who desired to express this view in prayer: "Thy love extendeth even to the nest of the bird." For this reason everything in the Mishna is legally ordered, little being left to personal decision; there it is settled how much a pauper may demand of public charity, and even how many children a father ought to bring into the world in order to fulfil his duty of helping to populate the earth, "which God did not create to be desolate." In general the Mishna assumes that the whole of the Torah, including such of the precepts of the Law as do not appear 472
immediately in the Pentateuch, is composed of ancient traditions, received by Moses on Sinai, communicated by him to Joshua, who handed them down to the Elders, who in their turn transmitted them to the Prophets, who finally handed them down to the members of the great assembly. All such laws as do not appear in the Pentateuch are designated in the Mishna by the term, "the saying of those learned in the Scripture" (*Dibre Soferim*), although its component parts are not rigorously divided into these two categories. It is true that in the Mishna the remembrance of the dissatisfaction of many Tanaites is still apparent, especially in the complaint that the numerous decisions which Joshua arrived at by means of interpretation, "resemble mountains hanging by a hair," that is to say, are far-fetched; but, nevertheless, the Mishna holds up as an inviolable standard all the Halachic laws which had been in force up to this time.

There repeatedly occurs in the Mishna the assertion of the equivalence of all religious commands and duties. The maxims of Rabbi, its compiler, might fitly be placed on the first page as an inscription:

> "Which road should man choose? One which is creditable to the traveler, and honorable in the eyes of mankind. Be as exact in thine observance of the minor precepts as of the most important, for thou knowest not what reward is attached to each command. Balance the (temporal) loss sustained in consequence of the performance of a duty with its (spiritual) reward, and the gain of a transgression with its disadvantages. Bear always three things in mind, so that thou commit no offense: There is an Eye that sees all, an Ear that hears all, and a Hand that inscribes all thy deeds in a book."

The Mishna is pervaded with these views from beginning to end. The reward of a conscientious observance of the precepts of the Law will be the participation in a future world, which awaits every Israelite unless he refuse to believe in a resurrection, or in the revelation of the Torah by God, or unless he live (or think) as an Epicurean. But pious conduct is also rewarded 473
in this world. He who conscientiously fulfils one religious duty will be favored by Heaven, his life will be lengthened, and he will be allowed to enjoy a share of the Holy Land. At the same time the attempt is made to establish a reconciliation between the worldly promises held out by the Bible and the reward of the world to come, a dogma which first assumed a distinct form in the period following the Captivity. The discharge of certain duties secures the enjoyment of reward on earth and in the world to come; such are the veneration of parents, charity, timely attendance at the school, hospitality, the endowment of (indigent) brides, the accompanying of corpses to the grave, devout prayer, peace-making, and especially the pursuit of religious studies (Talmud Torah). As to future punishment, the Mishna is unacquainted therewith, as also with a hell. For crimes and transgressions, mention is made of judicial punishment during this life only, varying of course with the seriousness of the offense; thus there were scourging, and execution by the Synhedrion in four degrees (by sword, by the rope, by fire, and by stoning), and finally a premature death at the hand of God (Kharat). The most heinous and atrocious sins were expiated by death, and lesser ones by repentance and the Day of Atonement, while pardon was obtained for sins of negligence by sacrifice. Of course, crimes committed against persons were not expiated until their victims were indemnified, satisfied, and appeased. Every righteous and moral deed, as well as every misdeed, possessed its religious importance; but the religious point of view was not predominant over, but subordinate to, the secular.

The Mishna regarded as the greatest virtue the study of the doctrines of Judaism and the

knowledge of the Law or of the Halachas (Talmud Torah). Occupation in these subjects possessed peculiar merit or justification (Zechut Torah); it protected and advanced a person here and hereafter. "He who is acquainted with the Bible and tradition, and is careful of his behavior, will not easily fall into sin." The learning, appropriation, retention, and theoretical comprehension and advancement of the existing principles of religion—that is to say, the conservation and furtherance of Judaism in the path of orthodoxy—gave the direction to the ideas and tendencies of that period. For this reason, he who is learned in the Law holds a very high rank, and although he be a bastard, takes precedence of a high priest who is ignorant of it. A disciple must honor his teacher even more than his father, or in case of conflict in his duty to one or the other, must first fulfil his duty to the former; for a wise teacher brings man to life in the world to come. It is incumbent on a father to teach his son the Torah, or to provide for his instruction in it. The Mishna does not decide the question as to whether a father ought to instruct his daughters in the Torah, but advances two opposite views on this subject: one advocated by Ben-Azai, who is in favor of the practice, or at least considers it permissible; the other, defended by the austere Eleazar ben Hyrcanus, who condemns it; "to initiate one's daughters in the Torah is as good as to initiate them in prostitution." This latter theory, which finally prevailed, exercised a most pernicious influence in after-times; for while every community was careful to provide elementary and advanced schools for its boys, the girls were systematically kept in complete ignorance. 474

But although great weight was laid by the Mishnaic code on the exact observance of the letter of the Law, a something higher than this observance of the Law was recognized as piety; namely, the possession of a certain elevation of mind, of which the boundaries were far more widely extended than those of the Law. A conscientious man should keep his word in questions relating to property, although he be not bound thereto by the terms of the written law. He who pays his debt in the year of release, although not under a legal obligation to do so; he who pays to the heirs of a proselyte the debt due to the latter, without being legally compelled to satisfy their claim; and generally he who abides by his word—these are the men in whom the sages delight. It is true that there are certain prescribed forms of prayer, but it is lawful, nevertheless, to pray in any language; the principal thing is to pray with devotion and earnestness. Men ought to thank Heaven for bad fortune as well as for good. The Mishna displays altogether a tendency to emphasize the spiritual value of religion. The sounding of the cornet on the New Year, the Festivals, and the Atonement Day of the year of Jubilee, as prescribed by the Law, ought not to remain an outward, material deed, but ought rather to create a certain frame of mind which raises the soul to God. As illustrations of this view the following instances are cited: it was not the fact of Moses lifting up his hands which gave the Israelites the victory over Amalek, nor the erection of a brazen serpent in the wilderness which cured them of the bites of the scorpions, but the turning of their hearts to God. But this tendency of the Mishna remains only a tendency, and received no wide development; more confidence is placed in an obligatory law than in a conscience which creates its own standard. 475

Besides the juridical feature, and perhaps as a consequence of it, the Mishna possesses another peculiarity which is more formal than essential; it is characterized by a desire to devise and group together all possible sorts of cases, however remote they may be, in order to apply the most dissimilar laws to their decision (a species of casuistry). This peculiarity, which in after-times exerted an influence at once favorable and prejudicial to advancement, and which was conducive at the same time both to logical acuteness and to sophistry, seems to have first made its appearance in the public academies of Jabne and Usha, and in the numerous other schools. It was probably the ingenious Meïr and his disciples who most contributed to its cultivation. As if it were not sufficient to consider and decide such cases as really occurred, according to the already existing laws and principles of the Pentateuch and tradition, teachers occupied themselves in depicting fantastic and intricate situations, simply to show, for example, that it was occasionally possible for several laws to apply to a single act. The Mishna admitted all these hypothetical cases constructed by the schools, and perhaps added to their number. This casuistic peculiarity was especially employed in order to give a clear idea of certain cases where cumulative punishments or atonements were incurred. 476

It is noteworthy that the Mishnaic compilation contains no Halachas of a character hostile to the Jewish professors of Christianity; it does not touch on this subject in any place, not even declaring whether it is allowed or prohibited to eat meat cooked by the Minæans. It appears that the danger with which Judaism had been threatened by the Jewish Christians, since the destruction of the Temple until the Bar-Cochba war, had already been averted, and that danger was now no longer to be dreaded. On the other hand, and in order to avoid the least appearance of participation in idolatry, the Mishna contains numerous laws directed against heathenism and intercourse with the heathens. The teachers of Christianity immediately experienced the want of some such protective laws for the preservation of the Christian communities, and Tertullian, one of the Fathers of the Church (a younger contemporary of Judah the Patriarch, and the first Christian author who wrote in Latin), expressed a desire that the Christians should be kept apart from the heathens just as strictly as the Jews were by the prescriptions of the Mishna; the reason for this was that heathenism had continued to make its way into Palestine since the Bar-Cochba war, and had gained possession not only of coast towns, but even of inland places. It was necessary, therefore, to regulate the conduct of the people accordingly. The Mishna devotes a special treatise (Aboda Zara) to this subject; it prohibits the intercourse with heathens for three days before their principal public festivals, such as the kalends of January, the Saturnalia, the anniversary of the accession or the death of the emperor. It also commands the people not to frequent such of the shops of the heathens as are decorated with laurel wreaths. The Jews are forbidden to sell ornaments or other objects for the use of idols to the heathens, or to let to them 477

any houses in Palestine, because they would be desecrated by the introduction of images of idols. On account of the hatred entertained against them by the heathen inhabitants of Palestine, the Jews are further commanded not to allow themselves to be attended during any illness by the heathens, or even to allow their beards to be shaved by the latter; and in particular are ordered not to remain alone with them in any lonely spot, lest they should be secretly murdered by them. The Roman heathens having introduced the barbarous custom of setting men to fight with wild beasts, the Mishna interdicts the sale to them by the Jews of bears, lions, and all other animals by which any injury can be caused, and further prohibits the Jews from building their basilica, places of execution, or stadia, because they serve to promote the shedding of innocent blood. In order not to pander to the unnatural vices (sodomy) of the heathens, the Jews are commanded not to commit any animals to their charge; the Mishna even forbids the Jewish midwives or nurses to offer their services to the heathen women, because they would thereby help to bring into the world a new child of idolatry. All enjoyment derived from objects of reverence to the 478
idolaters is interdicted, and the Jews are not even allowed to sit in the shade of an image of an idol, and are particularly forbidden to drink of the wine of which a portion has been, or may have been, offered by a heathen to his gods. Most of the laws relative to the separation of the Jews from the heathen world, introduced with great zeal and precipitancy shortly before the destruction of the Temple, are retained and extended by the Mishna. Notwithstanding all its hatred of the heathens generally, and especially those in Palestine (the Mishna paid but little attention to foreign countries), the Jewish legislation was unable to entirely belie the distinctive trait of Judaism, its universal love of mankind. Together with these hostile laws, there was also adopted one which was favorable to the heathens, due probably to the initiative of Rabban Gamaliel I: their poor were given access to the fields, and possessed, equally with the Jews, the right of gleaning. A special treatise, called "The Sayings of the Fathers" (Pirke Aboth), is devoted to the teachings of a higher morality, and contains the maxims and short sentences of the sopheric teachers and sages from the earliest times. These laws of morality, however, are concealed, and, as it were, overgrown by a mass of law relating to the ritual.

With the completion of the Mishna and the almost equally important Boraïtas, the Tanaites had accomplished their task of imparting a settled form and lasting shape to the hitherto uncertain and transitory matter of tradition; they had called it to life, and presented it to the Jewish nation as common property. After completing their task with noble assiduity, untiring zeal, and unexampled self-denial, they disappeared from the scene, leaving to future generations the result of their efforts, from which to receive their education and imbibe a love of their religion and nationality.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

THE FIRST AMORAIM.

Judah II.—Friendliness of Alexander Severus towards the Jews—Joshua ben Levi—Hillel instructs Origen in Hebrew—The *Hexapla*—The Palestinean Amoraim—Chanina—Jochanan—Simon ben Lakish—Joshua, the Hero of Fable—Simlai, the Philosophical Agadist—Porphyry comments on the Book of Daniel.

219–280 C. E.

After the extinction of the Tanaites and the death of the younger contemporaries of the compiler of the Mishna and of his son Gamaliel III, a happier period commenced: happy abroad by reason of the favorable political situation brought about by the friendly attitude assumed towards the Jews by one of the best of the Roman emperors; happy at home through the agency of a series of vigorous-minded men, who imbued the ancient customs and manners with a new and healthy spirit. The most prominent men and the lights of this epoch were: in Judæa, the Patriarch Judah II, son of Gamaliel; Jochanan, the principal authority of these times; and Simon b. Lakish, the Teacher, robust of hand and brain; and in Babylonia, Abba-Areka and Samuel. These men were the pioneers of a new movement, connected, it is true, with the labors of the Tanaites, inasmuch as it was grounded upon their work, but yet went beyond it in range. A sketch of the leading personalities of this period will not perhaps be considered superfluous.

But little is known of the early life and training of Judah the Patriarch. His youth was passed in a time when religious strictness had acquired so predominant an importance, that the family of the Patriarch himself was open to censure in case any of its members acted contrary to 480
prescribed law. Judah was walking one Sabbath-day, with his brother Hillel, in Biri, wearing a pair of shoes decorated with golden buckles, which seems to have been prohibited in that town. They were sharply censured by the populace on this account, and, not daring to explain that the act was not contrary to the Law, they were obliged to take off their shoes and give them to their slaves. On another occasion, when the two sons of the Patriarch were one day bathing together in Kabul, the people called out to them "that in their city it was not lawful for two brothers to bathe together." When Judah succeeded his father in the office of Patriarch (about 225) he transferred the seat of this dignity from Sepphoris to Tiberias, and this city, formerly avoided on account of its uncleanliness, was thus invested by him with considerable importance; it outlived all the other cities of Judæa, however rich in memories, and was the last retreat of the ancient traditions. The announcement of the appearance of the new moon, which on account of a certain preference shown to the south of Judæa had formerly been made there, was now ordered by Judah to be made at Tiberias. The south of Palestine, formerly the principal scene of historical events, was henceforward bereft of its supremacy, and was obliged to abandon its rôle to the once-despised Galilee. Like his grandfather, Judah II was held in great reverence by his contemporaries, and was also called simply Rabbi or Rabbenu. He likewise was often severely censured, but accepted the blame more patiently than his ancestor.

It was probably the second Judah, as the Jewish narratives positively assert, that was beloved by a Roman emperor, from whom he received numerous marks of favor. Accident, which in the guise of the Prætorian guards generally gave the casting vote at the election of the emperor, 481
elevated Alexander Severus (222–235), an unknown Syrian youth in his seventeenth year, to the position of ruler of the world. In public, he gave evidence of a more pronounced friendliness to Judaism than any of his predecessors. In his private apartment there was placed, next to the representations of Orpheus and Christ, a picture of Abraham. This emperor was so deeply impressed with the truth of the golden rule of pure philanthropy, "Do not unto others what thou wouldst not they should do unto you" (esteemed as the essence of the whole Jewish religion before the time of Jesus), that it was always on his lips, and was placed by him as a motto on the imperial palace and the public buildings, and proclaimed by a herald to the soldiers whenever he desired to reprimand them for attacks on the property of foreigners. On all occasions he set up the Jews and Christians as patterns to the depraved Romans, and was desirous of seeing the highest dignities of the state awarded upon the same principles as those which governed the admission of Jewish and Christian religious leaders to ordination. He was well disposed towards the Christians, but seems to have possessed a greater predilection for the Jews and Judaism. The inhabitants of Antioch and Alexandria, whose frivolous character caused them to be better pleased with immoral emperors than with an austere ruler like Alexander Severus, derided him in epigrams, and gave him the nicknames of the "Syrian Head of the Synagogue" (Archisynagogus, that is, Rabbi) and "High Priest." The emperor's mother, Mammæa, however, had a preference for Christianity, and was a protectress of Origen, one of the Fathers of the Church. For these reasons, the Patriarch Judah possessed during this period an almost royal authority, and was
even able to exercise anew criminal jurisdiction; not quite openly, it is true, but still with the 482
prior knowledge of the emperor. The latter seems to have made the acquaintance of the Jewish Patriarch during his frequent visits to Antioch on the occasion of his campaign in Persia (231–234). Judah probably prevailed upon him to protect, or rather to revive, the privileges of the Jews. Among these was the right of again entering the city of Jerusalem, and of filling the office of judge, both of which rights had been denied to them by Hadrian. Jewish fable relates many things concerning the sincere attachment of the Emperor Severus (Asverus), son of Antoninus, or simply Antoninus, to Judaism and the Jews. But although much of this is doubtless exaggerated and embellished, the Talmud contains many narratives concerning the relations existing between

the Patriarch and the Emperor which are certainly historical. Thus it is related of him that he presented a golden candlestick to a synagogue (probably that of Tiberias), and granted the Patriarch a field in the district of Gaulanitis, most likely for the support of the disciples.

It is quite in the spirit of this emperor of Syrian origin, prepossessed as he was in favor of foreign religions, that he should have requested the Patriarch, as the story runs, to recommend to him a learned man to aid him in building an altar on the model of that in the Jewish Temple, and in the preparation of incense according to the rules of the Jewish code, for which purpose Judah is said to have recommended his intimate friend Romanus. The thirteen years during which the Roman world submitted to the rule of a good emperor were a happy time for the Jewish nation, for the sovereign conferred many marks of favor upon this people, lately despised and persecuted. The position of the Jews was indeed so favorable that the opinion was commonly expressed that Daniel, who had cast a prophetic glance on the succession of the empires of the 483
world, had predicted this state of things in the words: "When they (the Jews) succumb, some small help will still be extended to them," which were considered to refer to Severus Antoninus, who manifested a love for the Jews. This favorable situation contributed towards the substitution of a more friendly spirit in place of the variance with and profound dislike of the Romans which had prevailed for centuries.

The Christians complained at this time that the Jews were much more favorably disposed towards the heathens than towards themselves, although possessing much more in common with themselves than with the heathens. The barrier erected by the Jews, in consequence of their hatred of the Romans, was partly overthrown, and the rigor of the separation of the two nations was relaxed. The family of the Patriarch were permitted, on account of their association with the highest dignitaries of the state, to dress their hair according to the Roman fashion, to learn Greek, and to do various other things which had formerly been prohibited. The life of the Jews assumed altogether a happier aspect: they began to decorate their rooms with paintings, and religious scrupulousness took no exception.

To the influence exercised by these friendly relations with the rulers must probably also be ascribed the fact that the Patriarch abolished, or intended to abolish, many of the stricter rules which had formerly been carried out with the utmost severity. In the stormy days of the first rebellion against the Romans, when the wave of racial hatred ran high between Jews and Græco-Roman heathens, a Synod, in order to put a stop to all intercourse with the heathens, had forbidden the Jews to purchase or make use of their oil and various other articles of food. In Palestine, this restraint did not fall heavily on the Jewish inhabitants, as the land produced all that was necessary to satisfy the daily wants of the people, and the oil exported from Galilee 484
afforded a sufficient supply to the neighboring countries. But the war of Hadrian devastated Judæa and deprived it of all its oil plantations; the daily need of oil thus gradually compelled this strict prohibition to be disregarded. But the legal permission was still wanting, and, although numbers had dispensed with it, there still remained many who complied strictly with the law, as yet unabolished. Judah II therefore used his best endeavors to obtain a majority favorable to the abrogation of this law, and prided himself greatly on accomplishing his purpose; it is probable that he had to sustain a severe conflict in order to gain his object. When Simlaï, the Patriarch's assessor, who was constantly traveling between Galilee and Babylon, brought the news that permission had been granted to the Jewish inhabitants of countries bordering on the Euphrates (who had always been restive under restraints imposed upon them) to make use of the oil of the heathens, this innovation appeared so daring to Abba-Areka (the principal Babylonian authority), that he refused to believe the report. Samuel, however, who desired to see the authority of the Patriarch generally recognized even in Babylon, compelled him to make use of this permission.

Another alleviation proposed by the Patriarch, according to which the onerous marriage with a deceased brother's widow was to be evaded in certain cases by a bill of divorce, to be given before death, was not agreed to by his College. He was also desirous of permitting the use of bread made by the heathens. Finally, he proposed to abolish the fast of the month of Ab, instituted in commemoration of so many catastrophes, according to some authors in totality, according to others in certain cases only. The contemporary teachers of the Law, however, were opposed to these alterations; but, on the other hand, they agreed with him in abolishing a mark 485
of affliction introduced during the period of adversity under Hadrian: henceforward it was allowable for brides to ride in state-litters on their wedding-day.

In spite of the reverence felt by the teachers of the Law for the Patriarch Judah, they were not blind to his weaknesses, and he was obliged to submit to numerous attacks on their part. The Patriarchate had acquired in his hands an almost royal power, and was even entitled to a body-guard, ready to enforce the commands of the Patriarch. This power, although not abused by Judah, was all the more displeasing to the teachers of the Law, since he, on his side, conferred no particular favors on the learned classes, but rather exerted himself to abolish the distinction between the learned and illiterate in all civil relations. He further subjected the teachers of the Law to a share of the communal burdens. Simeon ben-Lakish, one of those outspoken men who carry their love of truth even to the length of disrespect of persons, was especially opposed to this leveling policy, and gave vent to offensive sallies against the Patriarch. Once, in the lecture-hall, he put forward the proposition: That in case the Patriarch should render himself guilty of a crime, it would be necessary to sentence him, like any ordinary man, to the punishment of scourging. Upon this it was observed by Chaggai, that in such a case he would have to be absolutely deposed, and debarred from taking office again lest he should employ his power in revenging himself upon the authors of his disgrace. This discussion was manifestly an attack upon Judah's possession of extraordinary power. Angry at these remarks, and carried away by his

first impulse, he immediately despatched his Gothic slaves to seize the fault-finder; but Jochanan, the Principal of the school, succeeded eventually in appeasing his wrath. Once the Patriarch complained to Ben-Lakish of the rapacity of the Roman authorities, which prevailed for a 486
lengthened period in all the provinces of the Roman empire during the reign of anarchy which followed after the death of Alexander Severus. In most of the provinces there had arisen emperors, anti-emperors, and usurpers, who, during the short span of their reign, assumed the character of ruler of the world, and conducted themselves in the countries subject to their sway with true Roman rapacity. "Pray for me," said Judah to Ben-Lakish, "for the rule of the Romans is evil." To which the latter replied: "If thou take nothing, nothing will be taken from thee." This remark was probably intended as a rebuke for the covetousness of which it is impossible to acquit Judah.

The Patriarchs seem to have commenced about this time to draw a revenue from the communities. This had become a necessity, as the impoverishment of Palestine had followed in the wake of its heavy taxation. A great part of the pasture lands had fallen into the hands of the heathens dwelling in the country, to whom the Jewish proprietors had been obliged to sell. Through this impoverishment the means of maintaining the school-houses and the pupils were greatly diminished. The income of Judah, unlike that of his grandfather, proved insufficient for the purpose, and he was therefore obliged to open up new sources of income in order worthily to support the dignity of Patriarch. He sent messages abroad to make collections amongst the rich Jews. One of the most important teachers of the Law in Lydda, named Joshua ben Levi, made a special journey to Rome for this purpose. In Rome some wealthy Jews were known to live. These willingly contributed to the support of the institution which replaced the Synhedrion, and which was the last remnant of an independent state, and the representative of which was supposed to be descended from or connected with the royal house of David. It is related that the Jewish ship- 487
owners and merchants gave up the tenth part of their gains to the support of the disciples in the school of Tiberias. This grant was called the Patriarch's tax, and the mission-tax (Apostole), also crown money (aurum coronarium).

Meanwhile, however greatly Judah's avarice may have been blamed, he still stood high in the favor of the populace, by reason of the simplicity of his manners and attire, which caused his proud and almost royal dignity to be forgotten. He was accustomed to wear linen clothes, and to dispense with all etiquette in his reception of ceremonious visits, thereby calling down upon himself the reproaches of his friends, who expressed their opinion that a ruler ought to appear in magnificence, and to maintain an imposing demeanor.

How great a reverence was felt for Judah may be seen from the fact that, on his death, no less honors were paid to his body than had been shown to his grandfather, Judah I. In direct opposition to the Law, a descendant of Aaron was compelled to take charge of his corpse; it being alleged that it was permissible in this instance to lay aside the holy character of his priesthood.

Hillel II., the brother of the Patriarch, was possessed of great skill in the Agadic exposition of the Scriptures, and seems to have been a profoundly moral man. Among the many maxims said to have been uttered by him, the following is especially worthy of note:

> "Separate not thyself from the rest of the community; put not overmuch trust in thyself (in thy piety) before thy death; judge not thy neighbor until thou hast been placed in his position."

It was probably owing to Hillel's profound knowledge of the Scriptures that he was visited by Origen, the philosophical Father of the Church, who desired to consult him concerning certain difficult passages in the Bible. Origen called him the Patriarch Jullos.

The spirit of investigation awakened by the Fathers of the Church, Pantæus and Clemens of 488
Alexandria, in the Christian school of Alexandria, which sought to connect the Old and the New Testament, revived the necessity of an acquaintance with the Hebrew language, in order to explain by the help of the knowledge of the original text, the glaring contradictions existing in many places between the views of the Old Testament and the now inflexible dogmas of Christianity. It was Origen who felt most the need of this knowledge, and he was unremitting in his efforts to acquire the Hebrew tongue, and in his recommendations to others to study it. He regarded the Jews as his masters in the knowledge of Hebrew and the correct exegesis of the Scripture: he admitted having learnt from Jews the exact sense of various difficult passages in the Bible, during his long but intermittent residence in Judæa (from about 229 to 253). Being desirous of writing a Commentary on the Psalms, he took the trouble to have them explained to him by a Jew, according to the traditions. At that time the study of the Halachas had not yet superseded that of Biblical exegesis.

Besides Hillel and Simlaï there were other Jewish teachers well acquainted with the original text, who confuted the Christian teachers, and laughed at them for the absurdly childish arguments which they drew from their corrupt Greek translation, the Septuagint. They were especially diverted at the credulity of the Christians, by whom every apocryphal book was invested with the garb of antiquity. Such books as the histories of Tobias, of Judith, and of Susannah were admitted into the collection of the Holy writings, upon which loose foundation was erected the fragile fabric of their religion.

In order to protect the creed of the Church from this ridicule, Origen undertook the gigantic task of revising the Septuagint version, mutilated and crowded as it was with errors of all kinds. 489
His immediate object was to afford the Christian teachers an insight into the differences existing between the translation and the original text, and so better to enable them to conduct their

discussions with the Jews. To this end, he compared the translations of Akylas, Symmachos, Theodotion, and three others which had appeared in the meantime; and in order to allow of a convenient survey, he placed them in columns, the Hebrew text, with its pronunciation in Greek letters, figuring at the head. These parallel texts were known by the name of the Hexapla (sixfold). It was labor lost, however, to compare the wretched and intentionally corrupt Greek translation with the original Hebrew text. The Septuagint continued to exist in its mutilated form, and was even worse confounded by reason of Origen's industry, for many passages belonging to other translations were often accidentally introduced into its text.

The activity of the Palestinean teachers was directed to another object; their cares were bestowed neither on the study of the Bible nor on the establishing of the doctrines of faith; both these subjects lay outside their sphere of activity. Their chief energies were devoted to the study of the oral law in its definite form, the Mishna. This work had been composed in a brief and laconic style, and, besides, it contained many passages which were incomprehensible, the words or subject-matter having passed out of everyday use. For these reasons the comprehension of the Mishna required peculiar study and erudition. The principals of the schools applied themselves, in the first place, to the elucidation of the terse and frequently obscure text of the Mishna. From this aspect of their labors they received the name of Amoraim (Amoraï, Expounder). But far from 490
being satisfied with this arid work, or with remaining contentedly in this dependence, they gradually emancipated themselves, made new departures, and believing in good faith that they were standing on the ground of the Mishna, went far beyond its boundaries. As the Tanaites had treated the text of the Bible, so also did the Amoraim treat that of the second code; they dissected it, and resolved it into its constituent parts, so that under their hand it was dissipated, becoming new matter and acquiring a new form.

The first generation of the Amoraim, following immediately upon the Tanaites and semi-Tanaites, constitutes in many points a parallel with the second generation of the Tanaites. Like the latter it consisted of a series of talented teachers, who attained a great age, and whose labors were continued during half a century. Like the latter, again, it possessed different schools and systems, and was divided into various opinions concerning the explanation of the Law. But it does not afford the spectacle of violent controversies; for it already possessed a common and recognized formula, a settled standard, to which all authorities subordinated themselves. The oldest of the Amoraim was Chanina b. Chama, of Sepphoris (from about 180 to 260). He was descended from an ancient and noble family, and followed the profession of physician; the science of medicine, inborn in the Levites, being generally cultivated by teachers of the Law. The method of teaching adopted by him was very simple. He was an Amora in the fullest sense of the primitive meaning of the term; he expounded the Mishna or the Boraitas with the help of such comments only as had been handed down to him by tradition, without allowing himself to make any independent deductions. If new cases occurred which were not indicated in the Mishna, he did not decide them according to his own lights, but took counsel with learned colleagues, or 491
even with disciples, however obvious the decision may have been. Chanina occupied the same position among the Amoraim as Eleazar b. Hyrcanus among the Tanaites; he was entirely receptive, never creative. This point of view, however, according to which the Mishna was regarded as dead stock, was not acceptable to the younger and more zealous men; Chanina was therefore deserted, even by his own disciples, who proceeded to found new academies.

Notwithstanding this, Chanina was regarded with great veneration both by Jews and Romans, on account of his piety. Once, when he went, with Joshua b. Levi, a younger contemporary, to visit the Proconsul (Anthypatos), in Cæsarea, the latter rose respectfully at their approach, replying to his friends, who expressed astonishment at his behavior, that "they appeared to him like angels." He reproved more boldly and fearlessly than any other teacher, the deeply-rooted faults of his community, and tried to rid it of that erroneous belief which willingly accepts the most incredible miracles, in order to be relieved of all responsibility. Chanina's unsparing utterances concerning the people of Sepphoris present at the same time a faithful picture of the customs of the period. On one occasion Sepphoris and the surrounding districts had been so devastated by the plague that many of the inhabitants of all parts of the town had been carried off by it; the only quarter not visited by it was that in which Chanina resided. The men of Sepphoris wished to make him responsible for this plague, on the ground that he had not performed any miracle to avert it; whereupon he replied: "In the time of Moses there was only one Zimri (who debauched a heathen woman), and yet twenty-four thousand fell by the plague; ye, however, possess many Zimris, and complain notwithstanding." Another time, Judæa was visited by a continued drought and lack of rain. Chanina had arranged the prescribed fasts and 492
offered up public prayers, yet the much desired rains did not set in; whereupon the people complained anew, and referred to Joshua b. Levi, the envoy to Rome, whose prayers for rain for the south of Judæa had been crowned with success. On the next opportunity Chanina sent for Joshua from the south, and united with him in prayer, but again without success. Seizing upon this occasion, he reprimanded his fellow-countrymen for their superstitious belief in the power of a human being to work miracles; "Thus do ye see," exclaimed he, "that it is neither Joshua who causes rain, nor Chanina who hinders it; the inhabitants of Lydda are kind-hearted and humble, therefore heaven sends them rain; ye, however, are hard-hearted and callous, and therefore heaven withholds rain from you." Chanina retained his modesty and self-denial all through his life, and justly recognizing the merits of others, rejoiced in his later years over the fame of those who had surpassed him. He attained an extreme old age, and saw three Patriarchs—the elder Judah, his teacher; Gamaliel, Judah's son, and Judah II.

In opposition to the conservative Chanina stands Jochanan bar Napacha (born 199, died 279). Deprived of both father and mother, who died in his early youth, he used to say in later life, that

he ought to be thankful for this misfortune, as he would not have been able to fulfil the strict duties of filial love in the manner required by the Law. He was so handsome of figure that the Talmudical source, usually so sober, involuntarily becomes poetical in trying to describe his beauty: "Let him who desires to form an idea of Jochanan's beauty take a newly-wrought silver goblet, fill it with ruddy garnets, crown its brim with a wreath of red roses, and place it between light and shadow; its peculiar reflection of light will then represent the glory of Jochanan's dazzling beauty." This beauty, however, partook more of a feminine character, for he possessed no beard, the expression of manly dignity. His eyebrows were also so long as to overshadow his eyes. When he was grown up he attended the school of the elder Judah, but admitted that he had understood but little of the profound Halachic discussion, by reason of his youth. As he was not rich, possessing only a small plot of land, he applied himself to business, in conjunction with Ilpha, a fellow-disciple, when a warning was given to him to devote his whole energies to the study of the Law, in which it was asserted that he would acquire great distinction. For this reason he abandoned his trade, and again followed the lectures of celebrated teachers of the Law. He sold his little plot of ground in order to obtain the wherewithal to study, exhibiting no concern with regard to any provision for his old age. It seems, however, that later on he was maintained at the expense of the Patriarch, Judah. Jochanan frequented the company of the teachers of various schools, in order to acquire a diversified knowledge of the subject-matter of the Law. He became the principal assistant of the Patriarch, Judah II, and was the most productive Amora of his time. Through the influence of a large body of disciples, his sayings form a considerable element of the Talmud. His method of teaching was to search deeply into the meaning of the Mishna, to subject every paragraph to severe analysis, and to compare each maxim with the others; he arrived by these means at the inference that the Mishna was not possessed throughout of legal force. He also laid down certain rules concerning the manner of arriving at a definite decision in those cases where two or more Tanaites were of different opinions.

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Through his influence Tiberias, with its mild air, its fertility and its curative waters, became the meeting-place of a numerous body of disciples, who flocked to him from far and wide. His academy was even attended by mature and finished scholars from Babylon, although the newly-founded schools of that country possessed excellent masters. Over a hundred Amoraim are known who accepted Jochanan's decisions as of full legal force, and who taught them in their schools.

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An intimate friend of the Patriarch, he supported him in his endeavors to modify certain ancient usages. Jochanan was himself not very particular on this head, and by far less strict than the Babylonian school, which came into existence during his lifetime. In opposition to the existing custom, he permitted the acquirement of Greek: by men, because they were thereby enabled to protect themselves against traitors, and by women, because the Greek language was an ornament to the sex. He entertained great esteem for Greek civilization in general, and ranked it on an equality with Judaism. He expressed himself beautifully on this subject: "For that Shem and Japhet, the two sons of Noah, did cover their father's nakedness with a mantle, Shem (symbol of Judaism) hath obtained a shawl with fringes (Talith), Japhet (the type of Greek civilization) the philosopher's mantle (Pallium)." It was Jochanan who permitted the innovation of decorating rooms with paintings. He was never able to reconcile himself to the Roman rule, and was unsparing in his denunciation of the insolent arrogance and heartless violence of the authorities. He regarded as symbolical of the Roman Empire, the fourth beast in Daniel's vision of the four empires of the world, which was a perennial mine of discovery for the Biblical exegete, and was even more diligently explored by the Christians than by the Jews. The small horn which grew out of the fourth beast represents, according to his explanation, wicked Rome, which annihilated all previous empires; the eyes resembling human eyes, which were visible in this horn, indicate Rome's envious glances at the wealth of others. If any one is rich, the Romans immediately elevate him to the office of president of the council charged with the supply of provisions, or make him a member of the municipal senate, in order that his fortune may be answerable for everything. Another striking maxim of this sort uttered by Jochanan was the following: "If thou art proposed as a member of the senate, choose rather as thy dwelling the desert of the Jordan." He permitted people, in exceptional instances, to emigrate from Judæa, in order to escape from the heavy burden of the municipal offices.

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Jochanan's character was marked by a profound morality; the slave who waited upon him was allowed to partake of all the dishes prepared for his master. He had the misfortune to lose his ten sons; the unfortunate father carried about with him a small bone of his last son, in order to console all such as had to bewail a similar disaster, by the relation of his extraordinary misfortune. "Behold all that now remains of the last of my ten sons," he was wont to explain to them. A daughter alone was left to Jochanan; thus, an orphan from his birth, he died almost childless. He is said to have had periods of insanity in his extreme old age, occasioned by grief at the death of his friend and brother-in-law, Ben-Lakish, of which he believed himself to be the cause.

Simeon Ben-Lakish, Jochanan's contemporary friend, brother-in-law and opponent, was in many ways his counterpart, and was altogether a peculiar personage, in whom were united the most opposite qualities; rough physical strength was coupled with tenderness of sentiment and acuteness of mind. Resh-Lakish, for such was his abbreviated name, seems to have been born at Bostra, the capital of the Saracens, about the year 200, and to have died in 275. As Jochanan's constant comrade, he had seen the Patriarch Judah I. in his youth, and had been brought up in the school of his successors. The sources of the Talmud are never tired of dilating on his gigantic strength and enormous size. He once engaged himself at the Circus in the capacity of slaughterer of wild beasts, his duty being to protect the spectators of these highly popular combats from the

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fury of the animals. Ben-Lakish probably only chose this low and dangerous occupation out of necessity. Tradition is at some pains to reconcile and to transform into a beautiful picture the glaring contrasts existing in Resh-Lakish, his rude strength and his study of the Law. But his scrupulous integrity is even more renowned than his enormous physical strength. It is related that he used to avoid the company of persons of whose honesty he was not fully convinced, for which reason unlimited credit was usually accorded to all whom Ben-Lakish honored with his society, without any further inquiry. His earnest and gloomy countenance was never brightened by a smile, for he considered cheerfulness to be frivolous, so long as the holy people were subject to the power of the heathens. We have already noticed his love of truth and his candor, which he carried almost to insult in his animadversions on the abuses of the Patriarch. In Biblical exegesis he adopted the method of finding ingenious explanations, in which study he surpassed his older comrade and brother-in-law. "When he considered Halachic questions," says a source of the Talmud, "it was as though he were grinding the mountains against one another." Ben-Lakish possessed a certain originality in the study of the Agada, and advanced peculiar views, which were only estimated at their proper worth in later times. It was often questioned in the schools at what period the sufferings of Job had occurred, the other circumstances of this remarkable 497
drama were also debated, and the most contrary views found expression. Resh-Lakish seems to have come to an accurate conclusion in advancing the opinion that Job had existed at no period, that he had never lived, and was simply an ingenious moral creation (Mashal). This view appeared very strange to his contemporaries, who were unable to comprehend such a conception. The names of the angels were regarded by Ben-Lakish as not having been originally Jewish, but as being a foreign element transplanted into Judaism, which had, in fact, been brought by the Jewish nation from Persia. He was wont to contradict the assertions of those who extolled the past at the expense of the present, who declared hyperbolically "that a nail of the ancients was worth more than the whole body of their descendants"; or, in another form, "that if the ancients were angels, we, on the contrary, are only asses"; he used to say that the existing generation possessed greater merit, for the reason that although heavily oppressed, they still pursued the study of the Law. Although a friend of Jochanan from his youth, and drawn still closer to him by the ties of family alliance, Ben-Lakish was nevertheless at variance with him during his last years.

The name of Joshua ben-Levi, who formed, with Jochanan and Ben-Lakish, the triumvirate of the Palestinian Amoraim, is more renowned in the world of legend than in history, where, indeed, but little is related of him. The son of Levi ben-Sissi, he conducted a school at Lydda, in the south of Judæa. It is true that the inhabitants of Lydda were not in over-good repute with the Galileans, who pronounced them proud and superficial. But Joshua's reputation in no way suffered from this circumstance, and his authority was greatly respected. To his opinions on the Halachas was accorded for the most part the force of law, even in those cases where the other two members of 498
the triumvirate entertained different views. Joshua himself admits, however, that he forgot many traditions during the period in which he was occupied with the organization of the communities of Southern Judæa. The situation of the communities of this district had, in fact, been so unsettled ever since the catastrophe in the time of Hadrian, that Jochanan and Jonathan were obliged to journey thither in order to restore peace and order. Joshua also on one occasion visited Rome, in the capacity of collector of revenues for the Patriarch. He had there an opportunity of observing a fact which exhibited in strong relief the contrasts existing in the capital of the world. He saw a statue enveloped in drapery, in order to protect it against heat and cold, while near by sat a beggar who had hardly a rag to cover his nakedness. He is said to have expected the Messiah to appear in the capital of the world, where he supposed that he existed in the guise of a servant, waiting among the beggars and cripples at the gate, and expecting every moment to be called upon to effect the deliverance of Israel. According to the legend, Joshua ben-Levi was regarded as one of those choice spirits who were admitted to the most intimate intercourse with the prophet Elijah, and over whom death itself was obliged to relinquish its power. He wrested the sword from the angel of death, went to Heaven alive, measured the expanse of the Heavens, of Paradise, and of Hell, and forwarded the results of his investigation to Gamaliel through the medium of the destroying angel himself, who was obliged to submit to his orders.

An original path in the explanation of the Agada was struck out by Simlaï; he it was who first considered this collection worthy of profounder study. Born at Lydda, he had quitted this desolate region, and had settled down at Nahardea, where the new school of the Babylonian Amoraim was first coming to its prime. He entertained the most friendly relations with the 499
Patriarch Judah II. He possessed but small weight in questions relating to the study of the Law, and his Halachic attainments were not esteemed in Palestine. He was the first to collect together all the commands contained in the Jewish Law, numbering 613, of which 365 are prohibitions, and 248 affirmative precepts. David, according to Simlaï, reduced these 613 commands to the following eleven virtues: honesty, justice, truthfulness, abhorrence of calumny, of malice and of injuring one's neighbor, despising the wicked, reverence of the worthy, sanctity of oaths, unselfish lending without interest, and forbearance from bribery. Isaiah summed them up in six, as follows: to be just in our conduct, honest in our speech, to despise self-interest, to keep our hand from bribery, our ear from wicked insinuations, and our eye from base desires. The Prophet Micah reduced the commands of the Law to three leading principles: the exercise of justice, love of charity, and humility; while the second Isaiah brought them down to two, which are, to cherish justice and to exercise charity. Finally, the Prophet Habakkuk expressed them all in a single formula: "The just man lives by his faith." This was the first attempt to reduce the whole Law of Israel to principles. A beautiful parable, in which Simlaï indicates the part played by every nation in the history of the world, affords evidence both of the wide extent of his views and of his poetical talent.

Possessed of a profound knowledge of the Scripture, and gifted with an elevated mind, Simlaï was especially qualified to enter into discussion with the Fathers of the Church, and to shake the arguments which they drew from the Old Testament in support of the dogmas of Christianity. In these discussions Simlaï gave evidence of a sound exegesis, free from misinterpretations. During the time of the first generation of Amoraim, Christianity had entered upon a new stage; in 500
opposition to the tendency of the primitive Christians (Ebionites and Nazarenes), a universal Catholic Church had come into existence, whose fundamental doctrines (dogmas), collected from all quarters, some Pauline, others anti-Pauline, others heathen, were generally assented to by the majority of Christians. The various sects of primitive Christians and Gnostics were vanquished, being either embodied in the incorporated Catholic Church or rejected as heretical. This creation of a Catholic Church and the unification of the Christian religion, accomplished in the midst of all this diversity and schism, were largely brought about by the Bishops of Rome. These arrogated to themselves, on the strength of their seat in the capital of the world, the supremacy over all the other bishops and patriarchs, expelled them from the community for unorthodox opinions (as in the case of the discussion concerning the celebration of the Passover), and gradually obtained recognition as chief-bishops and Popes. After the completion of this work the spirit of research also made its appearance among the Christians, and the traditions of the Church were subjected to a thorough investigation.

New dogmas had made their appearance, which the authorities sought to establish and secure. The rigid doctrine of the Unity of God, derived by Christianity from the parent religion, had in course of time, and in proportion as the new Church glorified the Messiahship of Jesus, given rise to a doctrine of duality: Father and Son, or the Creator of the World, and the Logos. To these was soon added a third. The primitive Jewish view of the inspiration by God of the Prophets and other pious persons, which was, in this signification, characterized as holy inspiration (Ruach-ha-Kodesh), crystallized in Christianity into the dogma of the Holy Ghost considered as a person, and regarded as an equality with God and Christ and as having originally co-existed with 501
them. Without being aware of the fact, Christianity, which considered itself a truly spiritual and refined Judaism, had adopted an entirely different idea of God, in fact, a sort of tritheism. The more the Christian dogma of the Trinity was at variance with the very essence of Judaism, the more trouble was taken to establish that it was supported by the Old Testament, in order to give it thus the stamp of antiquity. This proof, however, was not to be furnished by straightforward means, and thus the Fathers of the Church of the Palestinean and Alexandrian schools, being acquainted with Hebrew, were obliged to take refuge in all sorts of allegorical interpretations. Wherever the Scriptures contained several denominations for God, they professed to see an indication of the Trinity in the letter of the text itself. Even the simple opening words of the Pentateuch, "In the beginning God created heaven and earth," were interpreted by this Christology in proof of Christ's co-operation in the creation of the world; for "the beginning" was interpreted to mean "wisdom," or the "Word" (Logos), being synonymous with Christ, and this sentence was thus found to contain the profound secret that "God created the world in Christ"! As long as the leading spirits of Christianity remained ignorant of the Hebrew sources, they were not in a position to hold any serious conference on matters of religion. It was only when the Fathers of the Church applied themselves, like Origen, to the acquirement of a clearer Hebrew text, that polemical discussions on Christological themes became more frequent.

Simlaï, in particular, defended the doctrine of the unity of God against the Christian dogma of the Trinity, and adduced the proofs for his contention with consummate skill. His opponent in this theoretical dispute was perhaps Origen, who was for a long time a resident in Palestine. By the help of a sober method of interpretation Simlaï established the fact that all the passages of the 502
Holy Scripture which appear to afford an argument in support of the Trinity, in reality bring out and emphasize so strongly the unity of God, that any misconception appears impossible. Jew and Christian who, like quarrelsome brothers, had cherished feelings of animosity to each other during the time they had lived under one roof, now contented themselves with carrying on religious controversies.

The attacks upon Christianity during this period had the effect of producing a certain acquaintance with Jewish literature even in the heathens, who turned it to account in their efforts to restrain the growth of Christianity. In Daniel, the Christian dogmatists had discovered a Sibylline book, with vague insinuations and mystic numbers, which they contended contained prophecies relating to the Christian economy and to the appearance of Christ on the Day of Judgment. In opposition to these views the heathen philosopher Porphyry wrote a polemical commentary on the book of Daniel, which is certainly the only Biblical commentary composed by a heathen. This neo-Platonist, who was possessed of moderate but mystic views, bore the oriental name of Malchus, and was a native of Batanea, formerly a Jewish province. He asserted in his commentary that the book of Daniel is the work of an author who lived during the time of the persecution of Judaism and the Jews by the Syrian monarch, Antiochus Epiphanes, and that the ambiguous expressions in which it abounds are only allusions to that period, and in nowise prophecies, still less oracular proofs of the facts of Christianity.

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CHAPTER XIX.

THE JEWS OF THE PARTHIAN EMPIRE.

Increasing importance of the Jewish Community in Babylonia—The Prince of the Captivity—The Babylonian Amoraim—Abba Areka (Rab) and his royal friend Artaban—Samuel and King Shabur—Important Political Changes under the Neo-Persians—Anarchy in Rome—Zenobia and the Jews.

219–279 C. E.

During the Patriarchate of Judah II. many important events occurred in the Jewish community of Babylonia, which contributed to place that country in the foreground of Jewish history. After the loss of their mother, the children of Israel had found a second in Babylonia, and had never yet experienced a stepmother's treatment at her hands. Babylonia, the Italy of the East, whose capital had in ancient times, like Rome, first been the ruler of the world, and then the point of attack of uncivilized tribes in their migrations; whose name still exercises a certain magic in the distance, even after its fall; Babylonia, which had already been the temporary abode of the Jewish race, now became for a long period the permanent scene of Jewish activity. Judæa, on the other hand, gradually fell into the background. The peculiar formation of the country between the Euphrates and the Tigris facilitated the separation of Judaism from its primitive scene of action, and brought about the transplantation of Jewish genius into a foreign zone; by reason of the abundant opportunities of employment which the land afforded, similar to those to which they had been accustomed, it became a second fatherland for the homeless nation. The great number of the Jews who had inhabited this district time out of mind; their independence, which had 504
suffered no restraint at the hands of the Parthian and Persian rulers; the luster imparted to their situation by the possession of a political chief; their inherent, self-contained vitality, unweakened by suffering and petty annoyances, all these things contributed to invest their character with a peculiar quality and to further the evolution of new parts and tendencies. The sojourn in Babylonia imbued the Jewish mind with that particular form of keen intelligence which discovers an answer to every question, a solution to every riddle, and is discouraged by no difficulties. The Jews of this country acquired studious, plodding, energetic habits; the successive leaders and principals of the schools showed them the paths of profound wisdom and impressed on them the seal of elevated thought.

The word Babylonia, as used in Jewish history, is capable of a broad and a narrow interpretation, and possesses, in fact, three different meanings. In the broadest sense in which it occurs it includes the whole district between the Zagros mountains and the Euphrates, from the sources of the twin-river Tigris-Euphrates to the Persian Gulf. In a narrower sense it signifies the strip of land enclosed between the two rivers, where their beds begin to converge towards each other and at last actually unite, and where numerous canals formerly intersected the country and connected their streams: the southern part of Mesopotamia, the ancient province of Babel, and a portion of the former kingdom of Chaldæa. Babylonia, as understood in this narrow sense, was principally inhabited by Jews, and for this reason was also known by the name of "the land of Israel." Finally, in its most limited sense, Babylonia designates a small district on the eastern bank of the Euphrates, of which the center-point seems to have been the town of Pumbeditha. This district extends from Nahardea in the north to Sora in the south, a distance of twenty-two 505
parasangs (sixty-eight miles). The fixing of the boundaries of Jewish Babylonia is not a matter of indifference for history, as in former times it constituted a matter of conscience. Even in Judæa the natives of Babylonia of Jewish origin were admitted to possess the most unsullied purity of descent, and to have refrained from all intercourse with heathens, slaves, or persons born out of wedlock; Judæa was far behind Babylonia in this respect. An old proverb says: "In the matter of descent, the Jewish population of the (Roman) countries is to that of Judæa, as adulterated dough is to pure meal, but Judæa itself is only as dough when compared with Babylonia."

The Jewish province in Babylonia was divided into several smaller districts, each of which was known by the name of its capital. Thus there existed the districts of Nares, Sora, Pumbeditha, Nahardea, Nahar-Pakod, Machuza, and some others, all of them possessed of some characteristic, such as a peculiar dialect, or particular customs or manners, or even distinct weights and measures. Four of these towns were distinguished as prominent centers, each having in turn been at the head of the entire province. The first place was occupied by Nahardea (also called Naarda, of which name there were both a town and a district); this was a fortified city situated on the Euphrates and a canal called the Naraga, and was entirely inhabited by Jews; it lay on the boundary-line of Jewish Babylonia. During a certain period Nahardea was a Babylonian Jerusalem; here were situated, in the time of the continuance of the Temple, the treasure-chambers of the Babylonian communities for the reception of the gifts to the Temple, which it was customary to convey to Jerusalem under a strong escort. A few miles to the south of Nahardea lay Firuz-Shabur (afterwards Anbar), a fortified and thickly-populated town, and the most important in the country after Ctesiphon, the capital. 506

Near by lay Pumbeditha, situated on one of the numerous canals of the Euphrates, and adorned with many palaces. Pumbeditha was none the less a thoroughly Jewish town, with a Jewish congregation, and was regarded as the capital of Jewish Babylonia. Within its territory lay several smaller towns and fortified castles, which nestled in the shadow of the capital. The inhabitants of Pumbeditha were considered acute and cunning, and were even notorious for their deceit and dishonesty. "If a man of Pumbeditha accompany thee," said a proverb, "change thy

lodging."

Sixteen geographical miles (twenty-two parasangs) south of Pumbeditha was situated the town of Mata-Mechassia. It lay on the shore of a broad lake, Sora, which was in reality the Euphrates, widening out over the low-lying country; from its position on this lake the town also derived the name of Sora. It was inhabited by a mixed population of Jews and heathens. The region round Sora was one of the most fruitful parts of the whole country; by reason of its low situation it was inundated every year by the Euphrates and its tributaries and canals, and the overflow produced an Egyptian fertility. Pumbeditha was distinguished for its magnificent buildings and the cunning of its population, while Mata-Mechassia was noted for the poverty and honesty of its inhabitants. A proverb expresses this contrast in the following words: "It is better to live on the dunghills in Mechassia than in the palaces of Pumbeditha."

With these three towns of the Euphrates, Nahardea, Pumbeditha, and Mata-Mechassia, a fourth contested the supremacy: this was Machuza, situated on the Tigris, at a distance of hardly twelve miles from Ctesiphon, the capital of the Parthians. Machuza, also called Machuza-Malka, from the King's Canal (Nahar Malka) which flows in proximity to the Tigris, was situated on an 507
eminence, and was fortified with two strong walls and a moat. Close by stood a castle, called Akra di Coche, which served as a bulwark to the capital, Ctesiphon. In spite of the importance which Machuza and its castle must have possessed for the Parthian and Persian rulers, it was, nevertheless, entirely inhabited by Jews, and an Amora expressed his surprise that the gates of its fortress were not provided with the prescribed Mezuzas.

The most noted families of Machuza were descended from proselytes, for which reason their features differed from those of the remainder of the Jewish population of Babylonia. They are described as having been very frivolous, addicted to pleasure and good cheer, and more devoted to the affairs of this world than to those of the next; they were called on this account "candidates for hell." It is related of the women of Machuza that they indulged in pleasure and idleness. Once, when a Palestinean teacher of the Law brought from Judæa to Nahardea a Halacha allowing women to wear golden head-bands set with precious stones on the Sabbath, it was remarked that only four-and-twenty women in that town availed themselves of this permission, while in one quarter alone of Machuza there were eighteen who appeared with most costly head-bands. The proximity of Ctesiphon, and its wealth, had probably some influence on the luxurious propensities and the manners of the inhabitants of Machuza. This city also, which was the residence of the king, and the newly-built town of Ardashir, which lay close by, were thickly populated with Jews. The entire district of Babylonia, with its numerous canals, resembled an island, and its wonderful fertility made of the whole country one extensive garden. There was so great a multitude of date plantations that it used to be said proverbially of the Babylonians: "A basketful of dates for a 508
denar, and yet they do not apply themselves to the study of the Law!"

The occupations followed by the Babylonian Jews were agriculture, trades of all descriptions, and, what is of course natural in a country dependent on its canals for irrigation, the digging and cleaning of these artificial waterways; they also bred cattle, carried on commerce, undertook voyages, and cultivated certain of the fine arts.

The greatness of their numbers invested the Babylonian Jews with a certain amount of independence, and they seemed in this country almost as if in a land of their own. Their situation with regard to the rulers of the land was very favorable, as they were only called upon to pay a poll-tax (Charag) and a land-tax (Taska); there was at this period much vacant ground in the region of the Euphrates, and any one could take possession of a plot on becoming answerable for the land-tax in respect thereof. The Jews possessed their own political chief, who was called the Prince of the Captivity (Exilarch, Resh-Galutha); he was a dignitary of the Persian empire, and the fourth in rank from the king. His position with regard to the Persian kings was that of a feudatory. The Resh-Galuthas were, in fact, vassals of the Persian crown, but were simply confirmed, not chosen, by the monarch. Their badges of office were a silken cloak and a golden girdle; in later times they were surrounded by a princely luxuriousness, rode in a state carriage, possessed their own train of attendants, and an outrider to announce their approach. When they were received in solemn audience by the king, the royal attendants showed them the greatest respect, and they treated with the ruler on a footing of equality. According to the usage of Eastern princes, they were entertained with music at the moment of rising from or going to bed, 509
a custom which was severely censured by the strict teachers of the Law, on account of the mourning for Jerusalem.

The Princes of the Captivity were descendants of the house of David, for which reason the people gladly acknowledged their sway, since it honored itself and felt honored in its princes. An old chronicle gives the full details of their names and numbers. They traced back their descent as far as Zerubbabel, the grandson of the Jewish King Jojachin, who is supposed to have returned to Babel, and to have become the ancestor of a long line of descendants. It is not until the second century that a Resh-Galutha, by name Achiya, is visible through the deep obscurity of antiquity. Another, Mar-Huna, in the time of Judah I, commanded that his body should be brought to Palestine, in order to be buried in holy ground. From that time forward, however, the succession of the Princes of the Captivity can be traced in an unbroken chain till the eleventh century. They exercised considerable influence upon the development of Jewish history in Babylonia. Their relations with the people are indicated in a few occasional passages only.

The Resh-Galutha was the supreme judge of the Jewish communities, both in civil and in criminal cases; he either administered justice in person, or delegated his office to judges of his own nomination. The ordinary coercive measure employed in cases of disobedience was the bastinado, according to Eastern custom. The princes were also entrusted with the police of the

cities, the control of weights and measures, the inspection of canals, and the guardianship of public safety, to all of which various charges they appointed their own officers. It is nowhere indicated what revenues the Princes of the Captivity derived from the people; it is most probable 510
that the primitive Asiatic custom of making presents to the sovereign obtained. It is not until later times that mention is made of regular yearly revenues drawn by them from certain regions and cities. They enjoyed an honorable public distinction which was only conferred upon such rulers as were descended from David; this consisted of having the scrolls of the Law brought to them when they had to read a portion of the Torah aloud, whereas every one else was obliged to go to the scrolls. Wealthy by reason of the income accruing from their extensive lands, they also possessed many slaves and a numerous suite of attendants; even free men placed themselves under their patronage, wearing, as sign of their fealty, the arms of their masters on their garments. The Princes of the Captivity were most sensitive with regard to these distinctive marks, refusing to pardon even the scholars whom they themselves supported, if they laid aside or even only covered over these badges. There was too much power in the hands of the Prince, and this power was too little restrained or regulated by law or tradition, for cases of arbitrariness and abuse of authority not to be forthcoming. Numerous complaints were made of the arrogance, arbitrary encroachments, or violent deeds of many of the Princes of the Captivity or their servants; they deposed the principals of the schools, appointing others in their places who were often without merit. But what power has ever restrained itself within the bounds of justice and equity? In prehistoric times, that is to say, before the knowledge of the Law had been carried to Babylonia and there domesticated, the ignorance of the Princes of the Captivity in matters of religious practice appears to have been so profound, that it was possible to transgress the laws relating to food in their house with the greatest impunity. But history tells also of meritorious persons among their numbers, who in later times combined a knowledge of the Jewish law with the 511
possession of Jewish virtues, and whose names became a source of glory to the nation. The Princes of the Captivity often united with their political power the authority of teachers of the Law, equaling in this respect the Palestinean Patriarchs. As certain of these latter attempted to acquire political influence, in order not to be inferior to the Resh-Galutha—in which attempt, however, they were not always successful—many of the Princes of the Captivity endeavored in turn to obtain the dignity of teacher. All these various circumstances, the great number of the Jewish population of Babylonia, their independence, and the concentrated power of the Princes, stamp the history of the Jews of this region with a peculiar character; new needs arose in this country which were unknown in Judæa; new needs produced new regulations and Halachas, and thus the Law entered upon a new development in which, as already intimated, Babylon played the most important part.

During the patriarchate of Judah I, the young students of Babylon had crowded in greater numbers than in former times to the academies of Galilee, as if desirous of catching the last rays of the setting sun of religion in the mother-country, in order to enlighten therewith the land of their birth. Chiya of Cafri and his two wonderful sons, his relatives Abba-Areka and Chanina-bar-Chama, Abba and his son Samuel, were all celebrated disciples of Judah's school; they were either directly or indirectly the instructors of Babylonia. It is true that Chiya and his sons, Judah and Chiskia, did not return to their native country, but died in Galilee, where they were honored as saints; but Chiya exercised the greatest influence on the education of his disciple and nephew, Abba-Areka. Before the return to Babylonia of Abba-Areka and Samuel from the academy of Judah I in Judæa, an otherwise unknown person, Shila by name, occupied the post of principal of 512
the school (Resh-Sidra) in Nahardea. But with the appearance of these two men, who were endowed with all the qualities requisite in order to become the founders of new schools, extensive alterations were introduced; they initiated a new departure, and raised Babylonia to the level of Judæa.

Abba (born about 175, died 247), who is known in history by the name of Rab, had completed his education, after the death of his father Aibu, at the academy of Judah I in Tiberias. Great astonishment was expressed at the early development of the wonderful talents of this youth. Through Chiya's intercession, Rab obtained a somewhat restricted advancement, which the Patriarch Gamaliel III afterwards refused to extend. Great things were expected of him in his home, and when the news of his return from Palestine was known, Samuel, who had already returned, and his friend Karna, went to meet him on the bank of the Euphrates canal. The latter overwhelmed him with questions, and even Shila, the principal of the school, bowed to his superior knowledge. After Shila's death Rab ought to have succeeded him in his office, but he refused the post in favor of his younger friend, Samuel, whose home was in Nahardea.

The Prince of the Captivity of that period seems to have shown special regard for such Babylonians as were learned in the Law, in his appointments to the offices within his gift. He nominated as supreme judge in Cafri one of his relations, Mar-Ukba, whose wealth, modesty, character, and knowledge of the Law well fitted him for this post. He also appointed Karna as judge, who, not being rich, was obliged to be indemnified for his loss of time by the suitors. To Abba-Areka was given the post of inspector of markets (Agora-nomos), carrying with it the control of the weights and measures.

The arbitrariness of the rule of the Exilarch is well illustrated by the following example. Abba-Areka had been commanded to control the prices of the market, and to prevent the necessaries of life from becoming too dear. Having refused to obey this order, he was thrown into prison and kept there until Karna upbraided the Prince of the Captivity with thus punishing a man who was full of the "juice of dates" (genius). Abba-Areka had occasion, by reason of his position as Agoranomos, to journey to the various districts of Jewish Babylonia, and he thus became known throughout the country. Artabanus IV (211–226), the last Parthian monarch of the house of 513

Arsaces, who had probably made his acquaintance on one of his circuits, esteemed him so highly that he once sent him a present of some valuable pearls. Between the last Parthian King and the first Babylonian Amora there existed the same friendly relations as between the Jewish Patriarch and the Roman Emperor of his time. Artabanus was afterwards deposed by Ardashir, and with him ended the dynasty of Arsaces. When Rab heard of the fall of Artabanus, he exclaimed sorrowfully, "The bond is broken."

Abba discovered with surprise during his journeys the unbounded ignorance of the Jewish laws into which those communities remote from the capital had fallen. In one place nothing was known of the traditional prohibition forbidding meat to be eaten with milk. In order to repress these transgressions and to remove this ignorance, Rab extended many laws, and forbade even what was otherwise allowed. In this way there arose many restrictions which, owing to his authority, acquired the force of law. The negligence existing throughout the district of Sora gave him the idea of founding an academy in that very place, in order that the knowledge of the Law might become more widely spread through the passage to and fro of the disciples. His efforts 514
were crowned with complete success. If the development of the Law has greatly contributed to the preservation of Judaism, this result is for the most part due to the labors of Abba-Areka. With but few intermissions, Sora was the seat of Jewish science for nearly eight centuries.

The academy, which bore, as was customary, the name of "Sidra," was opened by Abba about the year 219. Twelve hundred disciples, attracted by Abba-Areka's reputation, flocked together from every district of Babylonia. More than a hundred celebrated disciples and associates afterwards disseminated his maxims and decisions throughout the land. The throng of auditors was so great that he was obliged to enlarge his lecture-room by enclosing a garden belonging to a recently deceased proselyte, which he acquired for this purpose as vacant ground. The reverence entertained for him by his disciples was so profound that they called him simply "Rab," the Teacher, in the same way as the Patriarch Judah was called Rabbi or Rabbenu, and this is the appellation by which he is generally known. His school was called Be-Rab (Be abbreviated from Beth, *house*), which afterwards became the general name for a school. His authority extended beyond the boundaries of Babylonia; even Jochanan, the most celebrated of the teachers of Judæa, wrote to him, "To our teacher in Babylonia," grew angry whenever any one spoke slightingly of Rab, and admitted that the latter was the only person to whom he would have willingly subordinated himself. Rab was accustomed to maintain such of his numerous disciples as were without means, for he was very wealthy, and owned land, which he cultivated himself. The excellent arrangements which he adopted permitted his auditors to devote themselves to the study of the Law without neglecting their livelihood. In two months of the year (Adar and Ellul), at the commencement of autumn and spring, they assembled at Sora. During these two months, 515
which were called "months of assembly" (Yarche Kalla), lectures were delivered every day from the early morning on; the auditors hardly allowed themselves time enough to swallow their breakfast. The ordinary name for the public lectures was Kalla. Besides these two months, Rab devoted the week before the principal festivals to public lectures, in which not only the disciples, but the whole populace, were interested. The Prince of the Captivity used also to arrive in Sora about this time to receive the homage of the assembled crowd. The throng was generally so great that many were unable to get lodgings in the houses, and were consequently obliged to sleep in the open air, on the shore of lake Sora. These festival lectures were termed Rigle. The Kalla-months and the Rigle-week had also certain influences upon civil life; the judicial powers suspended their operation during these periods, and creditors were forbidden to summon their debtors before the court. Rab thus provided at one and the same time for the instruction of the ignorant multitude, and for the further advancement of the deeper study of the Law by the education of disciples.

Nothing is known of any peculiar method employed by Rab. His mode of teaching consisted of analyzing the Mishna, which he had brought with him in its latest state of perfection, of explaining the text and the sense of every Halacha, and of comparing them with the Boraitas. Of these decisions and deductions, which are known by the name of Memra, there exists a great number from Rab's hand, and they, together with those which proceeded from Samuel and Jochanan, the contemporary principals of the schools, form a considerable part of the Talmud. For the most part he was more inclined than his fellow Amoraim to render the Law severer, and to forbid such legal acts as verged on the illegal, at least in the opinion of the multitude of 516
Babylonian Jews, who were incapable of nice discrimination. Most of Rab's decrees received the force of law, with the exception of those, however, which affected municipal law, for his authority was more respected in questions of ritual than of civil law.

With the most determined energy he undertook the amelioration of the morals of the Babylonians, which, like their religion, had fallen to a very low ebb among the lower classes. The ancient simplicity of married life which had formerly obtained was now superseded in Babylonia by a hollow and brutal immorality. If a young man and woman met, and were desirous of uniting in marriage, they summoned the first witnesses at hand, and the marriage was concluded. Fathers gave their daughters in marriage almost before they arrived at majority, and the bridegroom either did not see his bride until after the decisive step had been taken, when, doubtless, he often repented of his act, or else he lived in the house of his intended father-in-law in a too intimate relation with his betrothed. The law, instead of condemning this immorality, had afforded it the protection of its authority. Rab combated these prevailing customs with the full force of a moral ardor. He forbade the solemnization of marriage which had not been preceded by a courtship, and enjoined on fathers not to marry their daughters without the consent of the latter, and therefore still less before their majority. He further admonished all who were desirous of marrying to make the acquaintance of the maiden of their choice before their betrothal, lest

when disappointed, their conjugal love should turn to hate, and finally he forbade the young men to live in the house of their betrothed before marriage. He baffled all the legal artifices which could be employed by a husband to make a divorce retrospective by withdrawing the support of the law from such cases. All these moral measures became laws of general application. Rab also increased the reputation of the courts of justice; every one was obliged to appear on being summoned before the court, and the bailiffs were invested with official authority; the punishment of excommunication was introduced for cases of refractoriness. This punishment was very severe in Babylonia, and consequently produced great effects. The transgressions of the offender were publicly announced, and he was avoided until he had made expiation. In Babylonia, where the Jewish population formed a little world of its own, this punishment was sufficient to procure obedience and respect for the laws. Rab's energies were thus employed in two directions; he refined the morals, and aroused intellectual activity in a country which, as the sources express it, had formerly been "a vacant and unprotected fallow field." Rab surrounded it with a two-fold hedge, severity of manners and activity of mind. He was in this respect for Babylonia what Hillel had been for Judæa.

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Rab's virtues, his patience, conciliatory disposition, and modesty, also put one in mind of Hillel. He had a bad wife who opposed him in everything, but he bore her vexations with patience. In his youth Rab had acted badly towards Chanina, the head of the school in Sepphoris, and was therefore unceasing in his efforts to obtain his pardon. His forgiving disposition caused him to lose sight of his exalted station. Once, when he thought he had given offense to a man of the lower classes, he repaired to the latter's house on the eve of the Day of Atonement, in order to become reconciled with him. Whenever he was followed to his school by a crowd of people on the days of his lectures he used to repeat a verse of Job, in order to prevent his pride from rising too high: "Though the excellency of man mount up to the heavens, yet he shall perish forever." Before repairing to the court he was wont to exclaim: "I am prepared to meet my death; here the affairs of my house concern me not, and I return empty-handed to my home; may I be as innocent on my return as I was when I set out." He had the satisfaction of leaving a son, Chiya, who was exceedingly learned in the Law, and of marrying his daughter to a relative of the Prince of the Captivity. His descendants by this daughter were worthy and learned princes. His second son, Aibu, was not intellectually distinguished. To him his father recommended certain rules of life, among others a preference for agriculture: "Rather a small plot of land than a great magazine for goods."

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For eight and twenty years, until his old age, Rab devoted himself to the Sidra at Sora (219–247). When he died all his disciples accompanied his body to its last resting-place, and went into mourning for him. At the suggestion of one of them Babylonia mourned for him a whole year, and the practice of wearing wreaths of flowers and myrtles at weddings was suspended. All the Jews of Babylonia, except one, Bar-Kasha of Pumbeditha, mourned for the loss of their great Amora.

Much more original and versatile than Rab was his friend, his Halachic opponent, and his fellow-worker in the task of elevating the Jewish population of Babylonia, Samuel or Mar-Samuel, also called Arioch and Yarchinai (born about 180, died 257). In a certain sense this highly talented man was an epoch-maker in the history of the doctrine of Judaism. Nothing more is known of his youth than that he once ran away from his father. As a young man he followed the usual course, and went to Judæa in order to complete his education at the academy of the Patriarch Judah I. It has already been narrated how he there cured a disease of the eyes from which the ailing Patriarch suffered, and how he was nevertheless refused his nomination as a teacher by the latter; how he returned to his home before Rab, and was elevated after Shila's death to the dignity of Resh-Sidra.

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Mar-Samuel was of an even character, avoiding enthusiasm and demonstrativeness. While his contemporaries confidently expected the renewal of miracles as of old before the appearance of the Messiah, he propounded the view that everything would still follow its natural course, but that the subjection of Israel to foreign rulers would come to an end. His intellectual energies were employed in three branches of knowledge: the explanation of the Law, astronomy, and medicine.

As an Amora he was inferior to Rab in the knowledge of the laws of the ritual, but far surpassed him in his acquaintance with the Jewish civil law. Samuel developed and enriched the Jewish law in all its branches, and all his decisions have obtained Halachic force. None of his decrees, however, were possessed of such important results as the one by which he declared the law of the land to be just as binding on the Jews as their own law (dina d'malchuta dina). The object of this precept was not to bring about a compulsory toleration of the foreign legislation, but to obtain its complete recognition as a binding law, to transgress which would also be punishable from the religious point of view. This was an innovation which, after all, could only be approved by reason of the relations existing between the Babylonian Jews and the Persian states. Samuel's principle of the sanctity of the law of the land was a manifest contradiction of older Halachas, which treated foreign laws as arbitrary, and did not consider their transgression to be punishable. But the Amoraim had already succeeded in reconciling so many conflicting laws that these old and repellent decisions, and this new and submissive principle, were able to exist side by side. In the sequel Samuel's recognition of the laws of the country was a means of preservation to the dispersed nation. On the one hand it reconciled the Jews to living in that country into which they had been cast by remorseless fate. Their religious consciousness did not feel at variance with the laws set up for their observance, which were seldom humane. On the other hand, the enemies of the Jews, who in all centuries took as their pretext the apparently hostile spirit of Judaism, and advised the persecution and complete extermination of the Jewish

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nation, could be referred to a Jewish law, which, with three words, invalidated their contention. The Prophet Jeremiah had given to the families which were exiled to Babylon, the following urgent exhortation as to their conduct in a foreign land: "Seek the peace of the city whither ye have been carried away captives." Samuel had transformed this exhortation into a religious precept: "The law of the state is binding law." To Jeremiah and Mar-Samuel Judaism owes the possibility of existence in a foreign country.

Samuel possessed altogether a particular affection for Persian customs, and was consequently in exceedingly good repute at the Persian court, and lived on confidential terms with Shabur I. His contemporaries called him therefore, although it is not known whether as a mark of honor or of censure, "The king Shabur," and also "Arioch," the Arian (partizan of the neo-Persians). His attachment to the Persian dynasty was so great that it supplanted the affection for his fellow-countrymen in his heart. When Shabur extended his conquests to Asia Minor, 12,000 Jews lost their lives on the occasion of the assault of Mazaca-Cæsarea, the Cappadocian capital. Samuel refused to go into mourning for the victims, giving as his reason that they had fought against Shabur. He thus formed a peculiar type; living in the midst of the full tide of Judaism, immersed in its doctrines and traditions, he raised himself beyond the narrow sphere of his nationality, and 521
was ever ready to extend his sympathies to other peoples and to take note of their intellectual efforts. Rab, entirely taken up with the affairs of his own nation, refused to allow the customs of the Persians to exert any influence on those of the Jews, and even forbade these latter to adopt any practice, however innocent, from the Magi: "He who learns a single thing of the Magi merits death." Samuel, on the other hand, learnt many things of the Persian sages. With his friend Ablaat, he used to study astronomy, that noble science which brings mortal man into closer proximity with the Deity. The low-lying plain between the Euphrates and the Tigris, whose wide-extended horizon is unbounded by any hill, was the cradle of astronomy, which, however, soon degenerated in this region into the pseudo-science of astrology. By reason of the ideas instilled into him by his Jewish education, Samuel attached no importance to the art of casting nativities, and only occupied himself with astronomy under its most elevated aspect. He used to boast that he was "as well acquainted with the ways of the heavens as with the streets of Nahardea." He was unable, however, to calculate the erratic movements of the comets. It is impossible to determine the extent of his astronomical acquirements, or to discover whether he was in advance of his times or simply on a par with his contemporaries. Mar-Samuel turned his knowledge of astronomy to practical account; he drew up a settled calendar of the festivals, for the purpose of delivering the Babylonian communities from continual uncertainty with regard to the exact days on which the festivals would fall, and in order to relieve them of their dependence on Palestine for the determination of the time of the appearance of the new moon. Probably out of regard for the Patriarch, and in order not to destroy the unity of Judaism, Samuel refrained from 522
communicating his calendar to the general public, and allowed the computation of the festivals to retain its former character of a secret art (Sod ha-Ibbur). He was blamed by certain persons, however, for having in any way interfered with the calculation of the calendar. The extent of Samuel's knowledge of medicine is even less known; he boasted of being able to cure all diseases but three. An eye-salve of his invention was in great request.

Between Samuel and the founder of the Sora academy there subsisted a fraternal harmony, although the Sidra of Nahardea was eclipsed by Rab. In his modesty he willingly subordinated himself to Rab. The celebrated Shila family was possessed of the precedence in the ceremony of paying homage to the Prince of the Captivity; by them it was relinquished to Samuel, and he, in his turn, surrendered it to his comrade in Sora, contenting himself with the third place. After Rab's death Samuel was recognized as the sole religious chief of Babylon, and continued in this capacity for ten years. At first Jochanan, of Judæa, hesitated whether to acknowledge him as an authority. In the letter which the principal of the schools of Tiberias sent to Babylonia, he addressed Rab by the title of "our teacher in Babylonia," while Mar-Samuel he called simply "our comrade." The teachers of Judæa did not, in fact, give him credit for the requisite knowledge of the Halachas, basing their conclusion upon the fact that he occupied himself with other branches of science. It was in vain that Samuel sent to Judæa a festival calendar calculated for sixty years; Jochanan remarked slightingly, when the fact came to his knowledge: "At any rate he is well acquainted with arithmetic." It was not until Samuel forwarded several scrolls, filled with investigations of certain little-known diseases of animals, that he began to be respected. 523

It was during this period (the third century) that there occurred simultaneously in the Roman and Parthian empires certain political catastrophes which were attended with the most important results. Through their influence history acquired an altered aspect, and considerable changes were effected in the state of things existing in these two countries and their dependencies. It was impossible for Jewish history to remain unaffected by these events. During the reign of the noble Alexander Severus occurred the overthrow of the Parthian dynasty, which, beginning with Arsaces, had subsisted during four centuries. A new and more vigorous race seized the scepter, and this change of dynasty gave rise to many revolutions both at home and abroad. The author of these changes was Ardashir, or Arbachshter, as he was called in his own language, a descendant of the race of ancient Persians (Arians). Such of the Persians as still remained true to their nationality, nourished a hatred against the impure dynasty of Arsaces, on account of the semi-Grecian origin of its members, their leaning to Greek views in matters of religion, their contempt for the national faith, and finally, their impotence to check the ever-increasing conquests of the Romans. It was with them that Ardashir united himself and conspired to overthrow Artabanus, the monarch who entertained so great a reverence for Rab. A decisive battle was fought, in which Artabanus succumbed, and the neo-Persian dynasty of the Sassanides was founded by the conqueror. The race which thus obtained the upper hand is known in history by the name of the

neo-Persians; the Jewish authorities called them Chebrim (Chebre), and a deteriorated residue of the stock still subsists in India under the name of the Guebres. This revolution was attended by 524
results as important in matters of religion as in politics. In place of the indifference with which the ancient rulers had regarded the primitive worship of fire, Ardashir manifested an ardent enthusiasm for it. He proudly called himself "the worshiper of Ormuz, divine Ardashir, the King of the Kings of Iran, the offspring of a heavenly race." He ordered such of the parts of the ancient Persian law (the Zend-Avesta) as were still extant to be collected, and commanded them to be regarded as the religious code. Zoroaster's doctrine of the twin principles of light and darkness (Ahura-Mazda and Ahriman) was everywhere enforced; the Magi, the sacerdotal caste of this cult, recovered their credit, their influence, and their power, while the partisans of the Greeks were persecuted with fire and sword. The fanaticism which was thus aroused in the Magians also caused them to direct their hostile attacks against the Christians, who resided in great numbers in the districts of Nisibis and Edessa in upper Mesopotamia (conquered by the Romans), and who possessed their own schools.

The Jews were not entirely exempt from the attacks of this fanaticism, and only escaped severe persecution through their solidarity, their centralization, and their powers of defense. In the first intoxication of victory the neo-Persians deprived the Jewish courts of the criminal jurisdiction which they had been permitted to exercise until then; the Jews were admitted to no offices, and were not even allowed to retain the supervision of the canals and rivers, but they do not seem to have complained very bitterly of these measures. They were even compelled to submit to restraints upon their freedom of conscience. On certain festivals, when the Magi worshiped light in their temple as the visible representation of God (Ahura-Mazda), the Jews were not suffered to maintain any fire on their hearths, nor to retain any light in their rooms. The 525
Persians forced their way into the houses of the Jews, extinguished every fire and collected the glowing embers in their consecrated braziers, bringing them as an offering to their temple of fire. They also dug the corpses out of the graves, because, according to their notion, dead bodies lying in the bosom of the earth desecrated this "Spenta Armaita" (holy soil). For these various reasons the majority of the teachers of the Law were not greatly prepossessed in favor of the neo-Persians. When Jochanan heard that they had triumphantly invaded Jewish Babylonia, he was greatly concerned for the fate of his Babylonian brethren, but his anxiety was allayed by the assurance that the Persians were very poor and would therefore easily allow themselves to be bought off with bribes. By reason of their semi-savage state he referred to them as "the abandoned people into whose hands the Babylonian communities had been delivered." Levi bar Sissi, who was continually traveling to and fro between Judæa and Babylon, was anxiously questioned by the Patriarch Judah II as to the character of the conquering race. With obvious prepossession in favor of the vanquished Parthians, he described them and the victorious neo-Persians in the following words: "The former are as the armies of King David, but the latter resemble the devils of hell." Little by little, however, the fanaticism of the neo-Persians moderated, and there sprang up between them and the Jews so sincere a friendship that on their account the latter relaxed the severity of the Law, and even assisted now and again at their banquets. The teachers of the Law permitted the Jews to deliver up fuel which the Magi demanded of them on the occasion of the Festival of Light, and ceased to consider this act as a furtherance of idolatry, though it would certainly have been regarded as such by the old Halacha 526
in similar cases. Even Rab, the essence of strictness, acquiesced in the demand of the Magi, and allowed the lamps to be brought from the open street into the houses on the Sabbath on the occasion of the Festival of the Hasmonæans, in order not to give offense to the prejudices of the ruling sacerdotal class. This mutual toleration, doubtless, first made its appearance under the rule of Shabur I (242–271), the liberal-minded monarch whose friendship with Samuel has already been mentioned. This magnanimous king assured Samuel that during the many wars which he had waged against the Romans in countries thickly populated with the Jews, he had never spilt Jewish blood, except on the occasion of the capture of Cappadocia, when 12,000 Jews had been put to death as a punishment for their stubborn resistance.

The radical changes which occurred about this time in the Roman empire were also attended with important effects and reactions on Jewish history. The death of Alexander Severus was the signal for anarchy, the many-headed hydra, to rage in all its terror in Rome and the Roman provinces. During the short space of half a century (235–284) the throne was occupied by nearly twenty emperors and as many usurpers, who willingly laid down their lives to obtain the gratification of their desire to wear the purple, if only for a day, and to decree executions by the hundred. From nearly every nation which Rome had subjugated there arose an emperor who enslaved the Italian Babylon. The time of retribution had come; the birds of prey were contending for the putrefying body of the State. It was during the time of Samuel (248) that the thousandth anniversary of Rome was celebrated by the assassin-emperor Philip, an Arab by birth and a robber from his childhood; but Rome was powerful wherever its legions were stationed, except in Rome itself, the city whose senate was obliged to accept with smiling face the humiliations which 527
it experienced at the hands of the soldier emperors, and to sanction them in servile humility by Senatus-Consulta. The Roman empire was invaded on the one hand by the Parthians, on the other by the Goths, as if in fulfilment of the sibylline threats of punishment.

Valerianus had undertaken a campaign with the intention of recovering the districts which had been conquered by Shabur. Rome now experienced the further disgrace of seeing her emperor fall into his enemy's power, and suffer all the humiliations of slavery at the hands of the haughty victor. In the eastern provinces, in the neighborhood of the mighty Persian empire, disorder and dissolution had reached a still higher degree. A rich and adventurous native of Palmyra, Odenathus by name, had collected a band of wild and rapacious Saracens around him,

and he and his troops made frequent incursions from his native city into Syria and Palestine on the one side, and the region of the Euphrates on the other, plundering and laying waste the country through which they passed. Odenathus had already assumed the title of Senator. Why should he not become the emperor of the Romans, like his fellow-countryman Philip? Odenathus was known in Jewish circles as the robber captain, "Papa bar Nazar," and to him was applied the passage in Daniel's vision: "The little horn coming up among the greater horns, and having eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things." The predatory incursions of this adventurer were accompanied by results which were highly detrimental to the Jews of Palestine and Babylonia. He demolished the ancient city of Nahardea (259), which had formed the central point of the Jewish communities ever since the time of the Babylonian exile. It was many years before this town was able to recover itself from this destructive blow. The Amoraim of Nahardea, 528
Samuel's disciples, were obliged to take to flight; they emigrated to the region of the Tigris. They were—Nachman, a son-in-law of the Prince of the Captivity, Sheshet, Rabba b. Abbuha, and Joseph b. Chama.

On the occasion of the destruction of Nahardea by Odenathus, Samuel's daughters, doubtless together with many others, were taken prisoners by the enemy and brought to Sepphoris. The freebooters speculated on heavy ransoms, which appeared to them more lucrative than the sale of the captives in the slave market, for it was well known that the Jews spared no expense in order to procure the release of their fellow-countrymen. Samuel's daughters had derived so much benefit from their father's profound knowledge of the Halacha that they succeeded in escaping the application of a strict law, which placed all maidens who had been taken prisoners on the same footing with those who had been dishonored, thus incapacitating them from contracting a spotless marriage. Before it was known whose daughters they were they had already recovered their freedom, and their assertion that their innocence had received no taint at the hands of the rough warriors was readily believed. When Chanina heard in Sepphoris that they were Samuel's daughters he strongly enjoined a relation of theirs, Simon b. Abba, to marry one of them.

Odenathus, the destroyer of Nahardea, gradually became a petty Asiatic prince of Palmyra or Tadmor, the oasis which King Solomon had converted into a city. The Roman empire was so feeble and tottering that it was this hitherto disregarded warrior who was obliged to oppose a bulwark to the conquests of the Persians on Roman territory. The great services which he thus rendered to the empire compelled his recognition (264) as co-emperor by Gallienus, a monarch characterized by his weakness and love of satire. Odenathus did not long enjoy this high dignity, for in 267 he fell by the hand of an assassin, instigated, as the story went, by Zenobia, his wife. 529
After his death the regency devolved upon Zenobia, her two sons being still minors. Through her influence Palmyra, the city of the desert, was transformed into the home of imperial pomp, culture, and refined taste. A Christian report represents the empress Zenobia as a Jewess, but the Jewish authorities make no mention of this fact. No colors seem to be vivid enough for the Roman accounts of Zenobia in order to paint the picture of her strange personality. The palace of this second Semiramis, the ruins of which still bear witness to refined and artistic taste, was the meeting-place of original-minded geniuses, with whom the queen delighted to hold philosophical intercourse.

At her court resided Longinus, the refined and philosophical lover of the fine arts, who in his æsthetic work on the Sublime was unable sufficiently to express his admiration of the poetical contents of the Biblical account of the Creation, "Let there be light." Paul of Samosata, Bishop of Antioch, when accused of heresy, also found shelter at her court. Zenobia, his patroness, also seems to have had some leaning towards the fundamental truth of Judaism. The Jews were, nevertheless, not particularly well disposed towards the court of Palmyra. Jochanan, although not blind to the beauties of Greek, gave utterance to the most unfavorable opinions concerning the Palmyrene state: "Happy will he be who sees the fall of Tadmor." Subsequent generations were at a loss to explain this aversion.

There can be no doubt that many Jews took up arms against Zenobia, whose rule must also have extended over Judæa. It is related that a certain Zeïra bar Chanina having been brought up before Zenobia to receive sentence for an offense which seems to have been of a political nature, two of Jochanan's disciples, Ami and Samuel, presented themselves before the empress, in order to intercede on his behalf and obtain his liberation. They were most ungraciously received, 530
however, by Zenobia. "Do you think," said she, "that because God has worked so many miracles for your nation you can hazard everything, simply putting your trust in Him?" Another occurrence, which is related by the same authority, seems also to have taken place during Zenobia's reign. A certain Ulla bar Kosher, of whom no further mention is made in history, was prosecuted for a political offense, and fled to Joshua ben Levi in Lydda. So much importance must, however, have attached to his capture that a troop of soldiers surrounded Lydda, and threatened to destroy the city if the fugitive were not delivered up to them. In this sad dilemma in which the life of a single individual must either be sacrificed or the safety of an entire community endangered, Joshua ben Levi prevailed upon Ulla to give himself up. He justified this course of conduct by referring to a Mishnaic law which permits the surrender to the political power of a culprit specially designated, in the case of many lives depending on such compliance. But the Jewish conscience, symbolized by the prophet Elijah, refused to take any part in bringing about the death of a man. Elijah, the ideal of pure zeal for Judaism, appeared to Joshua ben Levi and inspired him with remorse for having allowed himself to deliver up the culprit; he ought not to have relied solely on the simple preceptive law, but should also have been mindful of the "Mishna of the Pious," which widened and elevated their views concerning the precepts of duty.

Zenobia's reign, after enduring brilliantly for several years (267–273), was brought to a

termination by Aurelian, who gained a hard-earned victory over the haughty empress, and brought her in golden fetters to Rome to figure in his triumph. Jochanan lived to see the fulfilment of his wish regarding Tadmor, and died a few years after its fall (279).

CHAPTER XX.

THE PATRIARCHATE OF GAMALIEL IV. AND JUDAH III.

The Amoraim in Palestine—Ami and Assi—The Brothers Chiya and Simon bar Abba in Tiberias—Abbahu in Cæsarea—The Emperor Diocletian—Complete Separation from the Samaritans—Character and Political Position of Abbahu—Huna in Babylonia—Chama's Generosity—Huna's Contemporaries and Successors—Judah ben Ezekiel—Chasda of Cafri—Mar Sheshet—Nachman bar Jacob—Zeïra.

279–320 C. E.

The period during which Christianity emerged from the position of a persecuted community and acquired that of an established church, marks a crisis in the development of the history of the world, and forms an epoch of transition also in the history of the Jews. The influence exerted by the mother-country began gradually to decline. It was Babylonia that now occupied the universal interest, while Judæa became a holy antiquity; it still possessed the power of arousing glorious memories, but was no longer the scene of memorable deeds. The teachers of this generation, indeed, were not few, including in their numbers the disciples of Chanina, Jochanan, and Resh-Lakish; and the youth of Babylonia, smitten with a holy longing, still preferred the schools of Palestine to those of their native land. But only very few of the principals of the schools were possessed of any eminence, and the most important of them, Ami, Assi, Chiya b. Abba, and Zeïra, were all Babylonians by birth. Abbahu, the only one who was a native of Judæa, was a person of much originality, but of no authority in the Halacha. The superiority of Babylon was so readily acknowledged that Ami and Assi, the leaders of Judæa, of their own accord subordinated themselves to Rab's successor. The Babylonian novices excelled their masters in the knowledge 532
of the Law; Sora and Pumbeditha took the lead of Sepphoris and Tiberias. Even the Patriarchs of this period, Gamaliel IV and Judah III, possessed but an insignificant knowledge of the Law, and were both obliged to receive instruction from Amoraim. Under Judah the duty of examining witnesses concerning the appearance of the new moon degenerated into a mere pretense and a formality. When Ami expressed a desire that this duty should be seriously fulfilled, the Patriarch informed him that he had often understood from Jochanan, that as soon as, according to astronomical calculation, the thirtieth day was ascertained to be the beginning of the new month, it was permissible to press a witness into declaring that he had perceived the new moon, although this was not the case. The accurate calculation of the Festivals gradually made this burdensome custom of the examination of witnesses so superfluous that Judah's successor was able to entirely abrogate this duty of the Patriarchate. Of more importance appeared to Judah the ordering of the affairs of the communities and the schools, and to this point he devoted his entire attention. He commissioned the three principal Amoraim, Ami, Assi, and Chiya, to undertake a journey through the cities of Judæa, in order to inspect the various institutions of a religious or educational character, and to restore them in those places where they were falling into decay. In one town, where the envoys found neither teachers of the people nor of the young, they summoned the elders to bring before them the guardians of the city. On the armed guard of the town being brought into their presence, the envoys of the Nasi exclaimed: "These are in nowise the guardians of the city, but its destroyers; the true guards are the teachers of the young and of the people; 'If God protect not the house, in vain watcheth the warder.'"

The Patriarchate of Judah III falls in the reign of Diocletian and his co-emperor, who, by the 533
strength of their rule and their sincere devotion, delayed for a time the decline of the Roman empire. Diocletian was not unfavorably disposed towards the Jews. He was, perhaps, all the more tolerant to them in proportion as he hated and persecuted the Christians; these latter he considered as the sole cause of the dissolution of the Empire, on account of their persistent struggle against the Roman state religion, and their zeal for conversion. The rigorous edicts which this monarch considered it necessary to decree during the last years of his reign (303–305), and which aimed at compelling the Christians to adopt the worship of idols, at closing their churches, and at prohibiting their meetings for divine service, did not include the Jews within their terms, although, curiously enough, the Samaritans do not seem to have escaped their action. Nevertheless, the enemies of the Jews appear to have exerted themselves in order to prejudice Diocletian against them. The emperor was secretly informed that the Patriarch and his companions made merry over his obscure parentage and his surname Aper (Boar), concerning which the emperor was especially sensitive. The story relates that the emperor, highly exasperated, commanded the Patriarch and the most distinguished members of the community to appear before him on a Saturday night, at Paneas, about twenty miles from Tiberias. As this command was not communicated to them until late on Friday, they found themselves in the desperate dilemma of undertaking a journey on the Sabbath, or disregarding the imperial summons. On their arrival at Paneas, Diocletian ordered them to bathe themselves for several days previous to appearing before him in audience. This insult was intended as an allusion to the uncleanliness with which the Jews were reproached. When at last they were brought before the
emperor, the Patriarch and his companions assured Diocletian of their loyalty and faithfulness, 534
and they are said to have convinced him that they had been iniquitously calumniated, whereupon he graciously dismissed them (about 297 or 298).

By reason of the constraint of sacrificing to the gods, under which Diocletian laid both Samaritans and Christians, the former were completely and forever excluded from the Jewish community. A peculiar fate controlled the relations of these two kindred and neighboring races,

and prevented them from living on good terms for any length of time. At any moment which appeared favorable to mutual advances, trifling circumstances were sure to arise which widened the breach between them. After the destruction of the Temple the two peoples lived in tolerably good relations with one another; the Samaritans were admitted to be in many respects strict Jews. The war of Hadrian united Jew and Samaritan even more closely, and this friendly relation took so deep a root, that Meïr's decision to regard the Samaritans as heathens never gained general acceptance. Daily intercourse and business connections had bound them closely to each other. Even Jochanan did not hesitate to partake of meat prepared by the Samaritans. His successors were, however, more severe, and contrived to bring about a separation from the Samaritans. The occasion of this rupture is said to have been as follows: Abbahu having once ordered some wine from Samaria, an observation was made to him by an old man that the Law was no longer strictly observed in that country. Abbahu communicated this intimation to his friends, Ami and Assi, who investigated the matter there and then, and determined to declare the Samaritans as heathens, irrevocably and in every respect. This was perhaps the last resolution arrived at by the Synhedrion. No mention is made of the Nasi in connection with this decree, thus 535
affording a further proof of the insignificance of the authority enjoyed by him, and of the depth to which the Patriarchate had fallen. This disunion had the effect of weakening both Jews and Samaritans. Christianity, shrewder and more active than its parent, Judaism, and more refined and supple than Samaritanism, its sister, gained the empire of the world soon after this rupture, and Jew and Samaritan alike felt its superior power. Golgotha, raised upon the height of the Capitol, pressed with a two-fold burden on Zion and Gerizim.

Notwithstanding the slight respect in which the Patriarchate of Judah III (280–300) was held, a phenomenon makes its appearance for the first time, which betrays indeed the poverty that existed in Palestine, but on the other hand shows the adherence of the Jews to the Patriarchal house of David, the last remnant of their ancient glory. It had always been the custom to announce to such communities as were situated at a distance, the resolutions arrived at by the Synhedrion, and especially the period of the festivals, by means of special messengers (Shaliach Zion, Apostoli). As a rule, men of merit and members of the Synhedrion were chosen to fill this honorable post, for they represented the highest authorities, and were also required to explain and apply the various resolutions. The more the numbers of the Jews in the Holy Land were lessened by revolts and wars, and the greater the part of the country that fell into the hands of the heathen, the more also that extortionate taxes spread poverty far and wide, the greater difficulty the Patriarchs found in defraying the expenses of their office from their own private means. They were obliged to turn to the wealthy communities of other countries to request contributions for their support. Originally, perhaps, these aids constituted a voluntary contribution (aurum coronarium), forwarded by the communities as a proof of allegiance on the 536
occasion of the accession of a Patriarch as prince of the Jews. About this time, however, Judah III found himself obliged to send messengers to raise a regular tax (canon, pensio). Such an envoy was Chiya bar Abba, whom the Patriarch Judah authorized and sent abroad armed with peculiar powers: "We send you an excellent man, who possesses equal authority with ourselves until he return unto us." This same Chiya was, in fact, an excellent man, as poor in means as he was rich in character. It was only on account of grievous necessity that he allowed this post to be conferred on him by the Patriarch, and its acceptance constituted in so far a sacrifice that he was obliged to quit the Holy Land, which he had chosen as his residence in preference to his native country. During a long period he was supported by a rich and charitable family of Tiberias, named Silvani (Beth-Silvani), who furnished him, as a descendant of Aaron, with the tithes of the produce of their property. On a certain occasion, however, Chiya forbade them to commit a deed which another teacher of the Law declared to be lawful; and they, in return, made him feel his dependency on their tithes. Upon this he determined never again to accept tithes from any one, and, in order to avoid temptation, he resolved to quit Judæa.

It is in this Amora that a singular fault may first be remarked, which later on became more general, and produced the most disastrous consequences. Chiya b. Abba, namely, was so absorbed in the study of the oral Law, that in his devotion to it he neglected the reading of the written Law, the Bible. Being once asked why the word "good" does not occur in the first Decalogue, he made reply that he hardly knew if this word really did not occur in that place. Chiya bar Abba was of a gloomy disposition, and in the Halacha he followed the severe tendency 537
which refused even to allow Jewish maidens to acquire the culture of the Greeks, although Jochanan himself had permitted it, and even encouraged it to a certain extent.

It may be noticed, as a sign of the times, that the heads of the schools at Tiberias were not natives of the country, but Babylonians who had emigrated thither from their own land. Ami and Assi occupied the post formerly filled by Jochanan, their master. They delivered their lectures in the peristyles, which certainly dated at least from the period of the Herods. But these buildings, which had been crowded with listeners in Jochanan's time, now testified to the declining importance of the Holy Land. Babylonia was the goal of such of the youth of Judæa as were desirous of studying. Ami and Assi only bore the modest title of "the Judges, or the respected descendants of Aaron in the Holy Land," and of their own accord subordinated themselves to the Babylonian authorities.

Of greater importance and originality was Abbahu of Cæsarea on the Sea, who was a striking contrast to Chiya and Simon, Abba's sons. He was wealthy, kept Gothic slaves, and had ivory seats in his house; his trade was the manufacture of women's veils. He understood Greek perfectly, which was the case with but few of his contemporaries; he frequented the society of educated heathens, and had his daughter taught Greek. He considered the knowledge of this language as an ornament to an educated girl, and supported his opinion by citing Jochanan's

permission. The austere Simon bar Abba, who was hostile to all worldly education, reproved this conduct in the following terms; "He attributes this permission to Jochanan, because his daughter is learning Greek." In answer to this attack upon his veracity, Abbahu protested that he had really received this tradition from Jochanan's lips. By reason of his familiarity with contemporary civilization, which many people regarded as sinful, a verse of Ecclesiastes was applied to him: "It is good that thou takest up this (the study of the Halacha) and neglectest not that (the learning of the Greeks), for the pious are able to fulfil all duties." The Greek language was in fact so current among the Jews of Cæsarea, that they even recited the passage of Scripture relative to the unity of God (the Shema) in this tongue. 538

Abbahu was held in great esteem by the Roman Proconsul, and probably also by the Emperor Diocletian, on account of his profound learning, which was heightened by the charm of a dignified figure and a generous character. By means of this influence with the authorities he was enabled to avert many severe measures. A case of this description affords at the same time an insight into the general state of things at this period. Ami, Assi, and Chiya bar Abba, having once pronounced a severe punishment on a woman named Thamar, who was doubtless guilty of some breach of chastity, were denounced by her to the then Procurator, on a charge of encroaching on the jurisdiction of the Romans. The Jewish judges, fearful for the consequences of this denunciation, besought Abbahu to exert his influence on their behalf. He, however, answered that his efforts had failed to produce any effect, by reason of the existing desire of revenge, perhaps also on account of the beauty of the culprit. His reply was couched in characteristic terms, being so conceived that, at first, the words do not convey their actual meaning. The import of this document was in brief as follows: "I have settled everything as regards the three slanderers—Eutokos, Eumathes, and Talasseus—but I have labored in vain on behalf of the obstinate and refractory Thamar." The language of this letter, which is a model of the style of that period, is for the most part pure Hebrew embellished by a play upon words; the Greek proper names are translated into the approximate Hebrew terms. This style, when handled with skill, invests the Hebrew tongue with an inimitable charm; but it easily degenerates into empty pomp and trifling, which was already in Abbahu's age to some extent the case. 539

By reason of his extensive acquirements Abbahu was well fitted to engage in polemics against Christianity. During the time of Diocletian, Christianity had strained every nerve to obtain the empire of the world. The Roman legions were in part composed of soldiers who had adopted this religion, and Christianity therefore redoubled its efforts to obtain proselytes. Setting itself up in opposition to Judaism and heathenism, it brought down upon itself severe punishment at the hands of Diocletian and his co-emperor Galerius, on account of its arrogance. The Jews were possessed of intellectual weapons, and these they employed as long as they were permitted their free use. Like Simlaï, Abbahu attacked the Christian dogmas in the most uncompromising manner, and grounded his opposition, according to the manner of the time, upon a verse in the Bible (Numbers xxiii. 19): "If a man say of himself, 'I am God,' he lieth; 'I am the son of man,' he will repent it; 'I go to heaven,' he will not confirm it." The doctrine of the Ascension was especially a disputed point between the teachers of the Church and the synagogue, and its defender in Cæsarea was Jacob the Minæan, a physician by profession. In order to authenticate the Ascension, the Christians brought forward the Agadic tradition, according to which Enoch ascended into heaven without dying: in the words of the Bible, "and he (Enoch) was not, for God took him." They used this ambiguous phrase in support of their opinion. Abbahu, however, proved by parallel verses that, according to the true exegesis, the expression contained in this verse amounted to nothing more than a figure of speech for "to die." In the succeeding generation Abbahu might, perhaps, have paid with his life for his bold truthfulness and his exact interpretation. 540

Abbahu was one of those modest, gentle, yielding characters who are the less conscious of their own merit in proportion as it is great. When it was proposed to ordain him as Rabbi, he withdrew in favor of Abba of Acco, desiring first to see the distinction conferred upon the latter, who by this promotion would have been able to free himself from the burden of debt with which he was oppressed. Another event brings out yet more strongly evidence of his unassuming disposition. He was once delivering discourses, concurrently with Chiya b. Abba, in a strange town, the subject being treated by the latter according to the Halachic method, while he adopted the more edifying style of the Agada. As was only natural, the popular discourses of Abbahu, being intelligible to all, were better attended than Chiya's lectures, which were more difficult of comprehension. The latter having manifested some irritation at the neglect which fell to the lot of his discourses, Abbahu attempted to console him in the following words: "Thy teaching resembles the most precious stones, of which there are but few good judges; mine, on the contrary, is like tinsel, which delights every one." In order to appease him still further, Abbahu showed his offended companion all possible attention and marks of honor throughout the day; nevertheless, Chiya was unable to forget the slight which he considered had been inflicted on him. This anecdote cannot be regarded as altogether unimportant, proving as it does the decay of serious studies in Judæa at this time. The Halacha, the study of which wrinkled the brow and exercised the mind, no longer found listeners, and was obliged to quit the field before the light-winged Agada. Abbahu was even unwilling to lay any stress upon his modesty. He once exclaimed: "With all my boasted humility, I am still far behind Abba of Acco, for he is not even angry with his expositor (Meturgeman) when the latter dares to make his own additions to the analyses which are whispered to him." A flaw had thus made itself apparent in that method of teaching, which had formerly invested the discourses with so much solemnity and merit. Instead of being merely the organ of the lecturer, the Meturgeman permitted himself to introduce his own views into the expositions. A complaint was made that the interpreters only accepted their office out of conceit, 541

in order to display their fine voice or their flowery language. This condition of things was aptly described in the following verse: "It is better to hear the severity of the wise than the song of fools." From this habit of the interpreters, the lectures degenerated into an empty word jingle.

Abbahu's generous and thoroughly noble views may also be gathered from another characteristic sketch, which at the same time affords a faithful picture of the customs of the period. It was usual on the occasion of a drought, an event of not uncommon occurrence in Judæa, for the most meritorious member of the community to offer up the prescribed prayers for rain. The person who on one occasion was recommended to Abbahu as the most worthy, happened to be a man of the worst fame, known to the wits as the "five sins" (Pentekaka). Being summoned before Abbahu, and questioned by the latter respecting his occupation, he admitted his infamous calling. "I am," said he, "a go-between; I clean out the play-house, carry the clothes to the bathers, divert the bathers with jokes, and play upon the flute." "And hast thou never done a good deed in all thy life?" demanded Abbahu. "One day," said Pentekaka, "when I was cleaning the theater, I saw a woman leaning against a column and weeping. In answer to my inquiry as to 542
the cause of her grief, she told me that her husband was a prisoner, and that there was nothing left for her to do in order to procure his release but to sacrifice her honor. As soon as I heard this," continued Pentekaka, "I sold my bed, my coverlet, everything that I had in the world, gave the proceeds to the woman, and said to her: 'Go, free thy husband without paying the price of sin.'" At these words Abbahu could not contain himself, and exclaimed to Pentekaka, that medley of sublime virtue and vulgar dishonor: "Thou alone art worthy to pray for us in our trouble."

The theater at this period participated in the general immoral tone of the times, and was by no means a nursery of culture or refinement; buffoons diverted the crowd, and Judaism was often laid under contribution to furnish a subject for their coarse jokes. Abbahu, who was acquainted with events which occurred outside the Jewish world, complained of the frivolous manner in which Jewish institutions were held up to ridicule, and cites, among others, the following examples. A camel was brought into the theater in mourning trappings; thereupon ensues the following dialogue: "Why is the camel in mourning?" "Because the Jews, who strictly observe the Sabbatical year, cannot even get herbs to eat, and are obliged to live upon thistles. The camel mourns because its food is thus snatched away." Enter Momus (the buffoon) with his head shaved. "Why does Momus mourn?" "Because oil is dear." "And why is oil so dear?" "Because of the Jews. They consume everything on the Sabbath that they have earned during the week; not even wood enough remains for them to cook their food; they must, therefore, burn their bed, and being without a bed, must sleep upon the ground and wallow in the dust; in order to avoid uncleanliness, they use a great deal of oil, and that is the reason that oil is so dear." Thus had the 543
degenerate Greeks prostituted the art of Aristophanes!

Abbahu also possessed a certain reputation in the study of the Law, but did not rank as an authority; his province was the Agadic exegesis. By reason, however, of his influence in the political world, his colleagues flattered him to excess—fearing to correct him even when he committed errors in teaching. It appears that Cæsarea, where Ushaya the elder had formerly established a temporary school, was now elevated by Abbahu to a par with Tiberias as an academical city, where the greatest Amoraïm of Palestine assembled. The synagogue in Cæsarea, whence had proceeded under Nero the first movement of revolt against the Romans, resulting eventually in the loss of independence to the Jewish state, was perhaps Abbahu's academy, and it appears to have still borne the fatal name of "the Revolution synagogue" (Kenishta di-meradta). In the same way as Simon bar Abba was accustomed to misfortune, Abbahu was attended by good luck, which did not forsake him even in his old age. He had two promising sons, Abimaï and Chanina. The latter was sent by him to Tiberias for the purpose of perfecting his education; but instead of applying himself to study, Chanina spent his time in burying the dead, whereupon his father reprimanded him in a letter which is remarkable for its laconic brevity: "Has Cæsarea, then, no graves, that I should be obliged to send thee for this purpose to Tiberias? Study must precede practical work." Abbahu was the last important personage of Judæa during Talmudical times. For fifteen successive centuries it had given birth to intellectual giants, judges, generals, kings, prophets, poets, soferim, patriots, teachers of the Law. It now ceased to produce, and brought forth no new celebrities into the world. When Abbahu died, says the legend, the statues of Cæsarea wept for him.

In Babylonia, on the contrary, the lively ardor and activity begun by Rab and Samuel, the 544
founders of the study of the Law in their native land, continued to increase after their death. During the half-century over which their labors had extended, the study of the Law had taken so deep a root that the plant throve better in foreign than in its native soil. A lively emulation to acquire a knowledge of the Law, and to regulate their life by this standard, possessed all classes of society. It was accounted the highest honor to be recognized as a master of the Law (Zorba-me-Rabbanan), and the greatest disgrace to be reckoned among the ignorant. The immorality which had formerly obtained in Jewish Babylon vanished together with the gross ignorance, and domestic and public life fashioned itself according to the ideal which had been inculcated with such enthusiasm by the two great teachers, Rab and Samuel. Babylonia assumed, in many respects, the rôle of the Holy Land, even as regards the contributions to the priests, which seem, however, to have been applied to the uses of the teachers of the Law: learning was of more account than the priesthood. Babylonia had become a regular Jewish state, whose constitution was the Mishna, and whose public props were the Prince of the Captivity and the school assembly. This impetus to a higher life also communicated itself to the princes of the captivity, and they likewise applied themselves to the study of the Law. Nehemia and Ukban, Rab's grandchildren, and Nathan, their father, were appointed Resh-Galutas in this generation; by reason of their intimate knowledge of the Halacha they received the title of honor of Rabbana.

This happy movement, which permeated all classes of Jewish society in Babylonia, was a sign that Judaism was not yet dead, but still possessed sufficient vigor to put forth new shoots. It was furthered to the utmost of their power by the successors of Rab and Samuel, of whom the most 545
prominent were: Huna, who was the chief teacher of the Sora academy, and at the same time was regarded as religious head both in Babylon and abroad; Judah ben Ezekiel, who founded a new school in Pumbeditha, and introduced a new method of studying the Halacha; Nachman b. Jacob, who transferred his academy to Shekan-Zib on the Tigris, after the destruction of Nahardea (259); and finally Chasda, Sheshet, and Rabba bar Abbahu. Almost all of these Amoraïm possessed their own peculiar tendency, and thus variety and diversity were introduced into the narrow circle of scholars in the Babylonian schools.

Huna was born about 212, at Dio Kart, and died in 297. He was Rab's successor in Sora, and the authority of this period, to whom, as already narrated, the Amoraïm of Judæa voluntarily subordinated themselves. The story of his life presents at once a perfect picture of the manners of this period, and shows how indefatigable zeal for the Law went hand in hand with secular occupations, with agriculture and other industries. Although related to the Prince of the Captivity, Huna was not originally wealthy. He cultivated his small field with his own hands, and was not ashamed of his labor. He used to remark to his visitors, who came to him to judge their differences, "Bring me a man to till my ground and I will be your judge." Often he returned home from the field with his spade upon his shoulder. He was once perceived in this condition by Chama b. Anilaï, the richest, and at the same time the most charitable and generous man in Babylonia. This liberal man almost realized the ideal in his exercise of the Jewish virtue of being a father to the poor. Bread was baked day and night in his house for the relief of the poor, doors were placed on all sides, so that all who were needy might enter, and he who came hungry into 546
the house left it satisfied. When Chama went out he held his hand continually in his purse, so as not to be obliged to keep those who felt ashamed to ask for charity in a painful situation while he was searching for his money.

At the time of the famine he caused wheat and barley to be left about at night for such persons as were prevented by their sense of honor from mixing with beggars. If an extraordinary tax was to be levied, Chama was certain to take a large share of the burden upon his own shoulders. This beneficent person possessed so much modesty, notwithstanding his extraordinary wealth, that whenever he met Huna returning from his labor, with his spade upon his shoulder, he begged to be allowed to carry it for him, out of reverence for the principal of the school. Huna, however, never permitted him to do this: "Thou art not accustomed to do such a thing in thine own town, therefore will I not allow it here."

Later on Huna grew rich, and had his fields cultivated by laborers, who received a portion of the crops; his cattle grazed on the steppes of South Babylonia. He employed his wealth in the most noble manner. On stormy days, when the winds which blow from the Syrian desert devastated the country and covered the city with ruins, he used to go about in a litter, in order to inspect the houses in Sora, and pull down any walls which might be in a falling condition. If the proprietors were not in a position to build their houses up again, Huna would have it done at his own expense. During the hours of meals, all the doors in his house were left open, and it was announced in a loud voice that all who were needy might enter and be satisfied. Other tales are related of his eager and assiduous charity. The indigent scholars who attended his school, which was situated in the neighborhood of Sora were maintained at his expense during the months of 547
study, although their numbers were anything but small. Eight hundred attended his lectures, and there were thirteen expositors placed in different parts of the building, whose duty it was to make the discourse audible and intelligible to the whole assembly. The profound reverence with which his noble character, his erudition, and his modesty inspired his friends, was nevertheless incapable of blinding them to his faults, however small they were. The teachers of the Law were extremely severe with regard to one another's conduct, and were unrelenting towards any of their number who did not come up to the ideal of the Law.

It was during the time of Huna that public life in Babylonia, which was in most intimate connection with the schools, became organized in a manner that was unchanged for almost eight centuries. Gradually and involuntarily there was formed a hierarchy of the principal and subordinate dignitaries. The school, which met, as already mentioned, during certain months of the year, was called the Metibta (session), and the principal member of this assembly was known as the Resh-Metibta (Director). Next in rank to the President came the Reshe-Kalla (Professors), whose duty consisted in elucidating during the first three weeks of the Kalla month, the theme which the Principal would take as the text of his discourses. The judicial offices were separated from the professorships; as justice was still meted out, according to ancient custom, before the gates of the city, the judges were called, by reason of this circumstance, the *Dayane-di-Baba* (Judges of the Gate). In matters of theory they were subordinate to the Principal; they were appointed by the Prince of the Captivity, on whom they were dependent in matters of practice.

For forty years Huna presided over the Metibta, and by reason of his undisputed authority, 548
Babylonia became completely independent of Judæa. He boldly acted upon the principle which his master Rab had been unable to carry through, and placed Babylonia on a footing of equality with Judæa as regarded the Law. "We consider being in Babylon just the same as being in the Holy Land," was a principle first established by Huna. He thus broke the last tie that united the land of the captivity to the mother-country, or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that he merely gave expression to the actual state of things, for, as a matter of fact, Babylonia far surpassed Judæa. Only as a mark of respect, or in case it was desired to obtain a solemn sanction of an opinion, was it usual in Babylonia to obtain a decision from the Holy Land. During the

period over which Huna's labors extended, the Sora Metibta bore sway in Babylonia.

Huna died suddenly (297) when over eighty years of age, leaving his fame and his virtues to his son Rabba. The highest honors were paid to his remains by his friends and pupils. The funeral discourse opened with the following words: "Huna deserved that the Holy Spirit should descend upon him." His corpse was carried to Judæa, probably in execution of his dying wish; there it was met by the most distinguished men, such as Assi and Ami, who procured its interment in the vault of Chiya, another Babylonian. It gradually became a pious custom to be buried in Judæa's holy earth, to which was attributed an expiatory power. The resurrection was confidently expected to take place in that country, which, it was also believed, would be the scene of the coming of the Messiah. Those who had died in unhallowed countries would roll about in the light, loose earth, until they reached the Holy Land, where they would again be revivified. In place of living inhabitants, who were continually decreasing, Judæa was becoming every day more thickly 549
populated with corpses. The Holy Land, which had formerly been one immense temple, inspiring great deeds and noble thoughts, was now a holy grave, which could render nothing holy but death. Of the numerous sanctuaries which had formerly existed, the dust alone now remained as an object of veneration. The entire central region of Judæa, the mountains of the King, was so exclusively inhabited by heathens, that it was proposed to declare it exempt from the tribute to the priests.

The antithesis and complement to Huna was his younger comrade, Judah ben Ezekiel (born 220, died 299). Although he had been a disciple of Rab, Judah seems to have inclined more to Samuel, whose characteristics he inherited. He possessed a strongly marked personality, and was highly talented, but at the same time had so many angles and edges that he was continually coming into collision with persons and circumstances. He was the descendant of an ancient Jewish stock, which was, perhaps, able to trace back its origin to families mentioned in the Bible, and for this reason he was unusually susceptible on the point of nobility of blood and purity of descent. A friend of simplicity in most matters, he vehemently attacked all who gave the preference to artificial refinement. Although he held the Holy Land in great reverence, he nevertheless blamed those who left Babylonia in order to be educated in the schools of Judæa, and was unrelenting towards such of his friends and pupils as emigrated thither. Judah founded for the first time an academy in Pumbeditha, which city, since the destruction of Nahardea, had become the center for northern Babylonia, as Sora was for the south. The Pumbeditha school, which, under Judah, was second only to the Soranian, attained in later times to the position of the leading academy. For nearly eight centuries it asserted its pre-eminence with but few intermissions, and was almost the last remnant of Jewish antiquity which beheld unmoved the 550
birth of a new epoch.

True to the character of the inhabitants of his native city, Judah ben Ezekiel allowed the intellect to predominate so greatly over the heart, that he only consecrated one day in each month to prayer, the rest of the time being devoted to the study of the Law. He had already been distinguished by Samuel as the "acute," and later on became the creator of that acute system of dialectics which in former times had gained a transitory acceptance in Judæa, and now became current in and indigenous to Babylonia. This system differed materially from that employed by the Tanaites, for it went direct to the heart of the matter, while the other clung to the formulæ of the rules of interpretation. Judah's discourses were confined solely and simply to the treatment of matters of jurisprudence, as occult comparisons and distinctions, deductions and applications, here find their proper place, and theory and practice go hand in hand. The remaining portions of the Mishna were neglected at Judah's school; he seems, in fact, to have experienced a sort of aversion to studying such parts of it as contained Halachas treating of the laws of Levitical purity which had fallen into disuse. Under Judah's influence, the extensive subject-matter of the Law shrank to the contracted dimensions of a sphere in which nothing was included but what was applicable to reality and everyday life. He introduced the precise custom of communicating not only the matter of the traditions, but even the names of the persons who had handed them down. Nevertheless, it is remarkable that his own brother, Rami (R. Ami), questioned the accuracy of the traditions handed down by him, and even gave him the lie direct. "Accept not the decrees," he would often exclaim, "which my brother Judah puts forward under the name of Rab or Samuel; but thus and thus were they handed down." In another respect also, Rami was the opponent of 551
his brother; he quitted Babylonia and emigrated to Judæa, although Judah severely censured such a course, which, he considered, constituted no slight crime against religion. He even regarded the return of the Babylonian exiles under Ezra and Zerubbabel as a violation of the Law, and considered that it had better never have come about; for the prophet Jeremiah had impressed on the captives that they should also die in Babylon. The only excuse which he found for the pious Ezra and his emigration was the assertion that the latter had led to Judæa such families as were of doubtful origin, in order to prevent their intermarrying with those whom he left behind.

As has already been mentioned, another of Judah's peculiarities was an extreme severity with regard to the purity of the race. He was so particular on this point that he delayed marrying his son Isaac long after the latter had reached maturity, because he was not certain whether the family from which he desired to procure him a wife was spotless beyond all dispute. Upon this point his friend Ulla pertinently remarked: "How do we know for certain that we ourselves are not descended from the heathens who violated the maidens of Zion at the siege of Jerusalem?" Judah's punctiliousness with regard to purity of descent caused him many a vexation. There once came to Pumbeditha a distinguished citizen of Nahardea, who claimed to be descended from the Hasmonæans, perhaps from the unfortunate king, Hyrcanus II, who had resided in Babylonia for several years. This Nahardean, who was connected with the most esteemed families of his native

town, was exceedingly vexed that Judah ben Ezekiel should be conceded the priority on every occasion, and once exclaimed scornfully: "Who is this Judah bar Sheveskeel?" When this tale came to Judah's ears, he excommunicated the Nahardean for his irreverence, and when he heard 552
that the latter actually called all persons slaves, he was so carried away by his passion that he publicly stigmatized him as a descendant of slaves. In consequence of this insult, the Nahardean complained to Nachman, the son-in-law of the Prince of the Captivity. Nachman, who was as overbearing as Judah was passionate, sent the latter a summons to appear before him to justify his conduct. The Principal of Pumbeditha was not a little astonished at thus being called upon to give an account of his conduct to Nachman, who was not only younger, but of less consequence than himself. Huna, however, with whom he took counsel, prevailed upon him to comply with this summons out of regard for the Prince of the Captivity.

Owing to his profound learning, his acuteness of intellect, and his estimable character, Judah enjoyed undisputed authority both in Babylonia and abroad. When Huna died Judah was chosen by the Sora Metibta as their Principal (297); under him and his successor there was but a single academy which was recognized by every one. His authority was recognized even in Judæa. He once excommunicated a certain distinguished member of the Metibta whose reputation was attacked. When the latter visited him on the occasion of his last illness, he openly stated that he was proud of having spared not even such a man out of regard for his position. As Judah died without having raised the ban, it was necessary to appeal to the Patriarch, in accordance with the custom which obtained in such cases. Judah had only held the office of general Resh-Metibta for two years when he died at a ripe old age.

The college elected in Judah's place the octogenarian, Chasda of Cafri (born 217, died 309). He was one of Rab's disciples, and entertained so great a reverence for his teacher that he committed to memory all the decisions which the latter had ever given, and promised a reward to 553
any one who would communicate to him any unknown trait of "our great master," as he called him. Chasda is known as the most fortunate of the Amoraïm. Originally poor, he was afterwards blessed with such extraordinary gifts of fortune that his wealth became proverbial. Sixty marriages were celebrated in his house, and it is said that no member of his family died during his lifetime. Although he had attended Huna's discourses, his method of instruction rather resembled that employed by Judah; he was extremely fond of acute explanations. Chasda's superiority over Huna, which he caused the latter to feel on one occasion, contributed to the creation of an estrangement between the two, which, it is said, lasted for forty years. In consequence of this difference Chasda appears to have withdrawn from Sora to the neighboring town of Cafri, but there he felt isolated and slighted. Once when the college of Sora appealed to him for his opinion of some dubious case, he took offense and exclaimed: "What! do you even pick up damp wood? Probably you expect to find a treasure beneath it." While Huna still held the post of Principal, Chasda erected a school in Sora at his own expense (293), but he still retained the position of disciple with regard to the former, and gave no decisions in practice. It was not until Judah's death that he was appointed Principal of the college; he held this office for ten years, and died in 309 at the age of ninety-two.

His Halachic opponent was Mar-Sheshet, who like himself had been a disciple of Rab and a pupil of Huna. Sheshet's memory was so retentive that he knew by heart not only the whole Mishna, but also all the Boraïtas. Whenever Chasda and Sheshet met, the former was dismayed at his opponent's imposing array of Boraïtas, while the latter trembled at Chasda's subtle 554
expositions. He was, in fact, a sworn enemy of that hair-splitting style of teaching which Judah had introduced into the Pumbedithan school, and which had quickly degenerated into mere subtilty. Whenever a person started any specious objection, Sheshet would ironically inquire: "Comest thou not from Pumbeditha, where they can pass an elephant through the eye of a needle?" Sheshet's relations with the Resh-Galuta of this period afford a striking proof of the neglect into which religious practices had fallen in the house of the Prince of the Captivity, and of the uncouth barbarity which still continued to rule there. Whenever the Resh-Galuta invited Sheshet to partake of his hospitality he was met by a repeated refusal. Upon being urged to explain the cause of this incivility, Sheshet answered that the slaves of the Resh-Galuta had not yet abandoned the custom of cutting the meat that was to be served in the banquet from living animals. Although the Prince of the Captivity may have been ignorant of this barbarous habit of his servants, it is nevertheless apparent that he paid no great attention to the religious conduct of his household. It was not unusual for the slaves of the Prince of the Captivity to indulge in practical jokes at the expense of the teachers of the Law who visited their master, often shutting them up in the dungeons. Nothing further is known of Sheshet, except that after the destruction of Nahardea he founded a school at Silhi on the Tigris.

The youngest member of this circle of the Amoraim was Nachman ben Jacob, one of Samuel's disciples (born about 235, died 324). He was the representative of that haughty self-reliance of the Babylonian Jews, which was founded upon their prosperity, their independence, and the certainty of a livelihood. He was a son-in-law of the Prince of the Captivity, whose daughter, Yalta, he had married after the death of her first husband, and he possessed to the full the pride, 555
ostentation, and arrogance characteristic of the princely house. Like any oriental prince, he was attended by eunuchs, ready at a moment's notice to make their master's exalted position felt by any one who should dare depreciate his reputation. He had been appointed chief judge by his father-in-law, and was so proud of this dignity, that when his colleagues attempted to place themselves on an equality with him, he forcibly reminded them that he alone was competent to act as judge. He even did not hesitate to decide many cases without the assistance of his colleagues, although it was considered an arrogant act to sit in judgment alone. His character was devoid of gentleness and humanity. Once when the slaves of the Resh-Galuta had forcibly

dispossessed an old woman of some building materials, in order to erect a tabernacle therewith, he was appealed to by the latter to award her redress for this violation of the Law: "The Prince of the Captivity and his doctors," said she, "are sitting in a stolen tabernacle." Nachman, however, scarcely listened to her; whereupon she pointedly exclaimed, "I am the daughter of a man (Abraham) who possessed 318 slaves, and cannot even find a hearing for my complaint!" To this remark Nachman returned a harsh answer, and finally decreed that at most she was only entitled to compensation for the stolen materials. He was even less considerate in his treatment of his slaves, whose sense of human dignity he outraged in a manner revolting to morality. His female slaves were not permitted to contract any lasting union, but were given in turn to different men, according as such changes were considered to afford a better chance of profit. In this he was entirely unlike his master, Samuel, who united his male and female slaves in lawful wedlock for life.

Even the teachers of the Law were treated by Nachman with imperiousness and disdain. His 556
wife, Yalta, the daughter of the Prince of the Captivity, had, contrary to custom, committed her child by her first husband to the custody of a nurse, so as to be able to marry Nachman. She even exceeded her husband in pride, and possessed all the whims and insolence of a petty oriental princess. She exacted homage of the learned men with whom her husband associated; and when, on one occasion, Ulla withheld his respects, she insulted him of set purpose. He was in the habit of making frequent journeys between Palestine and Babylonia, and was probably also poor. It was with reference to these two points that Yalta observed of him, "Travelers are full of twaddle, and rags of vermin."

Jewish jurisprudence is indebted to Nachman for an important decision, the account of the origin of which affords some indication as to the state of morality at this period. According to the principles of the old Jewish code, when a person was summoned before the court to answer for a debt, and insufficient evidence was forthcoming against him, he was only allowed to purge the charge by an oath, if he partially admitted the claim; if he repudiated it altogether, no oath could be administered. This law was based upon the assumption that every one was actuated by motives of patriarchal probity, which rendered them incapable of the audacity of openly repudiating a just claim. But this simple honesty could no longer be assumed to exist; on the contrary, it had been supplanted by a certain wily cunning, which succeeded, by reason of the wide-spread knowledge of the Law, in availing itself of the letter in order to evade the spirit. It was for this reason that Nachman, profiting by experience, introduced the oath of purgation (Shebuot hesset) in those cases where the claim was totally denied, and this decision eventually obtained the force of law. As has already been mentioned, Nachman emigrated from Nahardea 557
after its destruction, and established himself in Shakan-Zib, the inhabitants of which were notorious for their love of mockery. It is not related whether he again transferred his residence to Nahardea, after that city was restored.

A connecting link between Judæa and Babylonia, of which two countries the former was slowly declining while the latter was gradually coming to the fore, was formed by Zeïra, who was the highest authority in Judæa during the following generation. The history of this man brings into prominent relief the opposition existing between the mother-country and the Babylonian colony. He had been a pupil of Huna and Judah, but was dissatisfied with the method of teaching employed in Babylonia, and yearned for the simple method of the Amoraïm, which obtained in the schools of Galilee. He hesitated to quit Babylonia, however, in deference to Judah's dislike of emigration. When, at last, he stole away, so to speak, from his native country, his longing to behold the Holy Land was so irresistible, that he ventured to cross the Jordan by a rope, so as not to lose time in searching for a bridge. A Christian who was witness of the traveler's haste, remarked reprovingly to Zeïra: "You Jews have not yet abandoned your old fault of precipitancy, which showed itself among you at Mount Sinai"; whereupon the latter rejoined: "Ought I to delay a single moment to enter the Holy Land, the sight of which was not even vouchsafed to Moses and Aaron, our teachers?"

Arrived at Tiberias, Zeïra endeavored to forget the minute analysis which constituted the Babylonian method of teaching. The legend adds that he fasted for forty days, in order to give weight to his prayers, in which he entreated that the hateful Babylonian system might vanish entirely from his memory. Judæa and its peculiar method, on the other hand, seemed to him to be 558
surrounded with a halo of glory, and "the atmosphere of the Holy Land appeared to him pregnant with wisdom." The characteristic tendency of Babylonia, however, had gained so strong a hold on his mind that he was unable to free himself from it, even in Judæa. However greatly he strove to acquire the simplicity of the Judæan method, he never succeeded in entirely eradicating the influence of the Babylonian rational analysis, and it was on account of this very superiority which he himself failed to recognize, that he was held in high esteem by the Amoraïm of Judæa. The dignity of teacher was conferred upon him within a very short time. His modesty was so great, however, that, like King Saul, he hid himself, and only consented to be ordained when it was represented to him that remission of sins was attached thereto. In the encomium which it had become customary to recite on the occasion of an ordination, allusion was made to Zeïra's small, insignificant figure, in the following terms: "Without brilliancy, without glitter, but not without charm." He became one of the authorities of Judæa, together with Ami, Assi, and Abbahu, all of whom he outlived. At his grave a poet recited an elegy, which shows better taste than most of the verses produced on similar occasions; it ran somewhat as follows:—

"To him whom fruitful Sinear hath borne,
The Holy Land a crown of wisdom lent;
And sad Tiberias droops her head, to mourn

For him who was her chiefest ornament."

CHAPTER XXI.

THE TRIUMPH OF CHRISTIANITY AND ITS RELATIONS TO JUDAISM.

Hillel II.—His Calendar—Heads of Judæan Schools: Jonah, José, and Jeremiah—The Expansion of Christianity—Constantine—The Decadence of the Jewish Schools in Babylonia—The Pumbeditha School—Development of Talmudical Dialectics—The Persian Queen Ifra and her son Shabur II.—The Emperor Julian—Favor shown towards the Jews—Proposed Rebuilding of the Temple—Roman Tolerance.

320–375 C. E.

The period during which Christendom asserted its triumphant sway marked a decisive crisis in the history of nations, and closed also an epoch in Jewish history. The harvest which had slowly and invisibly been maturing during the preceding centuries was now ripe. Christianity, although hated and persecuted, had still remained defiant, and at last disarmed its enemies by drawing them within the circle of its influence. The Roman Empire, which seems to have felt an instinctive dread of its approaching dissolution through the religion of Christ, submitted to baptism, thus prolonging its assigned length of existence by the space of a century and a half. Heathenism, which was nourished by and in turn bred irrational ideas, deceit, and immorality, was obliged to surrender its life of shams, and make room for another form of religion.

The new religion which thus pressed triumphantly to the fore, possessed innumerable advantages over heathenism, in that it laid down in theory as a fundamental principle, a worthier conception of God and a purer morality, although it was very far from conforming in practice to 560
these tenets. At the same time as Rome and Italy lost their importance and retained only a shadow of their former greatness, Judæa and Tiberias, which had taken the place of Jerusalem, sank into insignificance. Like Italy, the seat of heathen civilization, Judæa was impoverished and stunted by Christianity. By means of the political power to which this religion now attained—the possession of the imperial dignity placing the axe of the lictors and the sword of the legions under its command—Judæa was soon deprived of its intellectual life, and the school of Tiberias lost the power of attraction which it had so long exercised, and sank into decadence.

While Babylonia was raised during the next fifty years to the pinnacle of its fame by the exertions of three original Amoraïm, Rabba, Abayi, and Raba, the Judæan Amoraïm of this period were of no importance. The few men of these times whose names have survived are Chaggai, who became an authority by reason of his age, Jonah II and José, the disciples and successors of Ami and Assi. The sole recognized authority of Judæa was Jeremiah; but he was an emigrant from Babylonia, where he had been so little appreciated that he had been turned out of the schools. The office of Patriarch also sank at this period into complete insignificance, its holder, Hillel II, having in imitation of his great-grandfather Hillel, self-denyingly resigned a portion of his power. It is remarkable that at the same time as the Patriarchate lost all consequence in Judæa, it acquired a showy splendor abroad, as if the corpse were being adorned before being lowered into the grave. During the last century of the existence of the office, the Patriarchs received the pompous titles of "Highness" (*illustres*), "Worshipful" (*spectabiles*), "Famous" (*clarissimi*), which
titles they enjoyed in conjunction with the highest dignitaries of the State, with whom, to all 561
appearances, they were thus placed on an equality. "Let him who dares to publicly insult the illustrious Patriarchs be visited with severe punishment," commands an imperial edict, which, although dating from a later period, rests nevertheless on the earlier legislation affecting the Patriarchs.

The Emperor Constantine, who had aggrandized the Church, and laid the dominion of the earth at her feet, had at the same time given her the doubtful blessing, "By the sword thou shalt live." He had originally placed Judaism, as a religion, on an equal footing with the other forms of worship existing in the Roman Empire. For, before adopting the Christian faith, and determining above all things to put a stop to religious persecutions throughout his dominions, Constantine had published a sort of edict of toleration, wherein he had commanded that every man should enjoy the right of professing any religion without thereby becoming an outlaw. The Jews were likewise included in this act of toleration, and their patriarchs, elders, and the principals of the schools and synagogues enjoyed the same privileges as the Christian ecclesiastics and the heathen priests. These decisions continued in force, and in later times were sanctioned by new laws, although another spirit began to sway the newly-founded Byzantine court. The rule was established that the members of the synagogue who dedicated themselves to the Law, the Patriarchs, Priests, and other religious officials, should be relieved from all municipal and other onerous offices. Taking as models the constitution of the Roman priesthood, and the Christian system of bishops, the Patriarch of Judæa was regarded as the chief of all the Jews in the Roman Empire. Constantine's impartial justice, however, lasted but a short time. The more Christianity
asserted its influence over him, the more did he affect the intolerance of that religion, which, 562
forgetful of its origin, entertained as passionate a hatred of Judaism and its adherents as of heathenism. Sylvester, Bishop of Rome, Paul, afterwards Bishop of Constantinople, the new capital, and Eusebius of Cæsarea, the first historian of the Church, did not fail to incite the inhabitants of the empire against the Jews. Judaism was stigmatized as a noxious, profligate, godless sect (*feralis*, *nefaria secta*) which ought to be exterminated from the face of the earth wherever possible. An imperial edict was published to the effect that the Jews were no longer to make converts, those entering, as well as those receiving newcomers into the faith being threatened with punishment (315). Finally the proselytism of the Christians was afforded the aid

of the State, and the Jews were forbidden to pronounce upon such of the members of their community as apostatized the punishment which Christianity was, however, permitted to inflict in a terribly aggravated degree upon its own adherents who left its fold. "All who dare attack the apostates with stones or in any other manner, shall be delivered to the flames, together with their accomplices." It was impossible, in fact, that Jews without fixed opinions should not be tempted by Constantine's decided leaning towards Christianity, and the prospect of profit, to change their religion. The Church expressly aimed, by all sorts of promises, at seducing the weaker members of the Jewish community from their faith, laying especial emphasis on the disadvantages which would accrue from adherence to Judaism, and on the benefits which the apostate would derive from the State. "Why do you suffer death for your God? See to what punishments and pillagings He has condemned you! Come to us; we will make you dukes, and governors and captains." "The sinful Roman Empire, the son of thy mother, attempts to make the faithful waver," such were the 563
texts from which the public orators of the synagogue had henceforth to preach. The privileges of the Jews were abolished by Constantine—as, for instance, in the city of Cologne—and it was decreed by him that, with the exception of two or three men, all of them were liable to be called upon to fill the burdensome municipal offices.

Then the world witnessed the hitherto undreamt-of spectacle of the first general convocation of Nice, consisting of several hundred bishops and priests, with the emperor at their head (325). Christianity thought to celebrate its triumph, but only succeeded in betraying its weakness and internal disunion. For on the occasion of this, its first official appearance, in all the splendor of its plenitude of spiritual and temporal power, there remained no trace of its original character. The Essenean doctrine of humility, brotherly love, and community of possessions; the Pauline zeal for morality and sound opinions; the ardor of the Alexandrian school for scientific erudition;—all had vanished. Dogmatical disputes, whether Christ the Son was equal to the Father, whether he resembled or differed from him, disputes all the more bitterly carried on because of the impossibility of settling the question either way,—these were the points which henceforward constituted the foreground of the history of the Church which was destined to represent the history of the world. At the Council of Nice the last thread was snapped which connected Christianity with its parent stock. The festival of Easter had up till now been celebrated for the most part at the same time as the Jewish Passover, and indeed upon the days calculated and fixed by the Synhedrion in Judæa for its celebration; but in future its observance was to be rendered altogether independent of the Jewish calendar, "For it is unbecoming beyond measure that on 564
this the holiest of festivals we should follow the customs of the Jews. Henceforward let us have nothing in common with this odious people; our Savior has shown us another path. It would indeed be absurd if the Jews were able to boast that we are not in a position to celebrate the Passover without the aid of their rules (calculations)." These remarks are attributed to the Emperor Constantine, and even though they may not have been uttered by him, they were nevertheless the guiding principle of the Church which was now to decide the fate of the Jews.

The first utterance of Christianity on the very day of its victory betrayed its hostile attitude towards the Jews, and gave rise to those malignant decrees of Constantine and his successors, which laid the foundation of the bloody persecutions of subsequent centuries. Constantine re-enacted—undoubtedly at the instigation of the clergy—the law of Hadrian, which forbade the Jews to live in Jerusalem. Only on the anniversary of the destruction of the city were they allowed, on making certain payments to the officials, to mourn on the ruins of the Temple. The clergy further succeeded in obtaining a law from Constantine prohibiting the Jews from making converts among the slaves. Christianity claimed the monopoly of expansion, and forbade Judaism to increase its influence either by making proselytes or by converting its slaves. Constantine seems, however, to have protected the Jews against the arrogance of such of their brethren as had gone over to Christianity; these converts, for the most part possessed of no fixed opinions, attempted to revenge themselves on their former fellow-countrymen and co-religionists. One of these apostates, Joseph by name, seems at this period to have vigorously persecuted the Palestinean Jews. He had been one of the assessors of the Patriarch in the Synhedrion of Tiberias, and had been entrusted with the honorable office of delegate and envoy to the 565
communities of Cilicia. There he had frequently associated in secret with a bishop, and had obtained the writings of the New Testament to read. The Cilician Jews raised doubts as to his orthodoxy, and as, in addition to this, he was not greatly beloved, on account of his high-handed treatment of the teachers and religious dignitaries, some of whom he even degraded, certain of the Cilicians entered his residence by surprise, and discovered him reading the gospel. How is it possible to blame the Jews of Cilicia for venting upon his person their indignation at his deceit? They are said to have thrown him into the river Cydnus, and he is supposed to have escaped death only by a miracle. Nothing now remained for Joseph but to publicly announce his adoption of Christianity. If he is to be believed, many Jews, including the most learned and worthy among them, nourished at this period a secret predilection for Christianity. Joseph even relates a thoroughly incredible tale of the aged Patriarch (probably Judah III), according to which the latter was a secret adherent of the religion of Jesus, and feeling a desire to be baptized, he invited a bishop from the neighborhood of Tiberias, under pretext of obtaining his medical advice.

The Christian clergy of Palestine, and probably the bishop Eusebius, who stood in high favor with the emperor, took care that Joseph should be well rewarded for his apostasy. Constantine conferred upon him the dignity of Comes, which carried with it a sort of immunity from punishment in case of misdemeanor or violation of the law. He was also granted permission by the emperor to build the first churches of Galilee—at Tiberias, Sepphoris (Dio-cæsarea), Nazareth, and Capernaum—where but few Christians had hitherto resided.

The Patriarch's son and successor, Hillel II, who is said to have been still a minor at the death 566

of his father, was defamed by Joseph with a twofold purpose; he desired, in the first place, to brand with infamy, simply by the force of calumny, a fellow-countryman of exalted position who had sufficient reason to hate him; and secondly, he wished to attest the miraculous power of the sign of the cross. He is said to have been appointed guardian and tutor to the young Patriarch, of whom he related that, being led astray by his youthful companions, he had abandoned himself to a life of indulgence, and had even seduced honest and virtuous women by the use of magical arts. This same Patriarch, Hillel II, who flourished from about 320 to 365, was, however, one of the most estimable successors of the elder Hillel; he was certainly no votary of Christianity, and was favored by an emperor who likewise had reason to dislike the arrogant Church.

It was in reality under Constantius (327–330), the fratricide and arch-persecutor of heretics, that the Christian rule was introduced into the Roman empire, and that the misfortunes of the Jews commenced. If the champions of the Church had not been blinded by vindictiveness and dogmatism, they would necessarily have perceived that by accepting the support of the political power they were acknowledging the authority of a master and turning the spear against their own breasts. The emperor Constantius could boldly exclaim, "Let my will be religion and the law of the Church!" It was not the fathers of the Church who decided questions of religion in the last instance, but the eunuchs and the serving-women of the court. How could the Jews expect humane treatment when the members of the Church, from the emperor down to the most humble of his subjects, were prompted by a spirit of fanaticism to persecute one another on account of verbal disputes? At the very beginning of Constantius' reign, the Jewish teachers of the Law were 567
banished; in consequence of this decree several of them emigrated to Babylonia. Among those who were exiled there were two who are known by name: Dimé and Isaac bar Joseph. These persecutions seem to have been aggravated in the course of time; the teachers of the Law were threatened with death, whereby the stream of emigration from Judæa was naturally increased. Abin and Samuel bar Judah were among the later emigrants (337–338). The consequences of these events were the decline of the Academy of Tiberias and the general decay of active teaching. Up till then there had still existed a sort of Synhedrion, employing the usual method of voting at its meetings; Haggai, Jonah, and José are named as members of it.

The sentiment of hostility, nourished by Constantius against the Jews, also manifested itself in several laws concerning them. The causes of this persecution remain involved in complete obscurity, and it is impossible to ascertain whether the apostate Joseph, that second Acher, was in any way connected therewith. Marriages between Jews and Christian women, which appear to have been of not infrequent occurrence, were punished with death under the emperor Constantius (339). Of even greater consequence was the law concerning slaves which was promulgated by him. Whereas his father had only forbidden the admission of slaves into the Jewish community, and had simply punished the transgression of this prohibition by declaring forfeited all slaves so admitted, Constantius decreed (339) that the circumcision of a Christian slave entailed the pain of death and the entire loss of fortune. He even forbade the reception of heathen slaves into the covenant of Judaism. The grounds for this law were twofold: it was desired that Judaism should receive no increase through its adoption by slaves, and also that Christians should not serve Jewish masters, "the assassins of God." This preposterous view has 568
been held by the Church ever since, and prevails even at the present day, although in another form. These restraints and rigors were by no means legal, for the Jews were still reputed citizens of the Roman empire, and in consequence of this equality with the other inhabitants, ought not to have been subject to any exceptional laws. But what were right and law to this emperor, who, as unscrupulous as he was weak, was swayed by the eunuchs and the ecclesiastics of the court? His conceits and caprices were law. Constantius, or the ecclesiastics of his court, were the founders of the Christian State.

The sufferings of the Jews became unbearable when Constantius sent his cousin and co-emperor Gallus to the East to operate against the ever-increasing power of the Persians (351). Gallus, who was addicted to debauchery, abandoned the conduct of the war to his legate Ursicinus. The latter, during three long years, worked more dire distress in Judæa than any imperial master. As the Roman legions were quartered in the cities of Judæa, Ursicinus made it the duty of the Jewish inhabitants to furnish the provisions necessary for their maintenance, and prosecuted his demands so inexorably that the Jewish communities were thereby driven to violate the laws of their religion. The Roman military officials demanded, for example, that the troops should be supplied with new bread, even on the Sabbath and the feast of unleavened bread. The communities of Judæa were so disheartened that the teachers of the Law vied with one another in granting indulgences and mitigating the severity of the Law. The two authorities of Tiberias, Jonah and José, taught that it was lawful to bake for Ursicinus' army on the Sabbath; and the teachers of Neve, a Gaulanite town, permitted leavened bread to be baked for the legions during Passover. In their distress the religious representatives quieted their consciences with the 569
excuse, which they deluded themselves into believing, that the enemy did not expressly demand the transgression of the Law, but simply required the regular supply of the army. But Ursicinus' intention appears really to have been to institute a religious persecution, for at Senbaris, a small town situated about four miles from Tiberias, he burnt a scroll of the Law which had been consecrated to the public use, and this act could not relate in any way to the service of the army. Besides this, an intolerable weight of taxes burdened the Jews of Palestine, who were for the most part greatly impoverished. Among these burdens were the supply of natural produce (corn and cattle), the payment of a poll-tax, of the tribute, and, in addition thereto, of a tax levied on every trade, and of all sorts of fines. The complaints which were uttered against these onerous taxes found an echo in the pulpit. "In the same way as when a garment hanging on a hedge of thorns has been disengaged from one side, it is immediately torn by the other, so does it happen

to us under the rule of Esau (Rome). No sooner have the supplies of produce been carried off than it is the turn of the poll-tax, and before this has been paid, the tribute is demanded. Wicked Esau behaves with artful cunning towards Israel. Thou hast stolen or killed. Thou hast not stolen? Who stole with thee? Thou hast not killed? Who was thy accomplice? Pay down thy fines, provide supplies, pay the poll-tax and other imposts."

These multitudinous oppressions with which the Jews were visited by the first Christian emperors, inspired them with the courage of despair and roused them to a fresh revolt. Although but little is known of this rebellion and its consequences, the accounts appearing to be but lightly sketched, it is possible nevertheless to collect some isolated particulars. The seat of the revolt 570
was at Sepphoris, where, under cover of the night, the Jews surprised the Roman troops stationed there, slaughtered them, and gained possession of their weapons. According to one account the Jews were led by a chief of the name of Patricius or Patrick (Netira), whom they raised to the position of prince. Masters of the mountain town of Sepphoris, they ventured upon extensive incursions into the surrounding country, with a view to revenging themselves on their enemies for the outrages to which they had so long been subjected. Similar revolts must also have occurred at this time in the two most important towns of Judæa, Tiberias and Lydda, as well as at various other places. Thus the revolt acquired not inconsiderable dimensions, and for this reason Constantius was obliged to reinforce his colleague Gallus with fresh legions. With the aid of these troops the latter completely suppressed the rebellion, but showed so little mercy to the vanquished that not even the children were spared. Many thousands of Jews fell as the victims of an insurrection in which prudence had been overcome by despair. Sepphoris was razed to the ground, and Tiberias, Lydda, and the other cities which had joined the rebellion were partially destroyed (352).

As had always been the case after similar rebellions, those who had taken part in the revolt were hunted down, so that none of them might escape punishment; the inhabitants of Sepphoris, being the originators of the rising, were most rigorously sought out by Ursicinus. In order to escape this persecution they made themselves unrecognizable by masking their faces, and by this means escaped detection for a while. At last, however, traitors came forward and informed the authorities of the deceit practised by the Sepphorians, and the latter were accordingly seized and executed on the spot. Many of the refugees had meanwhile hidden themselves in the 571
subterranean passages of Tiberias, where they were safe from the Romans. Huna relates: "When we took refuge in the subterranean passages, we had torches with us; if they showed but a feeble light, we knew that it was day, while when they burned more brightly we perceived that night was at hand." According to this, the refugees must have passed some time in these caverns.

Meanwhile Constantius appears to have re-enacted Hadrian's edict against the Jews, for the discharge of religious duties was prohibited, and even the computation of the calendar and trade in articles of religious use were forbidden. When it was desired to inform Raba, who was at this period the principal of the schools in Machuza, of the intended intercalation of a month, and of the restraint laid on the exercise of religion, it was necessary to adopt a mysterious and enigmatical style, and to make use of obscure allusions. The news was communicated in the following terms: "Men came from Reket (Tiberias), and the eagle (the Romans) caught them; for they held in their hand that which is fabricated at Luz (a blue-purple color for fringes). But by God's mercy and their own merits, they have nevertheless escaped in safety. The successors of Nachshon (Patriarch) desired to appoint a supporter of the months (intercalated month), but the Arameans (Romans) would not allow it; notwithstanding this, they assembled and intercalated the month of the death of Aaron (Ab)." This secret epistle to Babylonia betrays the distress which existed in Judæa at this period. The dispersed and weakened Synhedrion must have been prevented from inserting the usual supplementary month in the spring (Adar), and must have been compelled to transpose it to some unusual season which had not been sanctioned by the Law. On one occasion, about this period, the Jews were forbidden to observe the Day of 572
Atonement, and were accordingly compelled to postpone it till the Sabbath. This condition of distress in which Judæa was plunged was not at all altered when the barbarous Gallus was put to death at Constantius' command, and Ursicinus fell into disfavor (354). The adherents of Judaism were regarded at the imperial court of Constantinople as simple atheists, by reason of their refusal to recognize Jesus. This view gave rise to the law (357) that all Christians who joined the "blasphemous" communities of the Jews should incur the punishment of the forfeiture of their possessions. The creatures of Constantius, Eusebius the chamberlain among others, had specially aimed at the confiscation of property, and they burdened the Jews with illegal taxes, heavy beyond measure, hoping to exterminate them by impoverishment and exhaustion. New tables of taxes had already been drawn up, with a view to still further increasing their severity, on the pretext that as the Jews were atheists they deserved no protection. They were delivered from this oppression in an unexpected manner by the Emperor Julian, who differed as greatly from his brother Gallus, as from his cousin and co-emperor, Constantius.

The miserable condition of Judæa was the occasion of an act of self-renunciation on the part of the Patriarch Hillel, which has not yet been thoroughly appreciated. The custom had prevailed up till now of keeping secret the computation of the new moon and the leap year, and of making known the times of the festivals to the communities in the neighboring lands by announcing them by messengers. During the persecutions under Constantius this method had proved itself to be impracticable and useless. Whenever the Synhedrion was prevented from fixing the date of the leap year, the Jewish communities in distant countries were left in utter doubt concerning the most important religious decisions. In order to put a stop to all difficulty and uncertainty, Hillel II 573
introduced a final and fixed calendar; that is to say he placed at every one's disposal the means of establishing the rules which had guided the Synhedrion up till then in the calculation of the

calendar and the fixing of the festivals. With his own hand the Patriarch destroyed the last bond which united the communities dispersed throughout the Roman and Persian empires with the Patriarchate. He was more concerned for the certainty of the continuance of Judaism than for the dignity of his own house, and therefore abandoned those functions for which his ancestors, Gamaliel II and Simon his son, had been so jealous and solicitous. The members of the Synhedrion favored this innovation; they only desired that the second day of the festivals, which had always been celebrated by the communities not situated in Palestine, should not now be disregarded. José addressed to the Alexandrian communities an epistle containing the following words: "Although we have made you acquainted with the order of the festivals, nevertheless change not the custom of your ancestors" (*i. e.* to observe the second day of the festivals). The same recommendation was also made to the Babylonians: "Adhere closely to the customs of your fathers." This advice was conscientiously followed, and the second day is observed by all the non-Palestinean communities even at the present time.

The method of calculating the calendar introduced by Hillel is so simple and certain that up to the present day it has not required either emendation or amplification, and for this reason is acknowledged to be perfect by all who are competent to express an opinion on the subject, whether Jews or non-Jews. The system is based upon a cycle of nineteen years, in which seven leap years occur. Ten months in every year are invariable, and consist alternately of twenty-nine and thirty days; the two autumn months only which follow Tishri (the most important of all the months) are left variable, as being dependent on certain circumstances in astronomy and Jewish law. This and other computations rest, however, on rules so simple, and are so plain and easy, that the veriest tyro is thereby enabled to draw up a calendar for a hundred, or even a thousand years. It has not been ascertained how much of this system was invented by Hillel, and how much he owed to tradition, for it is indisputable that certain astronomical rules were regarded as traditional in the patriarchal house; in any case, Hillel appears to have made use of Samuel's calendar. This calendar and the year of its introduction are now known. It was published in the 670th year of the Seleucidean era, the 359th of the common reckoning. 574

The oppression which thus fell upon the inhabitants of Palestine, and which gave rise to Hillel's calendar, augmented the importance and influence of Babylonia, and although Christianity could boast of having broken up the academies and destroyed, so to speak, the Temple of the Law in Judæa, the destruction was nevertheless merely local. In Babylonia the study of the Law acquired so vigorous an impetus that the achievements of ancient times were almost eclipsed; the study of the Law was now celebrating the period of its maturity. Two methods of instruction in the traditions especially had developed, namely, that of receiving the authentic terms of the traditions and handing them down in exactly the same words, and that of making a fruitful application of the same, and of further amplifying them. Each of these methods was represented by one of the academies of Babylonia; Sora was receptive, Pumbeditha creative. Altogether Sora can be regarded only as a continuation of the academies of Judæa, as a sort of Babylonian Tiberias; and although the spirit which reigned there underwent a change under the influence of the Babylonian method, still the Soranian school never furthered the cause of study to any appreciable extent. It was Pumbeditha that raised learning to its highest level. The acute scholars of Pumbeditha, produced by Judah ben Ezekiel's Academy, held sway at this period over Babylonia and the dependent countries. The leaders and representatives of this movement formed a triumvirate, consisting of Rabba, and his comrades and disciples, Abayi and Raba. It was these three that gave the finishing touch to the work of completing the Talmud, or rather who raised the study of the Halacha to the rank of an intellectual system of dialectics. 575

Rabba bar Nachmani (born about 270, died 330) possessed, like the family to which he belonged, certain original qualities. He was of a family from Mamal or Mamala, a city of Galilee, the inhabitants of which were for the most part descendants of Aaron, and members of the family of Eli; they asserted that they participated in the curse with which this house had been visited, and which prevented any of its members from ever attaining extreme old age. Whoever went to Mamala was astonished at seeing so many persons with black hair; a grey-haired man was a rarity.

Rabba had three brothers, whose names were Kailil, Ushaya, and Chananya; all of them lived in the greatest poverty, which misfortune they also ascribed to the curse resting on the house of Eli. Ushaya, the younger, and Chananya, who had returned to Judæa, obtained a precarious living as shoemakers. By reason of the scarcity of customers, they were sometimes obliged to sell their work to prostitutes. Nevertheless, their minds remained so pure and chaste that they were never reproached with a single immodest glance; they were consequently held in high esteem, and were known as the "saints of the land of Israel." These two brothers applied themselves to the Agada, the favorite study in Judæa, while Rabba, their sober brother, who as a child had shown signs of great acuteness of mind, evinced a predilection for the Halacha, in which province his labor was epoch-making. He had determined to remain in Babylonia, and his brothers, unable to quiet their apprehensions concerning his lot, used all their endeavors to persuade him to come to Judæa. "It is not all one," ran their message to him, "whether one dies in or out of Judæa; for the Patriarch Jacob attached great weight to being buried in the Holy Land. Although thou art learned, still it is better to have a master than to educate thyself. And if thou thinkest that there is no teacher of importance to be found in the academies of Judæa, we inform thee that thou wouldst indeed find such a one here." In consequence of this pressing invitation, and contrary to the principles of Judah, his teacher, Rabba emigrated to Judæa. Some time after, however, he returned to Babylonia, probably because he was dissatisfied with the Judæan method of teaching. Rabba's worldly affairs are described as most miserable, and are frequently contrasted with Chasda's uninterrupted happiness. 576

After the death of his teacher Judah in 299, the Pumbedithan College, which was composed of lovers of dialectics, esteemed Rabba to be the only person worthy of occupying the vacancy thus created in the school. He was therefore offered the honor of becoming Judah's successor, but his exceeding modesty induced him to decline the post. The vacancy was eventually filled by Huna ben Chiya, whose wealth was so immense that he furnished his audience in the lecture-room with gilded seats. Although the greater number of the disciples frequented Sora, the Pumbedithan Academy nevertheless counted 400 students. Both Rabba and his friend Joseph associated 577
themselves with the local academy, and subordinated themselves to the principal, in order to prevent the school from being deprived of the reputation which it had at last succeeded in gaining. When it came to be known in what manner Huna ben Chiya had acquired his wealth, which had been amassed by the farming of tolls, he was given to understand that the dignity of teacher must not be stained by association with that hateful trade, and that he must give up either one or the other. Having abandoned the calling of farmer of tolls, he was recognized by the college, which followed Rabba's example, as a worthy principal of the academy. Joseph was the only person who refused to acquiesce in the appointment. The not altogether spotless reputation of its principal, however, threatened to become a cause of ruin to the Pumbedithan Academy; care was therefore taken after the death of Huna to make a better choice, in order to enlist the sympathy of the people and to attract a numerous audience. Two men appeared worthy to fill this post, Rabba bar Nachmani and Joseph ben Chiya, the one distinguished for Talmudical dialectics, and the other for Halachic erudition. The choice between the two was so difficult that it was determined to take counsel of Judæa, and the following question was accordingly asked: "Who possesses the superiority, Sinai (man of learning), or the remover of mountains (man of acuteness)?" In Tiberias, where the acute method of teaching, although not hated, was nevertheless held in low esteem, the decision was given in favor of the former. But Joseph entertained scruples against accepting this dignity. His nativity had once been cast by a Chaldean, who had informed him that he would obtain a position of great authority, but would not be able to retain it longer than two years and six months, after which he would die. In spite of 578
the legal prohibition forbidding credence to be given to the wisdom of the Chaldeans, the most noted teachers of the Law were unable to free themselves from its influence; daily example was stronger than the Law. Joseph having refused the post thus offered to him, it was conferred upon Rabba (309), and in him the Pumbedithan Academy found its ideal.

Rabba restored anew to the academy its extinguished fame, and attracted to his discourses a crowd of students, amounting at times to as many as 1200. He did not confine his lectures to the practical part of jurisprudence alone, as Judah had done, but treated of all the subjects contained in the Mishna; he sought to reconcile the various contradictions existing in the Mishna, the Boraitas, and the additions made by the Amoraic authorities (Memra), and generally to introduce clearness into the study of the Halacha. He even turned his attention to the remote subject of the laws of Levitical purity, which he succeeded in making comprehensible; but in this branch of study, which had vanished out of every-day life, he stood quite alone, a fact that he frequently lamented. He was distinguished by a desire to enter deeply into the motives not only of the Pentateuch, but also of the Sopheric and Mishnaic laws, and to draw conclusions from them. The formulæ which he employed as an introduction to these investigations ran as follows: "Wherefore has the Law commanded this?" or "Why are such-and-such things prohibited by the teachers of the Law?" His luminous conception and treatment of his subject invested it with life, while the variety which he succeeded in imparting to a dry theme by means of the occasional introduction of an Agadic sentence made it both interesting and captivating. At times he would entertain the students with interesting anecdotes before beginning his discourse, and as soon as he thought 579
that he had put them in a cheerful temper, he would begin to treat of more serious and weighty subjects. His guiding principle was that the soul must be prepared for the reception of serious thoughts, and that this receptivity was best awakened by cheerfulness. Rabba often put catch questions to his pupils, or expressed paradoxical opinions, in order to test their judgment or sharpen their intellect. Rabba holds the same important position among the Amoraim, as Akiba among the Tanaites. He collected scattered and fragmentary subjects under general heads. For this reason the reverence in which he was held by the teachers of the Law equaled that which was entertained for the founder of Babylonian Jewish life. But in proportion as he was beloved by this circle, he was obnoxious to the populace of Pumbeditha. His fellow-countrymen could not forgive this severe censor for the sharp, reproachful words with which, in his honesty and stern morality, he strove to combat their deceits and artifices. Once, on the occasion of a drought, when Rabba had proclaimed a public fast, and had ordered prayers to be offered up, without succeeding in obtaining rain, he exclaimed reproachfully to the populace: "It is not because we leaders of the people are worse than in the time of my master Judah, that Heaven refuses to gratify our wishes; nor is it because we are less diligent in the study of the Law. But what can be done by the representatives of the people when the entire race is degenerate?"

On account of their needy circumstances Rabba and another Amora, Ada, appear to have become the colleagues (Chacham) of Mar-Ukban, a grandchild of Rab, and at that time Prince of the Captivity, at whose expense they were probably supported. While the principals of the Soranian Academy were wealthy, often supporting the entire expenses of the schools, and maintaining a large number of disciples from their own purse, those of Pumbeditha generally 580
possessed but small means. This circumstance necessitated the establishment of an academical fund at Pumbeditha, to which the communities and the Prince of the Captivity probably contributed.

In Rabba's time the Babylonian Jews were the victims of a transitory persecution, which, although insignificant when compared with those which had occurred in the Roman empire, was

nevertheless calculated to arouse the sufferers from their feeling of profound safety. It was during the long reign (310–380) of Shabur II, the new king of the Sassanian dynasty, who had been acknowledged as ruler while yet unborn, that the friendly relation in which the Jews had stood to the Persian court became disturbed, and it is possible that they would have been as cruelly persecuted as the Christians, had it not been that Ifra-Ormuzd, the king's mother, was prepossessed in favor of Judaism and the Jews. The account briefly narrates that a body of troops marched into Pumbeditha, whereupon Rabba and Joseph took to flight. A serious charge had been brought against Rabba, the king or his councillors having been secretly informed that, by means of Rabba's discourses during the Kalla months, his 1200 students had been induced to evade the payment of the poll-tax. A royal bailiff was sent out with orders to seize the person of the principal of the Pumbedithan Academy. Being warned in advance, Rabba fled, and in order to escape detection he wandered about in the surrounding country. His death was caused by fright at the rustling of the wind in the trees, which the fugitive mistook for the tramp of advancing soldiery. Abayi and Raba, his most distinguished disciples, together with the rest of the members of the academy, went in search of his corpse, which they eventually found covered over and hidden by birds. They mourned during seven days for this highly esteemed Amora (330). The 581
charge, which was the occasion of Rabba's death, does not seem to have been further prosecuted. The queen-mother, Ifra, even sent a purse of denars to his successor, leaving it to him to make the best and most pious use of it, whereupon he employed it in ransoming Jewish prisoners.

Rabba's successor and friend, Joseph ben Chiya (born about 270, died about 333), was sickly and sensitive, and possessed a passionate disposition. He was aware of his failings and complained that they prevented him from enjoying life. He seems to have been very wealthy, and to have possessed fields, palm-trees and vineyards, from which latter—as he cultivated them more carefully than was generally the case—he obtained better wine than was commonly produced. Upon being afflicted with blindness, he grieved less for the loss of his sight than on account of his being thereby relieved from performing various religious duties.

Joseph was exceptional among the principals of the Pumbedithan Academy, inasmuch as he attached more weight to the acquisition of a knowledge of the Mishna and the Boraïtas by committing them to memory, than to the drawing of ingenious conclusions. For this reason he was known by the title of "Sinai" and "Possessor of Storehouses." Besides studying the Halacha, he turned his attention to the Targum or Chaldaic translation of the Holy Scriptures. The Torah, and probably also isolated portions of the Prophets, which were used for public reading (Haftara), had long ago been translated into the Aramaic dialects—both the Syriac and the Chaldaic. There existed various Chaldaic translations of the Torah for the use of those who were ignorant of Hebrew: one of these, based probably on the favorite Greek version of Akylas, bore the name of *Targum Onkelos*; the Syrian translation, employed by such of the Jews of Syria and 582
Mesopotamia as spoke Syriac, was called *Peshito* (the simple). The greater portion of the Prophets, however, had not been translated, and it was Joseph who first took in hand a Chaldaic translation thereof. Some persons believed that this was a work of piety, as Joseph was prevented by his blindness from reading, and was unwilling to recite the Hebrew text by heart, on account of the prohibition against oral quotation of the written Law. He therefore set about translating the Prophets on his own account, in order to be able to quote any desired passage in Chaldaic. Joseph's translation was incorporated in the Targum, and was accepted as a decisive authority on questions relating to the explanation of doubtful words.

He was exceedingly severe in maintaining discipline in his capacity of principal of the Academy; he flogged one of the students—Nathan bar Assa—for journeying on foot from the Academy to Pumbeditha on the second day of one of the festivals. The few years during which he retained his office were in many ways embittered. He was stricken by a severe illness, through which he lost his memory, and it was consequently often necessary for his pupils to remind him that he himself had formerly taught them the very facts which he was then disputing. Although they endeavored to spare his feelings when drawing his attention to his absurd mistakes, nevertheless, in his irritation, he regarded these corrections as a slight, and complainingly exclaimed: "Be indulgent with an old man whom misfortune has caused to forget all he learnt; and forget not that the fragments of the first tables of the Law were preserved by the side of the unbroken tables."

Joseph's hard lot may be considered as typical of the decay of the method of teaching which 583
depended on the power of memory. It heaps up the treasures of learning and tradition, guarding every atom of its hoard as painfully as a miser, and warns off all influences exerted by the employment of the intellect, as if they might obscure its mirror-like purity; but in an unlucky moment the store that has been laboriously collected suddenly vanishes; memory is extinguished, and there remain no means of recovering the lost treasures.

The Soranian school, the home of culture, also began to decline, through neglecting to further the development of the Law. After Chasda's death, the post of principal was held for twelve years (309–320) by Huna's son, Rabba or Rab Abba; but the studious youths were more strongly attracted by the rising star of the Pumbedithan Academy. For this reason Rabba's modesty is the only circumstance in connection with which any remembrance of him is retained. After the death of Rabba bar Huna, the Soranian Academy was deserted, and it was not frequented until half a century later, when it began to regain its lost renown.

After Joseph's death, the college was embarrassed as to whom it should appoint as his successor. There were four who seemed worthy to occupy this post, being all equally esteemed; they were Abayi, Raba, Zeïra II, and Rabba bar Matana. The college accordingly determined to

vote for the one who should give the most striking answer, to which no objection could be offered, to a question that was raised. Abayi was victorious in this intellectual tournament, and was chosen as principal. Abayi, whose surname was Nachmani (born about 280, died 338), was an orphan; his father Kailil had died before, his mother immediately after, his birth. A governess took the place of his mother, while Rabba, the sagacious Amora of Pumbeditha, filled that of his father. In after-life, Abayi spoke with gratitude and emotion of his foster-mother, and gave her 584
name to several healing medicaments. To his uncle Rabba, Abayi owed his knowledge of the Law and his skill in Talmudical dialectics. Like Raba, his contemporary Amora, he aroused great expectations during his early youth, and it used to be said of them, "The bud shows what the melon will be." Abayi appears to have possessed but a moderate fortune. Like the majority of the Babylonian teachers of the Law, however, he had a small field of his own, which he cultivated by the agency of a freeman. His character was mild and yielding, and he retained these qualities in his intercourse with the various classes of society. His maxim was: that man should be sagacious in the fear of God, gentle and conciliatory in his speech, and at peace with his brethren, with his relations, in fact, with all the world, even with the heathen abroad, so that he might be beloved and esteemed, and possess influence over his fellow-men. At this time opinions, words, and deeds, were still one and the same. Abayi's integrity was even acknowledged by such of the Samaritans as dwelt in Babylonia. Having once lost an ass which was found by some Samaritans, it was brought back by them to its owner, though he was not able to mention any special mark by which it could be recognized. "If thou wert not Nachmani," said they to him, "we should not have restored the ass even if it had borne some particular mark." Under Abayi's direction of the Pumbedithan Academy (333–338) the number of students diminished to about two hundred, and therefore in remembrance of the crowd of scholars who had flocked thither during the time of his predecessors, Rab and Huna, he called himself an "orphan of orphans." It was not that less interest and pleasure than formerly were now felt in study, but that Abayi possessed a rival in Raba, who had founded a school of his own in Machuza on the Tigris, whither he had attracted 585
many students. Both of these teachers brought the Pumbedithan method to its greatest perfection. Rivaling one another in talent and ingenuity, they discovered answers to questions which Rabba and Joseph had been unable to solve.

The traditions which had been handed down no longer afforded material for discussion, every point which they presented having already been thoroughly elucidated; new themes were therefore propounded and solved by the help of recognized formulæ. These subtle Talmudical dialectics received the names of their most proficient adepts, and were known as the "Havayot (reflections) d'Abayi ve Raba."

Before his death, Abayi heard of the cruel persecutions to which his coreligionists in Judæa were subjected under Constantius. The fugitives who conveyed this sad news to Babylonia, also brought with them new Halachas, from the circle of which Jochanan was the head, and thus inspired the learned students of Babylonia with new vigor.

Abayi died in the prime of life (338). After his death, the office of principal was conferred upon Raba bar Joseph bar Chama of Machuza (born 299, died 352), without any discussion, as if this was expected as a matter of course. Raba was wealthy, talented and acute, but possessed his weak points, which caused him to be considered inferior to his fellow Amoraim, although he surpassed them in acuteness of intellect. He was well acquainted with his own character, and described himself in the following words: "I have always cherished three wishes, of which, while two have been fulfilled, the gratification of the third has not been vouchsafed to me. I desired Huna's learning and Chasda's wealth, and obtained both; but Rabba bar Huna's unassuming modesty was not allotted to me." Although he was superior to the majority of his fellow-countrymen, his character was tainted, nevertheless, with certain peculiarities of the Machuzans; 586
he was luxurious, proud and overbearing, and although his fellow-countrymen did not enjoy the best of reputations in Babylonia, he flattered them to excess. He was exceedingly desirous of winning and retaining their favor. "When I became judge," he relates, "I was afraid that I should no longer retain the attachment of the Machuzans, but as they recognize my impartiality in giving judgment, all must either hate or all love me." Abayi seems to have reproved this tendency of Raba to sacrifice moral dignity for the acquisition of popular favor. "When a teacher of the Law," said he, "is too greatly beloved by his fellow-citizens, it is not because of his great merit, but on account of his indulgence, which causes him to refrain from calling attention to their vices, and from earnestly reprimanding them."

It has already been mentioned that the inhabitants of Machuza were descended for the most part from proselytes, for which reason the aristocratic Babylonian Jews forbore to contract marriages with them. As the Machuzans thus seemed to be at a loss how to obtain wives, Zeïra II declared in a public discourse that it was allowable for them to marry persons who had been born out of wedlock. This permission, however, implying as it did a sort of degradation of the Machuzans, was so offensive to their pride, that they almost stoned him to death with the fruits with which the booths were decorated (the incident occurring during the celebration of the feast of Tabernacles), just as King Alexander Jannæus had once been attacked in the outer court of the temple. Raba could hardly find words severe enough with which to blame Zeïra's candor: "Who would give utterance to so inconsiderate a decision in a community containing so many descendants of proselytes!" In order to enlist the favor of the populace still more strongly on his side, he demonstrated, in opposition to Zeïra's theory, that proselytes might marry even the 587
daughters of priests, and he succeeded by this flattery in charming the Machuzans so greatly that they overwhelmed him with presents of silken stuffs. In after-times Raba attempted to restrict the equality which he had accorded somewhat too freely to the proselytes, probably on account of its having caused displeasure in various circles; at the same time he remarked that proselytes might

ally themselves with bastard families. This decision having caused dissatisfaction, Raba appeased his fellow-countrymen with the following words: "I only meant well towards you, and leave you free to act either way."

Another of Raba's failings was that, although exceedingly wealthy, he was not entirely free from covetousness, which he allowed to become apparent on several occasions. A proselyte of Machuza, Issor by name, had deposited with Raba a sum of 12,000 sus (denars), in order to bequeath it to his son, who was being brought up as a student of the Law. Issor having fallen ill, Raba resolved to keep possession of this money as property to which there was no heir, a proselyte being unable to leave his fortune to a son born before his adoption of Judaism, as the Talmudical law does not recognize such offspring as a son. At all events, the principal of the schools—familiar as he was with all the intricacies of the Law—was determined to nullify Issor's disposal of his fortune in favor of his son. Meanwhile, another person who was equally well acquainted with the Law, suggested to the anxious father that, although he was prevented from making over the money in question to his son by will, he was, nevertheless, at liberty to do so by declaring before witnesses that the money belonged to the latter. Raba was greatly incensed at the man who offered this counsel, and complained as bitterly of this secret advice as if he had thereby been deprived of a lawfully acquired fortune. Raba's conduct also violated an accepted 588
Halacha which treats of a similar case. According to this law, although a man is not obliged to hand over to such of the sons as may have become proselytes, the property committed to his keeping by a heathen, of which the latter had not otherwise disposed, an offense is, nevertheless, committed against the higher laws of morality by withholding it from them.

Another example of Raba's selfish conduct is afforded by the fact that he exacted a higher rent from the tenants of his fields than was customary in Babylonia. At times his behavior towards persons of slender means was marked by a harshness which was in glaring opposition to the doctrines of charity and pity, inculcated equally by the Halachas and the Scriptures.

The conduct of his brother Saurim was even more heartless; he posed as a moral censor, and whenever any of the poorer members of the community appeared to him not to be religious enough he made slaves of them, and compelled them to carry him about in his gilded litter. Even to this conduct Raba offered no objection, but sanctioned his brother's arbitrary proceedings by referring to a long-forgotten law, which countenanced the treatment of the Jews as slaves, in case they no longer lived in accordance with the Law.

During this period the simple manners and the honesty which had obtained among the Jews of Babylonia in former times, fell to a low ebb with many of them, and made room for luxury, vanity, and thirst for power. Many a teacher of the Law was clad in gorgeous garments and was carried about in a gilded litter. They no longer felt themselves one with the people from whom they had risen, but constituted a particular caste, a patrician class, who mutually protected and maintained one another's interests, looking down with pride and contempt on the lower orders of 589
the populace. Raba himself admitted that whenever he was called upon to decide a point of law in which a person of the same class of society as himself was concerned, he was unable to sleep until he succeeded in interpreting the law in his favor. If a member of the school brought his produce to market, he was invested with the privilege of being allowed to sell before any one else, in order that he might obtain higher prices. The cause of a member was always heard first in the court. The teachers of the Law of such communities as paid their taxes in a lump sum, were exempt from all imposts. Raba allowed the associates, in places where they were not known, to declare their rank, in order that they might enjoy the advantages attaching thereto. What a contrast to former times, when the Tanaites hesitated, at the risk of their lives even, to derive any benefit from their knowledge of the Law! Raba went to extreme lengths in according privileges to the doctors of the Law. He permitted the associates to pass themselves off as worshipers of fire in order to escape payment of the *charag*.

The course of conduct thus pursued by the learned classes gradually awoke a dislike of them among the people. The lower classes spoke of them contemptuously as "those scholars." The mockery expressed by this epithet must have been so bitter that on their side the teachers of the Law branded as heretics (Epicureans) all who made use of the expression. Scholarship thus no longer obtained recognition. "What do we profit by the scholars?" the people asked themselves; "all their knowledge is employed for their own benefit." At the head of this opposition to the Rabbis stood the family of the physician, Benjamin of Machuza, which seems to have been possessed of great importance, as Raba paid great attention to its members. "What advantage do we really derive from the teachers of the Law?" said they jeeringly; "they can neither allow us to 590
eat ravens, nor forbid us to eat pigeons?"—meaning that in spite of all their dialectics they were unable to proceed beyond the circle of established customs. Although Raba declared this utterance of Benjamin Assia to be heretical, it does not appear that he excommunicated him, but rather that he treated him with great consideration; it is probable that the latter belonged to the retinue of the Prince of the Captivity.

Meanwhile the zeal for the study of the Law had greatly increased. Disciples crowded in even greater numbers than formerly to Raba's academy in Machuza, neglecting in their ardor their business pursuits. Raba was obliged to warn them against this excess: "I pray you do not come to my school in the spring and autumn months, lest you should neglect the time of the harvest and of the preparation of wine and oil, and so be troubled throughout the year by the cares of life." Raba's discourses were even more popular than Abayi's by reason of the clearness of his explanations, the exactitude of his distinctions, and the boldness of his treatment of the subject-matter of tradition. Raba showed a decided preference for analyzing the Mishna to the bare study of its dry subject-matter. The former method offered a wide field for the employment of

dialectical powers, while the Mishna, taken in its simplest sense, became a mere matter of memory. On this account Raba placed the Amoraïm above the Tanaites; the former explained, or explained better, such points as were doubtful to the latter. He was accustomed to say that a grain of pepper (acuteness) was better than a basketful of melons. In contrast to Zeïra I, who was adverse to that method of teaching which encouraged ingenious reasoning, and valued highly the simplicity of the Mishna, Raba declared that "whoso breaketh stones injureth himself thereby (Eccles. x. 9); thus are they characterized who know merely the Mishna; but he who splitteth 591
wood warmeth himself; such are they who are acquainted with the Talmud." The true Talmud, the attractive collection of nice questions, answers, comparisons and distinctions, the lofty flight of thought, which, starting from a point, passes with the quickness of lightning over the intermediate steps of a chain of reasoning, the dialectic form of the Talmud is the product of this period. The triumvirate, Rabba, Abayi, and Raba, were Talmudists in the real meaning of the word, *i. e.*, dialecticians. In this sense the Talmud was the creation of the Pumbedithan and Machuzan schools. In Judæa there was scarcely a notion of it. By reason of his extensive acquirements, his profound intellect, and perhaps also on account of his wealth, Raba remained the sole authority during his continuance at the head of the academy. Questions were referred to him even from Judæa, when the frequent persecutions under Constantius and Gallus involved the Holy Land in the deepest misery.

This period was by no means the happiest for the Jewish subjects of the Persian crown; they were not spared during the obstinate struggle between Rome and Persia. A Persian army was stationed at Machuza, and had to be maintained by the inhabitants of the town. As the population was entirely Jewish, this duty was attended with many inconveniences. Shabur II was no friend of the Jews. In ancient times numerous Jewish families had been transported to Armenia, and now lived there in their own cities; of these, Shabur led an immense multitude (estimated at 71,000) into captivity, and colonized them in Susiana and Ispahan. This latter city, which had formerly been the capital of the Persian empire, received the name of Jehudia, from the many Jews who settled there after the captivity. Shabur appears to have oppressed the Jews of Babylonia in no
less degree, for Raba was obliged to expend considerable sums of money in preventing 592
persecution. His friends extolled his good luck in being, to a certain extent, exempted from the misfortunes to which the Jewish people had been predestined, seeing that up till then he had been subjected to no extortions. To these congratulations Raba replied as follows: "You know not how much I am obliged to do in secret for Shabur's court!" On one occasion it was with great difficulty that he managed to escape a personal danger which threatened him in his capacity of principal of the schools. He had ordered a Jew to be flogged for having held carnal intercourse with a Persian woman, and the chastisement had caused the death of the culprit. The case happening to come to Shabur's knowledge, he commanded a heavy punishment to be inflicted on Raba for having exercised the criminal jurisdiction. The latter appears to have escaped the penalty by flight, but his house was pillaged. All further consequences of this occurrence were averted by Ifra, the queen-mother, who is reported to have said to her son: "Do not meddle in any way with the Jews, for God grants them whatever they pray for." In striking contrast with her son, Ifra-Ormuzd entertained a special liking for the Jews, and in particular for the teachers of the Law, to whom at times she vouchsafed a glance into the most secret recesses of her heart. In the same way as she had formerly sent a purse of gold to Joseph, she now forwarded 400 golden denars to Raba. Rami, a contemporary, was of opinion that this present ought to be refused, as it was not lawful to receive alms of the heathens. Notwithstanding this, Raba accepted the money, but distributed it amongst the heathen poor. The queen-mother Ifra also sent an animal for sacrifice to the principal of the school in Machuza, which she requested might be offered up
according to the Jewish rites, in order to prove her adoration of the only God. Raba did not live to 593
see either the introduction of the calendar by Hillel, or the short period during which prosperity smiled upon the Jews. He died after holding his office for fourteen years.

After Raba's death the importance of Machuza began to decline, and Pumbeditha, which had unwillingly surrendered the palm to Raba, now occupied its former position. It is remarkable that from this time forward mediocrity began to reign, as if intellectual activity needed recreation after so many exertions. Not one of Raba's successors was sufficiently able to compensate for his loss. The principals of the Babylonian schools, Nachman ben Isaac, Papa, and Chama of Nahardea, were possessed of no conspicuous importance; the Pumbedithan spirit of severe analysis and ingenious dialectics was indeed cultivated, but in nowise advanced.

Nachman ben Isaac (born about 280, died 356) was chosen as the leader of the Pumbedithan Metibta, but merely on account of his advanced age, his extraordinary piety, and perhaps also of his independence. His tenure of office only extended over four years, and was not rendered memorable by any noteworthy feature. During this period a new academy was founded at Nares, in proximity to Sora, situated on the canal of the same name.

The founder of this new academy, of which he became the principal, was Papa bar Chanan (born about 300, died 375). He had early been left an orphan, was wealthy, and by trade a brewer of beer from dates. His friend, Huna ben Joshua, equally wealthy, and his partner in business, became a teacher at this academy. But the two together were not able to fill the void which Raba's death had occasioned. It is true that the members of the Machuzan academy gathered
around them; but opportunities soon arose of effecting comparisons, the results of which were 594
anything but favorable to the new chiefs.

The following anecdote will serve to indicate the character of the principal of the Nares academy. Certain of the younger teachers of the Law had come to Nares in order to be present at Papa's lectures. This latter, however, left his subject in so confused a condition, that they secretly

began to make signs one to the other. Papa, seeing this, was exceedingly mortified, and said to them: "Let those present depart from here in peace." Another member, one Simaï bar Ashi (father of the Ashi who became famous later on), used to importune Papa with questions which quite exceeded his modest capabilities. Papa, in despair lest he should be put to shame before his pupils, would throw himself down in prayer, and beseech the merciful God to preserve him from the terrible feeling of confusion. Simaï, having been an unobserved witness of this fervent prayer, made up his mind that henceforward he would keep silence, and no longer involuntarily mortify Papa.

In the Halacha, Papa was the representative of a school which was so devoid of self-dependence, that its partisans did not even hold an opinion of their own concerning the views of others. Whenever two or more conflicting opinions left the meaning of a precept of the Law in doubt, Papa would say: "Let us adopt both views, or act according to all these opinions." Papa remained at his post during nineteen years (355–375), and the stupor into which all minds were thrown during this period was only dissipated by his successor. Pumbeditha possessed a principal of equal insignificance in Chama of Nahardea, whose character a single anecdote will suffice to indicate. King Shabur asked him whether the practice of burying the dead was founded on the Torah, or whether it was simply an ancient custom. The question arose from the usage of the 595
Persians, who neither buried nor burned the corpses of their dead. Chama, however, could bring forward no passage of Scripture in support of burial. Acha ben Jacob, a member of the household of the Prince of the Captivity, and therefore privileged to say many things, expressed the following opinion of this principal: "The world is delivered into the hands of fools; why did he not instance the verse, 'And thou shalt bury him on the same day'?"

In the course of the twenty-one years (356–377) during which Chama held office, a change occurred in the Roman Empire which was not without weighty consequences for the communities of Judæa and Babylonia. A nephew of the Emperor Constantius, Julian, effected a revolution which, however, was only temporary. Emperor Julian was one of those masterful characters who impress their names indelibly on the memory of man. It was only an early death and the hatred of the ruling Church which prevented him from obtaining the title of "Great." Although a member of Constantine's family, the fratricidal sword of the Constantines hung over his head, and he was compelled by fear of death to give hypocritical adhesion to the Christian religion, which he hated. Almost by a miracle he was created co-emperor by his uncle Constantius, who hated him from the bottom of his heart, and had already held a council about his death. A military revolt in his favor, and the unexpected death of his enemy Constantius, put Julian in possession of exclusive power. Known in the history of the Church as the Apostate (Apostata, Parabata), Julian made it the duty of his life to realize the ideal, which association with his teachers, Libanius and Maximus, had suggested to him, and which had been further ennobled by his rich mind. His favorite thoughts were to protect the oppressed of all nations and religions, to promote the well-being of all his subjects, more especially by alleviating the burden of taxes, to revive the philosophical sciences, 596
which had been condemned by the Christian emperors, to restore the ancient religion, freed, however, from its most conspicuous blemishes, which had rendered it so contemptible and ridiculous; finally, to confine Christianity, which had gained so much power during so short a period, within its proper limits. Mindful, however, of the persecution to which he himself had been subjected, he refrained from retaliating on the Christians, in spite of their mania for persecution. Still, he was desirous of restraining their encroachments, and therefore deprived them of their influence in civil and scientific matters, and attempted to lower them in the appreciation of the learned classes by the employment of the weapons of the intellect and delicate satire. He called Jesus a Galilæan whom credulity had exalted to a god, and spoke of the Christians by the nickname of Galilæans. For this reason he was all the more friendly toward the Jews, and was the only emperor after Alexander Severus who evinced serious interest in Judaism. He was led by more reasons than one to prefer Judaism. Brought up in the Christian religion, he had become acquainted with Judaism through the Holy Bible, and the more Judaism was hated and persecuted by Christianity, the greater was the reverence with which he regarded it. The emperor even admitted that he had been greatly shocked by the cruel oppression to which the Jews were exposed during the reign of Constantius, when their religion was branded as blasphemous by victorious Christianity. Julian was greatly impressed by the God of Judaism, as described in Holy Writ, and acknowledged him as the "Great God." He refused to believe, however, that beside Him there existed no other gods. He especially admired the benevolence of the Jews, and was astonished that they cared for their poor with such zeal that no beggars 597
existed among them. He was also desirous of deeply mortifying the Christians by the preference which he exhibited for the Jews, for the former were at great pains to prove the superiority of their religion by the abasement of the latter. He entertained a particular predilection for the sacrificial cult, and for this reason he was especially pleased with the Jewish system of sacrifices, with the solemn pomp of the Temple and the priests. The emperor reproached the Christians with having rejected the God and the worship of Judaism, but he particularly blamed them for having discarded the sacrificial service. It was true that the Jews did not then offer sacrifices, but this was only because they no longer possessed a Temple. Finally, the idea may have occurred to Julian to dispose the Babylonian Jews in his favor for the Persian war which now occupied his whole attention. He desired, if not to obtain their active support, at least to prevent them from offering fanatical resistance.

Julian's reign, which lasted not quite two years (November, 361 to June, 363) was a period of extreme happiness for the Jews of the Roman Empire. The emperor favored them, relieving them from oppression, and from the disgrace which the taunt of blasphemy entailed. He called the Patriarch Hillel his venerable friend, and honored him with an autograph letter, wherein he

assured him of his good-will, and promised to try and put an end to the wrongs of the Jews. He also addressed an epistle to all the Jewish communities of the empire, and made preparations for rebuilding the Temple in Jerusalem, which had become a Christian city since the time of Constantine. The imperial missive, which stands out in glaring contrast with the course of treatment adopted by the first two Christian emperors, is remarkable enough to merit being preserved. The letter (written at Antioch in the autumn of 362 or the winter of 363) ran as follows:

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> "To the Jewish Congregations.—More oppressive for you in the past than the yoke of dependence was the circumstance that new taxes were imposed upon you without previous notice, and you were thus compelled to furnish an immense quantity of gold to the imperial treasury. I learnt much by personal observation, but still more by the tax-rolls which were being preserved to your detriment, and which I happened to light upon. I myself abolished a tax which it was intended to impose upon you, and thus put a stop to the injustice of attempting to cast such a slur on you; with my own hands did I commit to the flames the tax-rolls against you which I came across in my archives, in order that for the future no one might spread such a charge of blasphemy against you. My brother Constantius, the Glorious, was not so much to blame for this as those barbarians in thought and godless in spirit who invented such a system of taxation. With my own arm have I hurled them to deepest ruin, so that not even the memory of their fall shall remain with us. Being on the point of according you yet greater favor, I have exhorted my brother, the venerable Patriarch Julos (Hillel), to put a stop to the collection of the so-called Apostole from you, and henceforward let no one further oppress your nation with the collection of such imposts, so that everywhere in my empire you may be free from care; and thus, in the full enjoyment of peace, may you address your fervent prayers for my empire to the Almighty Creator of the Universe, who has supported me with His strong right hand. It seems to be the fact, that those whose lives are passed in anxiety are indolent of spirit, and do not dare raise their hands in supplication for the prosperity of their country. But those who are exempt from all care, and are glad with their whole hearts, are able to direct their sincere prayers for the welfare of the empire to the Most High, who can best further my rule as I propose to reign. Thus should you do in order that, on the happy termination of the Persian war, I may be able to visit Jerusalem, the Holy City, which shall be rebuilt at my expense, as you have desired to see it restored for so many years: then will I unite with you in giving praise to the Almighty."

It is not related what impression was produced by this gracious letter, which, more winning even than Cyrus' missive to the Babylonian exiles, came as a drop of refreshing dew after long drought. A single account, which is borrowed from Jewish tradition, relates that the Jews applied to Julian the following verse (Daniel xi. 34): "Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help." Daniel is thus supposed to have prophesied that after the Jewish nation had suffered at the hands of Gallus, Julian would extend help to them by his support and his promise to rebuild the Temple.

Meanwhile Julian did not forget to act upon his promise. Although abundantly occupied with the preparations for the Persian war, he had nevertheless at heart the restoration of the Temple 599
of Jerusalem from its ruins. For this purpose he appointed a special chief overseer in the person of his best friend, the learned and virtuous Alypius of Antioch, and exhorted him to spare no expense during the rebuilding. The governors of Syria and Palestine received orders to aid Alypius with everything that was necessary. The building materials were already prepared, and workmen were assembled in great numbers for the purpose of clearing away the ruins which had lain heaped upon the site of the Temple ever since its destruction, nearly three hundred years before. The Jews do not seem to have interested themselves in the rebuilding of the Temple, for the Jewish authorities maintain a complete silence concerning this fact, and the stories of the ardor of the Jews for the rebuilding which are related by the later Christian reports are purely fictitious. The distant communities are said to have forwarded sums of money toward the restoration of the Temple, and it is even asserted that women sold their jewelry and brought stones in their laps. But all this was quite unnecessary, for Julian had amply provided both building materials and workmen. The Christians also spread the report that Julian only pretended to be kindly disposed towards the Jews in order to entice them into heathenism. Especially spiteful is the story that the Jews destroyed several churches in Judæa and the neighboring countries, and threatened to inflict as much evil on the Christians as they themselves had suffered at the hands of the Christian emperors. The report that about this period the Christians of Edessa massacred the entire Jewish population of that city is more credible. It may be assumed as a certainty that the hope of re-establishing their state, which had occasioned two or three revolutions, and had cost so many victims, was extinguished in the hearts of the Jews. The 600
restoration of their former magnificence was now only expected at the appearance of the Messiah. Without the latter a Temple would have seemed utterly absurd, according to the views which were entertained at this period, and still less would it have been possible for a Roman emperor to be regarded as the Messiah. The opinion was generally accepted that "God had bound the Jewish nation by oath not to climb over the wall (*i. e.*, re-establish the State by force), nor to rebel against the ruling nations, but to bear their yoke patiently until the coming of the Messiah, and not to attempt to bring about that period by violence."

Meanwhile the Christians looked with envious eyes upon the commencement of the work (spring, 363). The indifference of the Jews seems, however, to have contributed more than anything else to the suspension of the rebuilding, on account of the various obstacles which were

encountered. On the occasion of the pulling down of the ruins, and the excavation of the foundations, a fire broke out by which several workmen lost their lives. This subterranean conflagration doubtless occurred in the passages which had formerly existed beneath the Temple, and had its origin in the gases which had long been compressed there, and which, on being suddenly released from pressure, ignited on coming into contact with the air above. These sudden explosions occurred repeatedly, and disheartened the workmen, so that they gradually gave up work. If the Jews had interested themselves more warmly in the rebuilding, it is hardly probable that they would have allowed themselves to be discouraged by such an obstacle, which was anything but invincible; ardent enthusiasm shuns no sacrifice. But deprived of the warm participation of the Jews, Alypius also became less enthusiastic, and waited for further commands from the emperor. Julian, however, is said to have accused the Christians of having caused the 601
fires to break out in the underground passages, and to have threatened to build a prison for Christians out of the ruins of the Temple on his return from the war. But this story, which, like most of those relating to this event, is drawn from Christian sources, is utterly untrustworthy. The Christian authorities of the following generation relate the most wonderful tales of the miracles which are said to have happened during this impious rebuilding, the purpose of all of which was to warn the obdurate Jews and to glorify Christ.

The issue of the Persian war—unhappy as it was for Julian—was also calculated to deprive the Jews of their short-lived exultation, and to prepare a new triumph for the Christians. Julian had concentrated the whole of the Roman forces, and had availed himself of every possible expedient in order not to be inferior in strength to his opponent, Shabur II. Shabur on his side had set himself the task of freeing Asia from the Roman rule. Julian, however, was dreaming the golden dream which had lured many a Roman general, from Crassus and Cæsar downwards, to the region of the Euphrates. His ambition was to plant the Roman eagle on the further side of the Tigris.

Once again Europe and Asia stood face to face. The scene of the war was laid, for the most part, in the province of Jewish Babylonia. It is impossible to determine which side was espoused by the Jews. The town of Firuz-Shabur, which contained many Jewish inhabitants, was obstinately besieged for three days, compelled to capitulate, and finally burnt. The inhabitants escaped in small boats by the canals of the Euphrates. The conduct of the Jewish inhabitants of Firuz-Shabur towards Julian therefore remains uncertain. But the town of Bitra (more correctly Birtha), which was inhabited entirely by Jews, and was surrounded by a low wall, displayed a spirit of hostility; it 602
was completely abandoned by its population, and the soldiers, giving vent to their martial passion, burnt it to the ground. The town of Machuza (Maoga-Malka), which was to a certain extent a suburb of Ctesiphon, was held by a Persian garrison; it was most hotly besieged, and offered so determined a resistance that the entire military force of the Romans hardly sufficed to effect its fall. Machuza, the seat of Raba's academy, whose proud Jewish inhabitants rivaled those of the capital in magnificence, fell ten years after Raba's death (363) under the blows of the Roman catapults, and became a heap of ruins. After the war it was again rebuilt. In spite of the progress which Julian made into the enemy's country, he did not succeed in reaching Ctesiphon. He lost not only the fruits of his victories, but even his life, through his rashness. He was struck down by an arrow, said to have been shot by a Christian belonging to his own army. Calmly, and as becomes a philosopher, Julian breathed his last. It is related that a few minutes before his death he exclaimed: "Thou hast conquered, O Galilæan!"

The death of Julian in the neighborhood of the Tigris (June, 363) deprived the Jews of the last ray of hope for a peaceful and unmolested existence. His favor was, however, so far attended with good effect, that the edicts promulgated against the Jews by Constantine and Constantius were not immediately renewed; Julian's ordinances remained in force in so far as they did not affect the privileges of the Jews. Jovianus, Julian's successor (June, 363 to February, 364), was compelled to conclude an ignominious peace with the victorious Shabur; he lived too short a time to be able to effect any changes. He permitted his subjects to freely declare their adherence to any religion they chose, without thereby incurring any disadvantage. Once again the Roman 603
empire was divided between two rulers, Valentinian I (364–375), and Valens (364–378). The latter, who was Emperor of the East, was an Arian, and had suffered too severely from the powerful Catholic party to be intolerant himself. He protected the Jews and bestowed honors and distinctions upon them. His brother, Valentinian I, the Emperor of the West, likewise chose the policy of tolerance in the struggle between Catholics and Arians, and permitted the profession of either religion without political disadvantages being thereby incurred (371). This toleration was also extended the Jews.

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CHAPTER XXII.

THE LAST AMORAÏM.

Decline of the Roman Empire—Ashi and the Redaction of the Talmud—Jezdijird II—The Jews under the Emperors Theodosius I and his successors—The extinction of the Patriarchate—Chrysostom and Ambrosius—Fanaticism of the Clergy—Jerome and his Jewish Teachers—Mar-Zutra—Fifth and Sixth Generations of Amoraïm—The Jews under Firuz—Jewish Colonies in India—Completion of the Babylonian Talmud—Its Spirit and Contents.

375–500 C. E.

The period during which the Roman empire was approaching a state of complete dissolution marks an epoch of decay and regeneration, destruction and rejuvenescence, ruin and reconstruction, in the history of the world. The storm, which burst in the north, under the wall of China, brought down a black thunder-cloud in its train, and shattered the giant tree of the Roman empire, which, sapless and leafless, had only continued to exist thus far by the force of gravity; nothing now remained but a wreck of splinters, the toy of every capricious wind. The uncouth Huns, the scourge of God, drove before them horde upon horde, tribe upon tribe, whose names the memory refuses to retain or the tongue to utter. The period of the migration of the nations confirms almost literally the words of the prophet: "The earth staggers like a drunken man, and her sins lie heavy upon her; she falls and cannot rise, and the Lord Zebaoth punishes the bands of heaven in heaven, and the kings of earth upon earth." Small wonder indeed that in the Goths, the first wave of the migration of tribes which inundated and devastated the Roman empire, the Jews did not fail to discover Gog from the land of Magog, of whom a prophet had said: "Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou and all thy bands, and many people with thee" (Ezekiel xxxviii. 9). 605

In this remarkable alternation of disappearance of nations and their formation, the conviction forced itself upon Jewish thinkers that the Jewish people was eternal: "A nation arises, another vanishes, but Israel alone remains forever." The barbaric tribes, the avengers of the long-enslaved nations, settled on the ruined sites of the Roman empire, wild plants only to be cultivated by the master-hand of history, uncouth savages, to be civilized by earnest teaching. In this iron time, when no man could be certain of the next day, the leaders of Judaism in Palestine and Babylonia felt deeply the necessity of placing the treasure which had been confided to their hands in safety, so that it might not be imperiled by the accidents of the day. An epoch of collection commenced, during which the harvest which had been sown, cultivated, and reaped by their forefathers was brought under shelter. The subject-matter of tradition, which had been so greatly augmented, enriched and purified by a long series of generations and the diversity of schools, was henceforward to be set in order. This tendency of compilation and arrangement was represented by Ashi.

Rabbana Ashi (born 352, died 427) was the son of Simaï, and the descendant of an ancient family. He so early gave evidence of complete maturity of mind, that while still a youth he restored the long-desolate Soranian academy to its former place of honor. He was certainly not more than twenty when he became principal of that school. Coming of a wealthy family, Ashi possessed many forests, the wood of which he had no compunction in selling to feed the holy fire for the worship of the Magi. It is remarkable that nothing is known of the history of his youth and education; there is even no indication of the reason which induced him to infuse new life into the half-decayed Soranian academy; probably Sora was his native town. He pulled down and rebuilt the school which had been erected several centuries previously by Rab, and which was already beginning to exhibit signs of decay; and in order that no delay should occur in the rebuilding, he brought his bed on the site, and remained there night and day until the gutters of the house had been put up. The Sora school was built on an elevation so that it might overlook the whole city. Ashi's splendid qualities so impressed his contemporaries that he was regarded as the supreme authority, a position to which no person had been able to attain since Raba's death. Ashi united thorough knowledge of the entire body of the Law, characteristic of Sora, with Pumbedithan dialectics, and thus satisfied all claims. His contemporaries conferred upon him the distinguishing title of Rabbana (our teacher). During the fifty-two years over which his public labors extended, seven principals succeeded each other in Pumbeditha. Nahardea, which had made no figure since its destruction by Ben-Nazar (Odenath), also began to come into some repute again on account of the academy opened there by Amemar (390–420). But none of these teachers really disputed the supremacy with Ashi, and Sora again occupied the honorable position into which it had been placed by Rab. The oldest Amoraim, Amemar and Mar-Zutra, voluntarily subordinated themselves to Ashi's authority, and resigned to him the task of restoring unity. The most distinguished among them, even the two successive Princes of the Captivity of this period (Mar-Kahana and Mar-Zutra I), submitted to his orders. It was in Sora that the Princes of the Captivity now received the homage of the delegates of all the Babylonian communities; this ceremony had formerly taken place, first at Nahardea, and then, during the prime of its academy, at Pumbeditha. This homage was paid every year on a Sabbath, at the commencement of the month of Marcheshvan (in the autumn), and this Sabbath was known as the "Rigle" of the Prince of the Captivity. The extraordinary assemblies of the people, which met at the command of the Prince of the Captivity, were henceforward also held in Sora, and for this reason the Patriarchs were obliged to repair to that town, even though they had fixed their residence in some other 606 607

place. Ashi had thus made Sora the center of Jewish life in Babylonia, and had connected it with everything of public or general interest. The splendor with which its numerous assemblies invested it, was so great that Ashi expressed surprise that the heathen Persians could be witnesses of it all, and not feel themselves moved to embrace Judaism.

In consequence of this concentration of power in his own person, Ashi was enabled to undertake a work, the consequences of which were incalculable, both as regards the fate and the development of the Jewish people. He began the gigantic task of collecting and arranging the explanations, deductions, and amplifications of the Mishna, which were included under the name "Talmud." The immediate motive which suggested this undertaking was undoubtedly the consideration that the immense accumulation of matter, the result of the labor of three generations, ought not to be allowed to vanish from memory through lack of interest. This would certainly be the case if some means were not provided of impressing it easily upon the mind. Ashi even then complained of the diminution of the power of memory in his time as compared with times gone by, without, however, taking into account that by reason of the accumulation of matter the memory was infinitely more charged than formerly. His successful treatment of this 608
exuberant material was rendered the easier by the fact that he was permitted to work at it for more than half a century. Every year on the occasion of the assembly of all the members, disciples, and pupils during the Kalla months, certain tractates of the Mishna, together with the Talmudical explanations and corollaries, were thoroughly gone into, and thus in about thirty years more than fifty of them were completely arranged. In the latter half of his period of office Ashi went through the whole of the matter which had thus been put in order for the second time. What remained after this double process of winnowing and testing was accepted as of binding force.

This arrangement of the bulky matter of the Talmud was not committed to writing. The conservation in writing of oral tradition, the incarnation, as it were, of what is spiritual, was still regarded as a crime against religion, more especially at this period, when Christendom had taken possession of the Holy Scriptures as its own spiritual property, and considered itself as the chosen part of Israel. According to the views of the times, Judaism was now possessed of no distinguishing feature, except the Oral Law. This thought frequently found expression in a poetical form—"Moses requested permission to commit to writing the Mishna or Oral Law, but God saw in advance that the nations would one day possess a Greek translation of the Torah, and would affirm: 'We are Israel; we are the children of God,' while the Jewish people would also declare, 'We are God's children,' and He therefore gave a token for this purpose: 'He who possesses my secret (mysterion) is my son.' This secret is the Mishna and the oral exegesis of the Law. Therefore did the prophet Hosea say: 'Were I to write the fulness of the Law, Israel would be accounted as a stranger.'"

It is not at all astonishing that this multitude of ordered details could be retained by the 609
memory, for before the time of Ashi they had been retained though not yet reduced to order. By his compilation of the Talmud, Ashi completed the work which had been begun by Judah two centuries previously. But his task was infinitely more difficult. The Mishna embraced only the plain Halacha in artistically constructed paragraphs of the Law. The Talmud, however, gave also the living part of the development of the Law and its spiritual tenor, and this with dialectic exactitude. The first impulse to the compilation of the Talmud marks one of the most important epochs in Jewish history. From this time forward the Babylonian Talmud (Talmud Babli) became an active, potent, and influential element. Ashi, however, did not entirely complete this gigantic task; for, although he directed his ardor wholly to the work of compilation, the creative power was not so completely conquered either in him or his contemporaries, that they were content to entirely restrict their energies to the work of compilation. On the contrary, Ashi solved many of the questions which had been left doubtful, or had been unsatisfactorily answered by the preceding Amoraïm, and his decisions are as forcible and ingenious as they are simple; in fact, one often wonders how they could have been overlooked by his predecessors. About this time the Jerusalem or Palestinean Talmud was compiled and concluded. The name of the compiler is not known. The latest authorities whose names have been preserved are Samuel bar Bun and Jochanan bar Moryah, contemporaries of Ashi.

The period of Ashi's activity falls within the reign of Jezdijird (400–420), a king of the Sassanian dynasty, who was favorably disposed towards the Jews. The Magians gave to this noble prince the surname of "Al Hatim" (the sinner), because he refused to surrender his own will and 610
allow himself to be ruled by them. He was exceedingly well affected towards the Jews, and at the same time favorably disposed towards the Christians. On the days of homage there were present at his court the three representatives of the Babylonian Jews: Ashi, of Sora; Mar-Zutra, of Pumbeditha; and Amemar, of Nahardea. Huna bar Nathan, who, if he was no Prince of the Captivity, must nevertheless have been possessed of considerable influence, held frequent intercourse with Jezdijird's court. This mark of attention on the part of a Persian king, who proclaimed himself the child of the Sun, a worshiper of Ormuz, and the King of the Kings of Iran, may be regarded as a proof of high favor.

Ashi was devoid of all exaggerated enthusiasm, and seems to have attempted to suppress the hope of the coming of the Messiah, which kept the minds of the Jews in greater suspense than ever at this time of the migration of nations and of universal revolution, when sin-laden Rome was suffering the punishment of God. An ancient sibylline saying, attributed to the prophet Elijah, was current, according to which the Messiah would appear in the eighty-fifth jubilee (between 440 and 470 of the common era). Such messianic expectations were always certain of creating enthusiasts, who aimed at converting their silent belief into fact, and without exactly intending to

deceive, attempted to carry away such of the crowd as were of like opinions, and to excite them to such a pitch that they would willingly sacrifice their lives. In point of fact such an enthusiast did appear during Ashi's time in Crete, and he gained as adherents all the Jewish congregations of this important island, through which he had traveled in a year. He promised them that one day he would lead them dry-footed, as Moses had formerly done, through the sea into the promised land; he is said to have adopted the name of the great lawgiver. For the rest, this Cretan Moses 611
was able to convince his followers so thoroughly of his divine mission, that they neglected their business, abandoned all their property, and only waited for the day of the passage through the sea. On the appointed day, Moses the Messiah marched in front, and behind him came the entire Jewish population of Crete, including the women and the children. From a promontory projecting out into the sea, he commanded them to throw themselves fearlessly into the ocean, as the waters would divide themselves before them. Several of these fanatics met their death in the waves; others were rescued by sailors. The false Moses is said, however, never to have been found again. It was against such false hopes as these, whose consequences were so sad, that Ashi warned the Jews. At the same time he suggested another interpretation of the prophecy which had been set in circulation: "It is certain," said he, "that the Messiah cannot appear *before* this time, before the eighty-fifth jubilee, but after the lapse of this period the hope, although not the certainty, of his coming may be entertained." Ashi died, greatly respected by his contemporaries and the Jews of after-times, at a ripe old age (427), two years before the capture of Carthage by Genseric. This Prince of the Vandals, who wrested from Rome her accumulations of spoil, also carried to Africa the vessels of the Temple, which Titus had added in triumph to the plunder of so many nations. Like the sons of Judæa, the Temple vessels wandered much.

By reason of the Patriarchate, Judæa was still regarded as their head by the Jewish communities of the Roman Empire. During this period it presents an even more gloomy picture of complete decay than formerly. The oppression of hostile Christianity bore all too heavily upon the country, and stifled the impulse to study. Tanchuma bar Abba, the chief supporter of the later 612
Agada, is the last Halachic authority of Judæa. There also, as in Babylonia, the last Amoraïm collected the traditions and planned and arranged the Jerusalem, or, more correctly, the Judæan or Western Talmud (Talmud shel Erez-Israel, Gemara di Bene Ma'araba). But so defective is the history of Judæa that not even the names of the compilers or the originators of the movement are known. Doubtless the example of Babylonia suggested the making of this collection. Only so much is certain, that Tiberias, the seat of the Patriarchate and of the School, was the birthplace of the Jerusalem Talmud.

It was during this period that the Patriarchate, the last remnant of former times, met with complete destruction. Three patriarchs are mentioned by name: they are Gamaliel V, successor of Hillel II, his son Judah IV and Gamaliel, the last (370–425). But only indistinct traces of their activity can be recognized. It is true that they still bore the pompous rather than influential title of Highness, together with its attendant privileges, and that they still drew voluntary subsidies from the communities of the Roman empire, which their envoys were wont to collect from the congregations. But their authority was considerably diminished. The sole influence of the Patriarchs now consisted in the one fact, that they excluded from the Jewish community its apostate members, who had gone over to Christianity either voluntarily or through deceit or persuasion. But even this power proud Christianity refused to recognize. By means of the secular arm, the Bishops compelled the Patriarchs and the heads of the communities, who bore the name of Primates, to readmit into the community such of the members as had been excommunicated. But Theodosius the Great (379–395), although continually incited by the Catholic clergy, Ambrosius, among others, to persecute the Arians and other heretics, consistently protected the 613
Jews against their fanatical attacks. He promulgated a law confirming to the Patriarchs and Primates the right of excommunicating the members of their community, and forbidding the secular authorities to meddle with the domestic affairs of the Jews. He proved to Gamaliel V his justice towards the Jews by condemning to death the consular agent Hesychius, whom the Patriarch had accused before him of surreptitiously gaining possession of important documents. For the rest, nothing more is known of the circumstance to which these documents referred.

Theodosius frequently had to restrain the religious zeal of the Christians, which regarded as heroism such deeds as the disturbance of the religious devotions of the Jews, the pillaging or destruction of the synagogues, or their appropriation and conversion into churches. The principal fanatics against the Jews at this period were John Chrysostom of Antioch, and Ambrosius of Milan, who attacked them with the greatest fierceness.

The former, who had been called from the solitude of the cloister to the ministry, thundered against the Jews from the pulpit with his bombastic and cynical eloquence; even made them the subject of six successive sermons. The behavior of the Jews of Antioch, however, was indeed too provoking: without any active endeavor on their part, Christians became interested in their customs, their divine service, and their court of law. On Sabbaths and festivals many Christians, especially of the female sex, ladies of rank and women of lower position, met together regularly in the synagogues. They listened with devotion to the blowing of the cornet on the Jewish New Year, attended the solemn service on the Day of Atonement, and participated in the joys of the Feast of Tabernacles. They were all the more attracted by the fact that all this had to go on behind the backs of the Christian priests, and that the neighbors had to be entreated not to 614
betray them. Christians preferred to bring their lawsuits before Jewish judges, the form of the Jewish oath appearing more imposing and forcible to them. It was against such voluntary honoring of Jewish institutions by the Christians that Chrysostom directed the violence of his Capuchin sermons, bestowing all manner of harsh names upon them, and proclaiming the synagogues as infamous theaters, dens of robbers, and even still worse places.

Ambrosius, of Milan, was a violent official, ignorant of all theology, whom a reputation for violence in the church had raised to the rank of bishop; he was even more virulent against the Jews. Once when the Christians of Rome had burnt down a synagogue, and the usurper Maximus commanded the Roman Senate to rebuild it at the expense of the State, Ambrosius called him a Jew. The Bishop of Callinicus, in Northern Mesopotamia, having caused a synagogue situated in that district to be burnt to the ground by monks, Theodosius ordered him to build it up again at his own expense, and punished all who had participated in the act (388). Hereupon Ambrosius' anger was most violently inflamed, and in the epistle which he addressed to the emperor he employed such sharp, provoking terms, that the latter was thereby led to revoke his order. Ambrosius accused the Jews of despising the Roman laws, and mockingly taunted them with the fact that they were not permitted to set up any emperor or governor in their midst, nor to enter the army or the Senate, nor even to eat at the table of the nobles; they were only there for the purpose of bearing heavy taxes. To this pious misconduct Theodosius endeavored to put a stop by means of laws. Starting from the premise that Judaism was not prohibited from existing in the Roman empire by any law, he was desirous of extending to it the protection of the law against violent attacks. He therefore enjoined the Comes of the East to severely punish the Christian religious rioters and desecrators of synagogues (393). But of what avail could the imperial edicts and commands be against the tendency of the times to be malignant, to accuse of heresy, and to persecute? The Jews could not complain, for they were not treated any worse than the adherents of the various Christian sects whose opponents had gained the upper hand. The savageness which the invasion of the barbarians had introduced into the historical parts of the world tainted the province of religion with its contagion; Vandalism reigned everywhere, in the Church as well as in the State. Meanwhile the exceptional position of the Jews in the Roman empire had been either re-established or confirmed by Theodosius I. Constantius' law relative to the possession of slaves was revived afresh; any Jewish slave-owner who admitted his slaves into the pale of Judaism was to be severely punished. The privilege of exemption from the onerous municipal offices on the grounds of religious scruples, which the Jews had succeeded in obtaining under his predecessors, was abolished by Theodosius.

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This emperor bequeathed his dominions to his two sons, and thus lastingly divided the Roman world into two parts, and into two different camps, thereby intensifying the strained and unsympathetic relations of the different parties to each other. Henceforward the Jews of the Roman empire belonged to different masters, part of them being subjects of the eastern, others of the western empire. Arcadius, the eastern or Byzantine emperor (395–408), was a monarch merely in name; his all-powerful chamberlains, Rufinus and Eutropius, were extremely favorable to the Jews. Rufinus loved money, and the Jews had already discovered the magic power of gold to soften obdurate hearts. Numerous laws were therefore promulgated in their favor. One of these laws decided (396) that the Jews should remain possessed of independence in the matter of choosing their own market inspectors (Agoranomos), and that whosoever should dare encroach on this right should be liable to severe punishment by imprisonment. Another law of the same year protected the "illustrious patriarchs" from insult. In Illyria synagogues were attacked, probably by the clergy, who would have liked to see the Jewish houses of prayer as completely destroyed as the heathen temples; thereupon Arcadius (or Eutropius) commanded the governors to resist this movement with all possible energy (397). In the same year he also re-enacted and confirmed the law of Constantius, whereby the patriarchs, as also all the religious officials of the synagogue, were exempted from the burden of the magistracy, as were the Christian clergy. Another right was also preserved to the Jews by Arcadius' administration (February, 398); they were allowed to retain the privilege of submitting their lawsuits to the patriarch and other Jewish arbitrators, if both parties consented to this course, and the Roman authorities were obliged to execute these judgments, without prejudice to the fact, however, that in so far as their religion was not concerned, they were subject to the Roman law. We must not be surprised by a capricious change under the arbitrary rule of the Byzantine court: a law was published in 399, subjecting all Jews, even the religious superiors, to the Curial burdens. This had, perhaps, some connection with Eutropius' fall in the same year.

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Not much is known of the course of conduct pursued towards the Jews by the Emperor of the West, the feeble Honorius, or his master, Stilicho. The abolition of exemption from the Curies pronounced against the communities of Apuleia and Calabria does not prove that a systematic hostility already existed against the Jews. Another law (of April, 399) forbade, in the name of the Western Emperor Honorius, and under severe penalty, the collection of the patriarch's tax throughout the whole extent of the prefecture. Such sums as had already been received were confiscated to the imperial treasury. The motive of this prohibition may, however, have been that the Western Emperor regarded with envious eye the withdrawal of such considerable sums into the prefecture of his brother. But as if the legislation of this period desired to ridicule its own capriciousness, this prohibition was revoked five years later, and the Jews were henceforward permitted to collect the Patriarch's tax as before, and to forward it without concealment (404). While on the one hand Honorius forbade the Jews and the Samaritans to take any share in the military service, on the other hand, he protected the Jews from molestation on the part of the authorities, and decided by an edict that the Jews should not be summoned before the court on the Sabbath or the festivals (409).

617

The Middle Ages really begin for Judaism with Theodosius II (408–450), a good-natured but monk-ridden emperor, whose weakness afforded impunity to the fanatical zeal of many a bishop, and offered encouragement to cruelty. Edicts of this emperor prohibited the Jews from building new synagogues, from exercising the office of judge between Jewish and Christian suitors, and from possessing Christian slaves; they also contained other prohibitions of less interest. It was

under this emperor that the Patriarchate finally fell, although Gamaliel (Batraah), the last of the patriarchs, enjoyed great distinction at the imperial court, such as none of his predecessors had ever possessed. Beside the title which had long been borne by the Patriarchs, the high dignity of Prefect (*Præfectura*), together with a diploma of honor (*codicillus honorarius*), had been bestowed upon him, and although these were but hollow honors, they were of great importance 618
at a time when appearances constituted everything. It is not known what was the particular merit for which Gamaliel gained this distinction, but it was probably on account of his medical acquirements. He was a physician, and was credited with the discovery of a much-approved remedy for diseases of the spleen. In this elevated position Gamaliel considered himself privileged to be lax in his observance of the emperor's exceptional laws against the Jews. He therefore built new synagogues, exercised jurisdiction in disputes between Jews and Christians, and disregarded other similar imperial commands. In consequence of this, Theodosius deprived him of all his higher dignities, took from him his diploma of honor, and suffered him to retain only such distinctions as he had enjoyed as Patriarch (415). But Theodosius in nowise abolished the Patriarchate during Gamaliel's lifetime; it was not until after the latter's death that this occurred, his male heirs having died, it appears, at an early age (425). Thus, with Gamaliel (Batraah) the last remnants of the noble stock of the house of Hillel disappeared. For three and a half centuries this house had stood at the head of the spiritual affairs of Judaism; many of its members had been promoters of the Law, of liberty, and of national feeling, and the history of their lives had become an important part of the history of the Jewish nation. Fifteen Patriarchs had succeeded each other during this lapse of time; two Hillels, three Simons, four Judahs, and six Gamaliels.

During the reign of Theodosius in the East, and Honorius in the West, Cyril, Bishop of Alexandria, notorious for his love of quarreling, his violence, and his impetuousness, was suffered to illtreat the Jews and to drive them out of that town. He assembled the Christian mob, incited them against the Jews by his excessive fanaticism, forced his way into the synagogues, of which 619
he took possession for the Christians, and expelled the Jewish inhabitants half naked from the town which they had come to regard as their home. Disdaining no means, Cyril handed over their property to be pillaged by the mob, ever greedy of plunder (415). Thus the Christians inflicted on the Jews of Alexandria the same fate as 370 years before had fallen to their lot at the hands of the heathens. The Prefect Orestes, who took this barbarous treatment of the Jews greatly to heart, was powerless to protect them; all he was able to do was to lodge a charge against the bishop, but the latter gained his cause at the court of Constantinople. How great was the fanaticism of this bishop may be seen from what occurred in Alexandria soon after the expulsion of the Jews. Not far from this city was a mountain called Nitra, where dwelt an order of monks whose thirst for the crown of martyrdom had almost made wild animals of them. Incited by Cyril, these monks fell upon Orestes, and almost stoned him to death as a punishment for not sanctioning the expulsion of the Jews. It was this same fanatical band that tore to pieces the body of the celebrated philosopher Hypatia, who had charmed the world by her profound science, her eloquence, and her purity. Only one member of this unlucky community of Jews, Adamantius by name, a teacher of the science of medicine, was induced by this disaster to allow himself to be baptized; he repaired to Constantinople, and was there granted the right to settle in Alexandria. All the rest willingly bore banishment and affliction for the sake of their convictions.

Not so resolute were the Jews of the little town of Magona (Mahon) in the Spanish island of Minorca, in the Mediterranean. Severus, the bishop of that place, burnt their synagogues, and harassed them with attacks in the streets, until at last he succeeded in compelling many of them 620
to embrace Christianity. The Jews had settled early—probably in the time of the Roman Republic—in Spain and in the surrounding islands, and lived there in friendly relation with the original inhabitants. Even after the Iberians had become Christians, the husbandmen still caused the produce of their fields to be blessed by the Jews. It was in Spain that the Christian clergy first aroused the fanaticism of the Christian population against the Jews. The same bishop Osius (Hosius) of Cordova, who had sat in the Council of Nice, and had convoked a council at Illiberis (Elvira, near Granada), also succeeded in passing a resolution which prohibited the Christians, under pain of excommunication, from trading with the Jews, contracting marriages with them, or causing them to bless the produce of their fields. Nothing now remained for the Jews of Christian countries but to take up the weapons of mockery; they accordingly made merry over their enemies behind their backs, which has everywhere and at all times been the manner in which the weaker party has attempted to lighten its burdens. At times also they made use of coarse jokes to express their feelings with regard to Christianity. Such jokes were most usually made on the occasion of the feast of Purim, when the cheerfulness of the festival led to intoxication, and intoxication to irresponsible expressions and demonstrations. On this day the Jews in their merriment were accustomed to hang Haman, their arch-enemy, in effigy on a gallows, and this gallows, which used afterwards to be burned, took, accidentally or intentionally, the form of a cross. Naturally the Christians complained of profanation of their religion, and the Emperor Theodosius II directed the ruler of the province to put a stop to such misconduct by the threat of severe punishment, without being able, however, to repress it. On one occasion this carnival 621
pleasantry is said to have led to horrible consequences. The Jews of Imnestar, a small Syrian town between Antioch and Chalcis, having erected one of these Haman's gallows, were accused by the Christians of having suspended a Christian lad crosswise upon it, and of having flogged him to death. Thereupon the emperor ordered the culprits to be punished (415).

The Christians of Antioch were not inferior to their brethren of Alexandria in fanaticism. They once begged the emperor not to remove the bones and relics of their martyr Ignatius, as they afforded their city as great a protection as strong walls. They also, on their side, avenged the deed of the Jews of Imnestar, by forcibly dispossessing their Jewish fellow-citizens of their

synagogues. It is a remarkable phenomenon that the prefects and rulers of the provinces for the most part expressed themselves in favor of the Jews against the clergy. The Syrian prefect notified the emperor of this robbery of the synagogues, and must have painted this act of injustice in very vivid colors, for he thereby moved Theodosius II, steeped as he was in monkish bigotry, to issue an injunction to the inhabitants of Antioch, ordering them to restore the synagogues to their owners. But this decision was denounced by Simon Stylites, who led a life of extreme asceticism in a sort of stable not far from Antioch. From the height of his column he had renounced the world and its ways, but his hatred of the Jews was sufficient, nevertheless, to cause him to interpose in temporal matters. Hardly had he heard of Theodosius' command relative to the restoration of the stolen synagogues, than he addressed an insulting letter to the emperor, informing him that he acknowledged God alone, and no one else, as master and emperor, and demanded the withdrawal of the edict. Theodosius hardly stood in need of such intimidation; he revoked his command, and even removed the Syrian prefect, who had raised his voice in favor of the Jews (423).

622

The bigotry of Theodosius II operated also on Honorius, Emperor of the West, and by their absurd laws both of them placed the Jews in that exceptional position in which the newly-formed German states found them. The Jews were no longer allowed to hold any public offices, or to fill any military posts such as they had formerly been permitted to occupy. All that now remained open to them were the doubtful honors of the municipal offices; but not content with having deprived them of their position of equality, Theodosius restricted the free employment of their property for religious purposes, as if the fortunes of the Jews belonged to the emperor. After the extinction of the patriarchal house the Jewish communities had not discontinued their practice of forwarding the taxes of the Patriarch; they were handed over to the primates, who most probably employed them in supporting the schools. Suddenly there appeared an imperial decree directing the primates to deliver up to the imperial treasury such sums as had already been received for the Patriarch's taxes, and commanding that for the future they should be collected by imperial officials after exact computation of their amount, and even that the moneys received from the Western empire should be handed over to the treasury (May 30, 429). New Rome had inherited all the knavery and covetousness of Ancient Rome. In the same manner as the heathen emperor Vespasian had appropriated the Temple dues, so now did this Christian emperor seize upon the taxes of the Patriarch, thus adding to the injury of the robbery an insult to the conscience, for that which had been voluntarily offered out of piety was now imposed as a compulsory tax for the benefit of foreign interests.

623

In spite of the affliction which fell to the lot of Judaism in the Eastern empire, and more especially in Judæa, whereby the study of the Talmud was retarded, the spirit of investigation had not become quite extinct in Judæa. The reigning distress offered no scope for the profundities of the Halacha, but furthered the study of the cheerful Agada, which, diving deep into the joyful and gloomy situations of past ages, poured the balm of consolation on fretted and desperate spirits, and lulled them with the magic of hope. The more clear-sighted were fully conscious of this decay of serious studies, and expressed their discontent. Notwithstanding the prevailing injustice of the times, a lively interest in the Hebrew language and in the knowledge of the Bible was still felt in Palestine. It is indisputable that this interest in the language was greatly heightened by the controversies which were sustained with Christians, and to such a pitch was it excited at this period, that by its help Christianity arrived at an understanding of the primitive text of the Bible. Tiberias was the home and the model of this branch of knowledge; Lydda is the only other town which is mentioned beside it. Hieronymus (Jerome, 331–420), called by the Church the Holy, the founder of a nunnery in Bethlehem, being actuated, like Origen, by a thirst for knowledge, was at pains to become acquainted with the Bible in its original form, and for this reason went in quest of Jewish teachers, such as Bar-Chanina and others in these cities. Under their guidance, Hieronymus' acquirements were by no means small, for he succeeded in expressing himself freely in Hebrew. From this circumstance it may fairly be concluded that the knowledge of the holy tongue and of the Bible was more assiduously cultivated in Judæa than has generally been assumed. Bar-Chanina was obliged, however, to avoid publicity, and to go in secret to Hieronymus' cell, there to instruct him, for by reason of the hostile use to which the Christians turned their knowledge of the Hebrew language, it had latterly been forbidden to the Jews to teach them. Hieronymus not only learnt the pronunciation of Hebrew and the literal meaning of the Bible, but was afforded a more profound insight into the interconnection of the text by the aid of tradition. He succeeded so well in catching the form of the Agadic exposition, that at times he was able to carry it over with taste and ingenuity into the sphere of Christianity.

624

The Jews were several centuries ahead of their Christian contemporaries as regards judging and distinguishing between authentic canonical writings and spurious apocryphal collections. The Council of Nice, which had thought to unite parties by means of authoritative decisions, had decided the dispute as to the holy character of doubtful writings, and had incorporated several apocryphal books in the canon. The Jews with whom Hieronymus held conferences on matters exegetical, offered such sound remarks on the worthlessness of several portions of the Apocrypha that even at this day, when knowledge has made such immense strides, they must be acknowledged as correct. Among others, a Jewish teacher of the Law ridiculed the additions to Habakkuk, according to which an angel transported the prophet by the hair from Judæa to Chaldæa. He demanded where in the Old Testament could be found a counterpart to this story of one of the holy prophets, possessed of a body subject to the power of gravity, traversing so immense a distance in a moment. In spite of the unpropitious state of the times, the Jews of Palestine were not afflicted with that want of judgment which in naïve faith accepts without discrimination as holy anything that is put forward as such; they had not extinguished the light of

discernment in the temple of their faith. This power of judgment was a result of the study of the Halacha, which afforded a counterpoise to the incapacity of discrimination which is a consequence of credulity. Thus even in its old age Judæa fostered the Hebrew tongue, which it had given to its sons as an indissoluble bond of union in foreign countries. The use of the holy language in prayer, lecture, and study constituted the intellectual unity of the Jewish nation. 625

Christianity had caught up a few rays of the setting sun of Judæa, and treasured them up in the Church as a light from heaven. The knowledge of Hebrew, which Hieronymus had acquired from Jewish teachers, and by means of which he had been enabled to produce a Latin translation (Vulgata) of the Bible, deviating from the distorted Septuagint and approaching more nearly to the Hebrew text, sufficed for more than a thousand years, and was extended and amended with the renaissance of learning at the commencement of modern times. But with every step forward that Christianity took, it increased the gap which divided it from Judaism, and the eloquence of many centuries was required before recognition was again obtained for the fact that Christianity had had its origin in Judaism. To such an extent had blood-relationship been obliterated by religious zeal, that even Hieronymus, who had sat at the feet of Jewish masters, and had found "the Hebrew truth" in the Old Testament, was unable to free himself from the deep-rooted hatred of the Jews. His enemies having reproached him with heresy on account of his Jewish studies, he convinced them of his orthodoxy by his hatred of the Jews. "If it is requisite to despise the individuals and the nation, so do I abhor the Jews with an inexpressible hate." In this he was not alone, for his opinions were shared by a younger contemporary, Augustine, the Father of the Church. This profession of faith concerning the hatred of the Jews was not the private opinion of an individual author, but an oracle for the whole of Christendom, which readily accepted the 626 writings of the Fathers of the Church, who were revered as saints. In later times this profession of faith armed kings and populace, crusaders and herdsmen, against the Jews, invented instruments for their torture, and constructed funeral pyres for burning them.

It is remarkable that in spite of their repression on the part of the state, the Jews living in Cæsarea, the residence of the Governor, joined in the fashionable folly of the stadium. There existed among them charioteers, horse-racers, jockeys, and parties supporting the green or the blue, as at Rome, Ravenna, Constantinople, and Antioch. But as in those times every act in life bore the stamp of the confessional, religious disputes also became mixed up with the struggles of the partisans of the various colors. The victory or the defeat of a Jewish, Samaritan, or Christian charioteer was at the same time the occasion of an attack by his co-religionists upon their opponents.

In Babylonia, where up till now the Jews had enjoyed quiet and independence but seldom disturbed, troubles and persecutions also began to increase. It was for this reason that a dearth of prominent personages began to make itself felt. Creative power declined, and made way for the tendency to reproduce and establish what had already been produced. The Jewish history of this country moved within a narrow circle; the principals of the schools succeeded one another, taught, and died, and it was only by the appearance of persecutions that a sad variety was imparted to its course. Of Ashi's six successors at the Academy of Sora (427–456), not one accomplished anything worthy of remark.

Some small importance was possessed, however, by Ashi's son, Mar, who also bore the name Tabyome. He happened to be at Machuza at the time when he heard the news of the occurrence 627 of a vacancy at the head of the Soranian Metibta. He hurried off to Sora, and arrived there just in the nick of time, for the members of the academy were assembled for the election. Delegates were sent to confer with him on the choice of Acha of Diphta, and were detained by him, as were also others who were sent after them, until they were ten in number; whereupon he delivered a lecture, and was hailed as Resh-Metibta by all the members present (455). Acha was exceedingly hurt by this slight, and applied to his own case the following saying, "He who is unlucky, can never attain to luck."

In the same year a persecution of the Jews broke out with unprecedented rigor in the Babylonian countries. It was the commencement of a long series of bloody attacks which the Jews had to suffer at the hands of the last of the neo-Persian kings, and which rendered their position as sad as that of their co-religionists of the Roman Empire. Jezdijird III (440–457), unlike his predecessor of the same name, instituted a religious persecution of the Jews; they were forbidden to celebrate the Sabbath (456). The reason of this sudden change in the conduct of the Persian ruler towards the Jews, who had always been sincerely attached to him, is probably to be found in the fanaticism of the Magi, whose influence over many of the Persian monarchs was not less than that of the spiritual advisers of the eastern emperors over their masters. The Magi of this period appear to have learnt their proselytism and their love of religious persecution from the Christians. Besides this, Christianity had by its proselytism provoked the Magi to resistance. The Manicheans who had compounded Jewish, Christian, and Persian religious ideas into a medley of their own, made accusations of heresy as common in Persia as in the Roman Empire. Jezdijird persecuted both Manicheans and Christians. Sooner or later the light-worship of the Persians 628 was bound to take offense at Judaism, and to place the Jews upon the list of its enemies. The chronicles are silent concerning the conduct of the Jews with regard to the prohibition of the celebration of the Sabbath; conscientious Jews, however, cannot have failed to obtain opportunities of evading it, and for this reason the names of no martyrs have survived this persecution. The constraint was continued about a year, as Jezdijird was killed a short time after; a civil war was carried on by his sons Chodar-Warda and Firuz for the possession of the crown.

Mar bar Ashi was the sole authority of this period; and although all his decisions, with the exception of three, received the force of law, he does not seem to have acquired any special

repute in the Soranian Academy. He continued his father's work of completing the Talmudical collection, and included the latter's decisions therein. He and his contemporaries must have felt themselves all the more impelled to complete the work of compilation, as the persecution they had gone through made them feel that the future was precarious. Nothing more is known of Mar bar Ashi's character than a trait of conscientiousness, which stands out in strong contrast with Raba's partiality towards members of his own class. He relates as follows: "When an associate appears before me in court, I refuse to exercise the functions of my office, for I regard him as a near relation, and might involuntarily show partiality in his favor."

After Mar's death the Jews of the Persian Empire were the victims of a fresh persecution under Firuz (Pheroces, 457–484), which was far more terrible than that which had occurred under his father, Jezdijird. This persecution is said to have been occasioned by the desire for vengeance entertained by this monarch, who was swayed by the Magi against the whole Jewish 629
community, because certain of them were said to have killed and flayed two Magi in Ispahan. As a punishment for this deed Firuz put to death half the Jewish population of Ispahan, and had the Jewish children forcibly brought up in the Temple of Horvan as worshipers of fire. The persecution extended also to the communities of Babylonia, and continued for several years, until the death of the tyrant. Mar-Zutra's son, Huna-Mari, Prince of the Captivity, and two teachers of the Law, Amemar bar Mar-Janka and Meshershaya bar Pacod, were thrown into prison, and afterwards executed (469–70). They were the first martyrs on Babylonian soil, and it is a significant fact that a Prince of the Captivity bled for Judaism.

A few years later the persecution was carried to a still wider extent; the schools were closed, assemblies for the purpose of teaching prohibited, the jurisdiction of the Jews abolished, and their children compelled to embrace the religion of the Magi (474).

The city of Sora seems to have been destroyed at this period. Firuz, whose system of persecution puts one in mind of Hadrian, invented a new means of torture, which had not occurred to that emperor, which was to remove the young from under the influence of Judaism, and to bring them up by force in the Persian religion. For this reason he was branded by the Jews of after times, like Hadrian, with the name of "the wicked" (*Piruz Reshia*). The immediate result of this persecution was the emigration of Jewish colonists, who settled in the south as far as Arabia, and in the east as far as India.

This emigration of the Jews to India is expressly marked as occurring about the time of Firuz's persecution. An otherwise unknown person, Joseph Rabban by name, who is recognizable as a Babylonian by reason of this title, arrived in the year 4250 of the Jewish era (490), with many Jewish families, on the rich and busy coast of Malabar; he must accordingly have started on his 630
journey before this date, and therefore have emigrated under Firuz. Airvi (Eravi), the Brahmin king of Cranganor, welcomed the Jewish strangers, offered them a home in his dominions, and suffered them to live according to their peculiar laws, and to be ruled by their own princes (Mardeliar). The first of these chiefs was their leader Joseph Rabban, upon whom the Indian monarch conferred special rights and princely honors, to be inherited by his descendants. He was allowed, like the Indian princes, to ride upon an elephant, to be preceded by a herald, accompanied by a musical escort of drums and cymbals, and to sit upon a carpet. Joseph Rabban is said to have been followed by a line of seventy-two successors, who ruled over the Indo-Jewish colonists, until quarrels broke out among them. Cranganor was destroyed, many of the Jews lost their lives, and the remainder settled in Mattachery, a league from Cochin, which acquired from this fact the name of Jews'-town. The privileges accorded by Airvi to the Jewish immigrants were engraved in ancient Indian (Tamil) characters, accompanied by an obscure Hebrew translation, on a copper table, which is said to be extant at the present day.

As soon as the terrors of persecution had ceased with Firuz's death, the ancient organization was again restored in Jewish Babylonia; the academies were re-opened, principals appointed, and Sora and Pumbeditha received their last Amoraïc leaders—the former in the person of Rabina, the latter in José. These two principals and their assessors had but one end in view, the completion and termination of the work of compiling the Talmud begun by Ashi. The continual increase of affliction, the diminished interest which probably on that account was extended to study, the uncertainty of the future, all these causes forcibly suggested the completion of the 631
Talmud. Rabina, who held office from 488 to 499, and José, who discharged the duties of principal from 471 to about 520, are expressly mentioned in the old chronicles as "the close of the period of the Amoraïm" (*Sof Horaah*). There is no doubt, however, that the members of the two academies, whose names have been preserved, also had a part in this work, and that they therefore are to be regarded as the last of the Amoraïm. The most important among them was Achaï bar Huna of Be-Chatim, near Nahardea (died 506), whose decisions and discussions are distinguished by characteristic peculiarities, and bear witness to a clear and sober mind, and to great keenness. Achaï was known and esteemed for these qualities beyond Babylonia. An epistle received by the Babylonian academy from Judæa, which, as far as is historically known, was probably the last addressed by the deserted mother-country to its daughter colony, speaks of him in terms of greatest reverence: "Neglect not Achaï, for he is the light of the eyes of the exiles." Even Huna-Mar, the Prince of the Captivity, must have possessed Talmudical acquirements, for the chronicle, which is by no means favorable to the princes of the Captivity, numbers him among this series of teachers of the Law, and concedes to him the title of Rabbi. His history, with which certain important events are connected, belongs to the following period.

In conjunction with these men, Rabina and José accomplished the completion of the Talmud, that is to say, they sanctioned as a complete whole the collection of all previous transactions and decisions which they had caused to be compiled, and to which no additions or amplifications were

henceforward to be made. The definite completion of the Babylonian Talmud (called also the Gemara) occurred in the year of Rabina's death, just at the close of the fifth century (13th Kislev or 2nd December, 499), when the Jews of the Arabian peninsula were sowing the first seeds of a new religion and laying the foundations of a new empire, and when the Gothic and Frankish kingdoms were rising in Europe from the ruins of ancient Rome. The Talmud forms a turning-point in Jewish history, and from this time forward constitutes an essential factor therein. 632

The Talmud must not be regarded as an ordinary work, composed of twelve volumes; it possesses absolutely no similarity to any other literary production, but forms, without any figure of speech, a world of its own, which must be judged by its peculiar laws. It is extremely difficult to give any sketch of its character because of the absence of all common standards and analogies. The most talented could, therefore, hardly hope to succeed in this task, even though he had penetrated deeply into its nature, and become intimately acquainted with its peculiarities. It might, perhaps, be compared with the literature of the Fathers of the Church, which sprang up about the same time; but on closer examination even this comparison fails to satisfy the student. It is, however, of less consequence what the Talmud is in itself, than what was its influence on history, that is to say, on the successive generations whose education it chiefly controlled. Many judgments have been passed on the Talmud at various times and on the most opposite grounds. It has been condemned, and its funeral pyre has been ignited, because only its unfavorable side has been considered, and no regard has been paid to its merits, which, however, can be rendered apparent only by a complete survey of the whole of Jewish history. It cannot be denied, however, that the Babylonian Talmud is marred by certain blemishes, such as necessarily appear in every intellectual production which pursues a single course with inflexible consistency and exclusive one-sidedness. These faults may be classed under four heads. The Talmud contains much that is immaterial and frivolous, of which it treats with great gravity and seriousness; it further reflects the various superstitious practices and views of its Persian birthplace, which presume the efficacy of demoniacal medicines, of magic, incantations, miraculous cures, and interpretations of dreams, and are thus in opposition to the spirit of Judaism. It also contains isolated instances of uncharitable judgments and decrees against the members of other nations and religions, and finally it favors an incorrect exposition of the Scriptures, accepting, as it does, tasteless misinterpretations. The whole Talmud has been made responsible for these defects, and has been condemned as a collection of trifles, a well of immorality and falsehood. No consideration has been paid to the fact that it is not the work of any one author, who must answer for every word of it, or if it be, that that author is the entire Jewish nation. More than six centuries lie petrified in the Talmud as the fullest evidence of life, clothed each in its peculiar dress and possessing its own form of thought and expression: a sort of literary Herculaneum and Pompeii, unmarred by that artificial imitation which transfers a gigantic picture on a reduced scale to a narrow canvas. Small wonder, then, that if in this world the sublime and the common, the great and the small, the grave and the ridiculous, the altar and the ashes, the Jewish and the heathenish, be discovered side by side. The expressions of ill-will, which are seized upon with such avidity by the enemies of the Jews, were often nothing but the utterance of momentary ill-humor, which escaped from the teacher, and were caught up and embodied in the Talmud by over-zealous disciples, unwilling to lose a single word let fall by the revered sages. They are amply counterbalanced, however, by the doctrines of benevolence and love of all men without distinction of race or religion, which are also preserved in the Talmud. As a counterpoise to the wild superstitions, there are severe warnings against superstitious heathen practices, to which a separate section is devoted. 633 634

The Babylonian Talmud is especially distinguished from the Jerusalem or Palestine Talmud by the flights of thought, the penetration of mind, the flashes of genius, which rise and vanish again. An infinite fulness of thought and of thought-exciting material is laid up in the mine of the Talmud, not, however, in the shape of a finished theme which one can grasp at a glance, but in all its original freshness of conception. The Talmud introduces us into the laboratory of thought, and in it may be traced the progress of ideas, from their earliest agitation to the giddy height of incomprehensibility to which at times they attain. It was for this reason that the Babylonian rather than the Jerusalem Talmud became the fundamental possession of the Jewish race, its life's breath, its very soul. It was a family history for succeeding generations, in which they felt themselves at home, in which they lived and moved, the thinker in the world of thought, the dreamer in glorious ideal pictures. For more than a thousand years the external world, nature and mankind, powers and events, were for the Jewish nation insignificant, non-essential, a mere phantom; the only true reality was the Talmud. A new truth in their eyes only received the stamp of veracity and freedom from doubt when it appeared to be foreseen and sanctioned by the Talmud. Even the knowledge of the Bible, the more ancient history of their race, the words of fire and balm of their prophets, the soul outpourings of their Psalmists, were only known to them through and in the light of the Talmud. But as Judaism, ever since its foundation, has based itself on the experiences of actual life, so that the Talmud was obliged to concern itself with concrete phenomena, with the things of *this* world; so it follows that there could not arise that dream-life, that disdain of the world, that hatred of realities, which in the Middle Ages gave birth to and sanctified the hermit life of the monks and nuns. It is true that the intellectual tendency prevailing in the Babylonian Talmud, aided by climatic influences and other accidental circumstances, degenerated not infrequently into subtilty and scholasticism; for no historical phenomenon exists without an unfavorable side. But even this abuse contributed to bring about clear conceptions, and rendered possible the movement toward science. The Babylonian Amoraïm created that dialectic, close-reasoning, Jewish spirit, which in the darkest days preserved the dispersed nation from stagnation and stupidity. It was the ether which protected them from corruption, the ever-moving force which overcame indolence and the blunting of the 635

mental powers, the eternal spring which kept the mind ever bright and active. In a word, the Talmud was the educator of the Jewish nation; and this education can by no means have been a bad one, since, in spite of the disturbing influence of isolation, degradation and systematic demoralization, it fostered in the Jewish people a degree of morality which even their enemies cannot deny them. The Talmud preserved and promoted the religious and moral life of Judaism; it held out a banner to the communities scattered in all corners of the earth, and protected them from schism and sectarian divisions; it acquainted subsequent generations with the history of their nation; finally, it produced a deep intellectual life which preserved the enslaved and proscribed from stagnation, and which lit for them the torch of science. How the Talmud made its way into the consciousness of the Jewish people, how it became known and accessible to distant communities, and how it became a stumbling-block to the enemies of Judaism, will be told in subsequent pages.

INDEX.

Transcriber's Notes

Punctuation and spelling were made consistent when a predominant preference was found in this book; otherwise they were not changed.

Simple typographical errors were corrected.

Ambiguous hyphens at the ends of lines were retained.

Inconsistent use of small-caps and Proper caps in names unchanged.

Inconsistent use of periods after Regnal numbers not changed.

The Index was not checked for correct page references.

Text uses both forms of these words and phrases:

"Ruach ha-Kodesh" and "Ruach-ha-Kodesh";
"Galilæan" and "Galilean";
"A. C." and "C. E." (to indicate "A. D.");
"repellent" and "repellant";
"coreligionists" and "co-religionists";
"instal" and "install";
"Agora-nomos" and "Agoranomos";
"subtlety" and "subtilty";
"Amoraïm" and "Amoraim".

Text mostly used "Tanaites", so infrequent occurrences of "Tanaïtes" have been changed.

Page 505 says that "twenty-two parasangs" are "sixty-eight miles," but page 506 says they are "sixteen geographical miles". According to current understanding of "parasang," the former is more nearly correct.

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