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- ¹⁸*Sermons*, 1:267-98.
- ¹⁹*The Principles of a Methodist Farther Explain'd* (1746), VI.4, 6. Cf. "Short History of the People Called Methodists" (1781), sects. 8, 11.
- ²⁰*Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society*, 13:201-02.
- ²¹Preface, sect. 1.
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- ²³*Confessions, I.1*; cf. *Journal*, July 12, 1739, etc.
- ²⁴*Hymns and Sacred Poems* (1739), Pref. 5.
- ²⁵*HSP* (1740), Pref. 1-11, pp. iii-xi of orig.; cf. *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection* (1766), sect. 13.
- ²⁶*HSP* (1742), Pref. 1, 5.
- ²⁷Letter to R. C. Brackenbury, Sept. 15, 1789—not 1790, as in Telford *Wesley's Letters* (the original is in the Methodist Archives at Manchester).
- ²⁸Letter to his brother Charles (Telford, IV.281).
- ²⁹Letter to Miss Bishop (Telford, VI.297-98).
- ³⁰*The Character of a Methodist* (1742), sect. 1.
- ³¹*Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament* (1755) on Rom. 12:16. His mother had used this phrase in a letter to him on Aug. 18, 1725.
- ³²"Large" *Minutes* (1763), p. 2.
- ³³Frank Baker, *John Wesley and the Church of England* (1970), pp. 103-6.
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- ³⁵Nos. 3, 18, 20, 26, 29, 33, 35, 36, and 37.
- ³⁶Baker, *op.cit.*, pp. 107-08, 249-51.
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THE PRECIOUS INSTRUMENT A Study of the Concept of Law in Judaism and Evangelicalism

by
Paul W. Livermore

In his discussion of Genesis 1 Philo of Alexandria, that prolific spokesman of hellenistic Judaism, asks why Moses began with the creation account rather than with the commandments. He explains:

His exordium, as I have said, is one that excites our admiration in the highest degree. It consists of an account of the creation of the world, implying that the world is in harmony with the Law, and the Law with the world, and that the man who observes the Law is constituted thereby a loyal citizen of the world (*Op.* 3).

Though we might dispute his claim, we cannot help but admire Philo's ingenuity. And, lest one think that the correlation of "nature" with "Law" appeared only in hellenistic Judaism due to the influence of Stoicism, there is a mishnaic statement, attributed to Akiba (c. A.D. 50-135), making much the same point.

Beloved are Israel, for to them was given the precious instrument, still greater was the love, in that it was made known to them that to them was given the precious instrument by which the world was created, as it is written, "For I give you good doctrine; forsake ye not my law" (mAb. 3:15).

Already we can see that the idea of the law was far larger for Jews than is often imagined. What, then, did they think of when they referred to the law and how did they believe that it functioned in their religious lives and community?

The major task of this paper is to study the use of the law in Judaism at the time of Jesus and the centuries immediately surrounding Him. At the very end of our study we will make some comparisons concerning the

Jewish view of the law and the way in which contemporary Evangelicals view it.

We might think that we ought to undertake such a study because the Jewish position on this subject stood, and stands, in contrast—if not sharp opposition—to the Christian one. However, I doubt that this is the case to any significant degree. Why?

To begin with, it is doubtful whether "legalism," as generally understood, is a sufficiently distinct term so that, when we use it, we have clarified matters at all. The presence of commandments, standards, and other legal forms cannot, by themselves, merit the opprobrious term legalism. No social entity can survive without rules that are standardized and accepted by the group. The next step is usually to dodge the force of this by claiming that legalism arises not because of the presence of legal obligations alone but because of a certain attitude and ethos. This may be true, but what are the criteria by which we can judge when this appears? Can we really condemn Judaism as legalism because its ethos is more judgmental and oppressive than Christianity?

Our task is especially difficult when dealing with a religion such as Judaism which is not our own and possesses a large and at times unwieldy literature. The formidable nature of Jewish literature, in fact, contributes greatly to the temptation Christians have failed to resist time and again, to ignore the primary sources and interpret the religion largely on the basis of the debates going on in the New Testament or on unsympathetic, secondary sources.¹ It is not surprising that we do this. What ought to cause us concern is how readily we accept the results of such studies as anything beyond special pleading. Of course, we cannot avoid the use of secondary sources to guide us, but the Jews have a right to speak for themselves, and we owe them a hearing. When they claim that Christians misrepresent what they understand it to mean "to live under the yoke of the law," they are largely correct.² I shall follow, then, two methodological principles: (1) Primary sources and contemporary Jews (or Gentiles sympathetic with the Jewish viewpoint) give us better clues than Christians generally do about the nature of Judaism. (2) We will consider the context as well as the individual questions of the nature of the law and Judaism.

A Religion of the Book

Judaism in the post-exilic era had become a religion of the Book. The religious life of the average Jew revolved around a corpus of literature. Of course, the history of the making of this Book is fascinating and deserving of attention in its own right; but long before the time of Jesus the decision of what belonged in the first division, the Torah, was accepted by all Jews. There were debates concerning the authority of the Prophets, but for large portions of the people, they also had great authority. And for some of the same people what belonged in the third division, the Writings, was settled except for a few fringe documents. While there were debates, then, about which books had authority, such differences must not obscure the larger issue at stake—the Book was at the center. Authority had shifted from the living voice, *viva vox*, to the written word, *scriptura*.

This phenomenon of post-exilic Judaism accounts for a number of developments we can trace. For example, now the conveyers of the

authoritative word were not specifically the priests, whose work was largely confined to the cultus, or the prophet, but the scribe (*sopher*) whose responsibility was the written Word and the interpretation of it (cf. Neh. 8).

With the formation of the scribal class, technical methods were developed. That is, hermeneutics arose as a discipline. The norms (middoth) attributed to Hillel and later authorities suggest that some Jews were not only interpreting Scriptures but thinking systematically about the way they did so—obviously to distinguish valid interpretations from erroneous ones.

By the first century of the present era, then, whether we look at what was happening in Diaspora or Palestine, Judaism had become a religion which, in most respects, found the source for its spiritual nourishment in a book which it read, pondered, interpreted, and applied in a sophisticated way. If there was a "living voice," it was the interpreter's and not the prophet's.

The Book Is Studied

The Book, the written text, provided the source for both faith and practice. This was the place where Judaism looked for answers and nourishment. It was examined with minute attention paid to words, letters, concepts, and whatever other literary clues might be discovered in it. We will take three examples to show how the Jews used the Book as their source.

The Loeb Classical Library contains twelve volumes from Philo of Alexandria. Volume 1 treats Gen. 1:1-3:19; vol. 2, Gen. 3:24-6:4; and so on through parts of the Joseph story in vol. 5. Then, vol. 6 again looks at some of the heroes of the Genesis story and Moses from Exodus. Vols. 7 and about half of 8 discuss the laws, both the decalogue and special laws (as circumcision or kosher laws). The rest of vol. 8 deals with various themes (such as rewards and punishments), again using the Torah as the source for proofs and illustrations. The two supplemental volumes contain questions and answers on Genesis and Exodus. Only vols. 9 and 10 are not specifically biblical and contain treatises of various kinds. What we have from Philo, then, is primarily an exposition of the text of the Torah. We might argue with him and say that popular Stoicism has seriously colored his interpretation. Philo was aware that he saw things in the light of his philosophical milieu. But he considered the biblical text as the source and norm for understanding reality and determining conduct. He would have repudiated the accusation that he had departed from the Book.

Our second document comes from the rabbinical world. The Mishnah which we use is that attributed to Rabbi Meir, codified somewhere around A.D. 250. Some material from at least the first century B.C. is in it, though a good deal also comes from later times. Laying aside the issue of precise dating for a mishnah, we can observe that the Mishnah is the result of a process begun before Christ and continued long after. It is primarily halakic, discussing the proper way to fulfill the 613 commandments revealed in the Torah, the rules for civil and personal life as well as the cultus. It has six divisions (on seeds, set feasts, women, damages, hallowed things, and cleanliness) which in turn have 63 tractates or chapters. To give one example, the division on seeds, the first one, contains the tractates: benedictions, gleanings, produce not certainly tithed, diverse kinds, the seventh year, heave-offerings, tithes, second tithe, dough-offering, the fruit of the young trees,

and first fruits. A full listing of the data would be tedious but would prove what was going on in rabbinic Judaism. Often diverse opinions of the rabbis who do not quite agree are recited. However, disagreement on how a regulation is to be applied does not negate agreement on the importance of obedience. In fact, it is the intensity of the conviction that the law provides revelation and must be pondered which compels them to discuss the issue so thoroughly and respect the various opinions.

Our final example comes from an earlier period, around 180 B.C., and was written in Palestine by the teacher, Ben Sira.

Wisdom will praise herself, and will glory in the midst of her people. In the assembly of the Most High she will open her mouth, and in the presence of his host she will glory: "I came forth from the mouth of the Most High, and covered the earth like a mist. . . . Then the Creator of all things gave me a commandment, and the one who created me assigned a place for my tent. And he said, 'Make your dwelling in Jacob, and in Israel receive your inheritance.' . . . Whoever obeys me will not be put to shame, and those who work with my help will not sin." All this is the book of the covenant of the Most High God, the law which Moses commanded us as an inheritance for the congregations of Jacob. It fills men with wisdom, like the Pishon, and like the Tigris at the time of the first fruits. . . . Just as the first man did not know her perfectly, the last one has not fathomed her; for her thought is more abundant than the sea, and her counsel deeper than the great abyss (24:1-3, 8, 22-25, 28-29).

This wonderful panegyric, working from Prov. 8:22ff. and fusing Torah and Wisdom motifs, shows how powerful was the conviction of the Book's value. All three of our examples show the devotion with which Jews went about the task of studying the Torah. For them it was a source of endless wisdom, a certain guide to life. If we had time, we could go on to show from many sources how Jews returned to the text to examine and think about it in the smallest detail, with loving care and childlike eagerness. This was God's great gift to Israel.

Now we must ask two questions: Given that the Book was intensely studied, where was it studied and what was it believed that the study of the Book achieved?

The principal place for familiarizing oneself with the Book was through hearing it read in the local synagogues. At this time in the history of humankind the capacity to hear and understand was more highly cultivated than it is by us who depend so much on the written word. In fact, much of scripture was originally written to be heard not read by the masses, and the contemporary model of everyone having a Bible and following the Scripture lesson might suggest. Thus, the principal place to hear the reading and explanation of the Book was in the synagogue. This would apply equally to Palestinian and Diasporan Judaism. There also developed, separate from synagogue worship, schools of study. Rabbinic Judaism called such a school the *beth ham-midrash*.³ Here more intensive study of the text was pursued. And, of course, study became even more detailed and complex as great teachers drew disciples around themselves. Thus the same kind of

phenomenon occurred in Judaism as has happened, *mutatis mutandis*, in Christianity. All the way from public worship and church school to advanced, graduate work, the study of the Book gripped the energies and imaginations of the people. The place where the average person, however, became acquainted with the Book was the local synagogue and the *beth ham-midrash*.

Our next question is even more important for it concerns the motive for such intense study. What was believed to result from the study? I have already suggested that, in simple terms, the Jews believed the Word gave them guidance; it was a revelation of God's will. Let us pursue this line of thought further. To begin we take a statement from the oldest mishnaic tractate, Pirke Aboth (1:2):

Simeon the Just was one of the remnants of the Great Synagogue. He used to say: By three things is the world sustained: by the Law, by the [Temple]-service, and by deeds of loving-kindness.

This saying suggests that the Law is one among a number of fundamental components of the world. In other passages there are references to the seven things which God created before the world was made, one of these being the law.⁴ These were the things which the rabbis considered necessary, apart from physical requirements, for human life. Taking these two observations together with the citations from Philo and Akiba given at the first of this paper, we can see the inner logic of how the concept of the Law fit within the total complex of Judaism.

The Law reveals God's will for humankind in a complete way. At the same time it is a verbalization of the plan by which the world is put together and the rules by which it is run. Every element in the cosmos (nature, human relationships, the relation between humans and nature and humans to God) is outlined in the Law so that we can know how to go about life and fulfill our destiny. There is no division here between the natural and the supernatural. We cannot go into the philosophical question which, since the Enlightenment especially, such a viewpoint raises. We merely point out that in an important way the two worlds of the natural and the supernatural overlap, and that the Law deals with both worlds, not sharply distinguishing them. Thus, the study of the Law, Jews believed, put one in touch with both God's will and the ways of nature at the same time.

With this in mind we consider one other element found in the use of the law which was important to Jews, its capacity to guard us against the inner impulse to sin. In brief it worked like this: There were in their view, both good and evil forces working from within human beings. Without some positive guidance, however, the evil influence would prevail. This evil force was understood as a kind of inner influence that motivated and drove people to sinful acts. In one way or another this force had to be checked. Without such control, apostasy (and thus damnation) would result. As a rule, Judaism taught that one of the functions of the study of the Book was to enable mastery of this evil impulse. I have, in fact, found only one example from Jewish documents which considered the problem of inner sin so profound that the study of the Law would not overcome it (cf. 2 Esd. 3:20-22; 4:30; 7:45-48; 7:92, 116-119). The more common opinion is represented by this fascinating statement from the rabbinic world.

R. Levi b. Hama says in the name of R. Simeon b. Lakish: A man should always incite the good impulse in his soul to fight against the evil impulse. For it is written: "Tremble and sin not" [Ps. 4:4]. If he subdues it, well and good. If not, let him study the Torah. For it is written: "Commune with your own heart" [Ex. 24:12]. If he subdues it, well and good. If not, let him recite the Shema. For it is written: "Upon your bed." If he subdues it, well and good. If not, let him remind himself of the day of death. For it is written: "And be still, Selah!" (b. Bet. 5a).

In this passage study of the Law is one among a number of methods used to resist the influence of the evil impulse, the others mentioned here being simple resistance, recommitting oneself to God, and remembering the final judgment. Such advice is pastoral in character and, given the nature of Judaism, not all that different from Christian counsel.⁶

Thus, in Judaism, the study of the law had two related goals: to give guidance in life by revealing God's will and to guard against the destructive influence of inner sin. For point of interest, note the remarkable similarity between these ideas and Calvin's "third use of the Law":

The third use of the Law (being also the principal use, and more closely connected with its proper end) has respect to believers in whose hearts the Spirit of God already flourishes and reigns For it is the best instrument for enabling them daily to learn with greater truth and certainty what that will of the Lord is which they aspire to follow, and to confirm them in this knowledge. . . . Then, because we need not doctrine merely, but exhortation also, the servant of God will derive this further advantage from the Law: by frequently meditating upon it, he will be excited to obedience, and confirmed in it, and so drawn away from the slippery paths of sin. In this way must the saints press onward, since, however great the alacrity with which, under the Spirit, they hasten toward righteousness, they are retarded by the sluggishness of the flesh, and make less progress than they ought.⁷

The Book Is Interpreted

We turn now to consider the fact of interpretation or updating to which we have already referred. If the norm for faith and practice is found in a book, when the situation changes the word not only will be transmitted but also must be interpreted into the new situation.⁸ This, however, may happen in different ways. There may be cases where there is a fairly high consciousness that interpretation is happening and, as a result, methodological rules will be established to provide controls. On the other hand, there will be occasions when there is little consciousness that interpretation is going on and it may even be claimed that what is said (the interpretation) is exactly the same as what was written. We take three examples to illustrate how this worked in Judaism.

We have already mentioned the rabbinical middoth.⁹ It is unnecessary to enumerate these; and, I think, would be more useful to explore where the necessity for them lay. According to the rabbis the Torah gives 613 commandments. The whole will of God for human life is covered in these. However, the possible situations which we can encounter are almost an infinity. Therefore the 613 have to be expanded and applied, either explicitly

implicitly, so that the intent of the commandment is understood for every conceivable situation. For example, the fourth commandment says, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work. . . ." The question this raises is, what constitutes work? Thus, the 39 classes of work are set out in mShab. 7:2. Then again, not all the cases in which one might work, according to these classes, are necessarily the same. Suppose we find ourselves working, having temporarily forgotten that it was the Sabbath? The rabbis answered: Such an act is sinful and produces guilt, but this guilt is forgivable through the offering designed for the unintentional sin (cf. Lev. 4). However, culpability is increased if we acted while remembering that it was the Sabbath (mShab 7:1). The rabbis also believed that there were occasions when the Sabbath not only could, but ought to be profaned: to save life, to assist in child-birth, and to circumcise on the eighth day (mShab 18:3). It is clear from these statements that they had thought deeply about the meaning of this commandment. When it was broken they could see various degrees of guilt. And there were even occasions when the commandments had to be set aside because something else took priority. It is interesting that in two of the three cases mentioned, obligation to human beings—the sanctity of human life—took priority over obligation to God.

Further, it is wrong to view the regulations concerning the Sabbath as a kind of burden. Of course, on occasion it may have been perceived as oppressive, but these can be balanced with other observations that indicate a relief and joy which was brought to working people by this day of rest. In fact, the Sabbath acquired a festive quality. Fasting, mourning, and even intense prayer for divine intervention were forbidden except on occasions of extreme necessity lest the joyful spirit of the day be dampened.¹⁰

What we see, then, in the halakoth regarding the Sabbath is more than meticulous care to protect from impending judgment. That would suggest that the compelling motive was fear. Rather, the compelling motives were love for God and belief that His Word held the key to understanding life. The working principle was that no commandment in the text was given carelessly. If we think about it, seek to understand its precise meaning and application, the rewards in this life and the life to come are enormous.

We can hardly avoid raising a question now: What authority did these rabbinical halakoth have? Were they merely opinions or were they views which carried weight? In the rabbinic world, oral tradition, the official teaching transmitted from the great teachers of Israel, were placed alongside the written Word as the authoritative interpretation of the written Word. In some respects this concept is analogous to the idea of the magisterium of the church. In any case, it was from these oral traditions that the later rabbis codified their written documents, the halakic materials being found primarily in the Mishnah, the Tosephtah, and the Talmudim. As far as they were concerned, these interpretations were not additions or departures from the written text, although they were perfectly aware that at times the letter of the text had to give way to maintain the spirit.¹¹ Their view of the high value of the oral tradition finds expression in the teaching that on Sinai Moses transmitted both the written and the oral law. Even if we should challenge such a dogma, it is important that we appreciate how they understood what

they were saying. At the time of Moses, revelation was complete. Nothing needs to be added to it, rather only to explain and expound it.¹³

For a second example, we turn again to Philo. It is not surprising that he correlates the biblical text with the intellectual heritage of philosophy more systematically than the rabbis.¹⁴ Exactly how this is worked out in the hebraic or hellenic Philo is, remains a question beyond the scope of this essay. What we observe is that he has read deeply in both worlds, does not see them as ultimately incompatible, and develops methods for relating the two to one another. That his stated task is to explain the Torah, I have already shown. His working hypothesis is simple to put down: Scripture has two meanings, a literal and a spiritual, and we discover the spiritual meaning by the use of allegory. The literal meaning may be satisfactory for the average person, who is dull of intellect, but if we are to plumb the depths of the text we seek it out by allegory.

So we must turn to allegory, the method dear to men with their eyes opened. Indeed the sacred oracles most evidently afford us the clues for the use of this method. For they say that in the garden there are trees in no way resembling those with which we are familiar, but trees of Life, of Immortality, of Knowledge, of Apprehension, of Understanding, of the Conception of good and evil (Plant. 36).

However, while Philo obviously sees allegory as the method to get to the deepest meaning that Scripture possesses, he does not necessarily see that the literal and the allegorical meanings must contradict. He generally urges adherence to the letter of the Law and rebukes Jews who, in their enthusiasm for spiritual values, fail in concrete obedience, "as though they had become disembodied souls" (Mig. 89f.). On the other hand, while Philo demands the observance of circumcision, when it comes to explaining its value, he speaks in hellenic terms, symbolizing it as the excision of "desires and sensual pleasures and other passions of the soul" (QE, II, 2).

The conscious clash of two world-views, the hebraic and the hellenic, both of which offer insight into reality, has resulted in Philo's enormous productivity. Wolfson developed the fascinating thesis that Philo's thought is the fountain for the philosophical agenda of the next seventeen centuries in the western world: the dialogue between the hellenic and biblical heritages from Philo to Spinoza.¹⁴ His thesis may be disputed, but it is hard to deny that the energy with which Philo undertook his enterprise is tremendously instructive and inspiring.

We turn to a final example, the sectaries of Qumran.¹⁵ We will focus on one aspect of their thought, their treatment of prophecy. In looking at the portions of prophetic documents which predict future events, it is easy to see how the sectaries might have unconsciously updated them. They could hardly have known the historical events to which, for example, Habakkuk referred. For them, the prophet was writing about the events which were at the historical origins of their own community. So they interpreted as follows the first chapter:

(1:4) "So the law is slacked." This means that they rejected the law of God. "And justice never goes forth, for the wicked man encompasses the righteous man." This means that the wicked

man is the wicked priest, and the righteous man is the teacher of righteousness. . . . (1:6) "For lo, I am moving the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation." This means the Kittim [either the Macedonians or the Romans] who are swift and men of valor in battle.¹⁶

The confidence with which the sectaries updated the prophet is naive and direct, almost disarming. Of course that is not what Habakkuk was writing about. But their very naivete ought to cause us pause. It implies a conception of the Book which has imbedded itself in their minds. They interpreted the text as centering its meaning on themselves because, in their opinion, there was no historical or cultural gap between the two worlds. To them, Scripture was a *viva vox*, a living voice. Its meaning was obvious. A systematic methodology, such as used by the rabbis in one way or by Philo in another was not followed because the meaning of the text was derived in a straight-forward fashion. There was no self-consciousness in the Qumran community that what they were doing was interpretation. In their opinion they were reading the plain and simple meaning right out of the text.

We can make some broad observations in comparing these three Jewish hermeneutical styles. Philo, whom we can take as a representative of hellenistic Judaism, and the rabbis, whom we can take as representing a form of Palestinian Judaism, both have methodological principles by which they interpret the text. They are aware that they are saying things which are not stated there. They are also aware that they are speaking in language and forms which are foreign to the Biblical patterns. To some degree at least they know that they are making trans-cultural and trans-historical shifts. This cannot be said of the sectaries of Qumran. They are extremely naive. Not only have they changed the meaning of the text to apply it to themselves, they are unaware that they have done so. Perhaps the circumstances surrounding the founding of the community account for some of the peculiarities of this methodology. They were on the defensive from the beginning, and thus they justified their existence by setting themselves apart as the true covenant people who fulfilled what the Book had promised.

In this section of the paper I have reduced an enormous amount of material to a bare outline which, if it were to be pursued, would need to be made more precise. My goal, however, is simply to point out how, by its very nature, the doctrine that the spiritual life of a people derives its normative informational source and guidance from an ancient book inevitably results in the appearance of hermeneutical techniques.¹⁷ Further, if that religion seeks to nourish the life of a large number of people, including within it classes such as rich and poor, learned and unlearned, there will also appear various schools of thought on methodology. Some will develop techniques which employ foreign categories to a high degree (e.g. Philo). Others, who are committed to intellectual and precise thought but want to stay more within the traditional confines of the religion will develop norms that appear more conservative (e.g. the rabbis). Finally, at the more popular level, there will be many who interpret the word in a more naive way accepting the traditional understanding of the word found within their group (often of quite recent origin, but firmly established) as the virtual equivalent of the written word—that is, not even aware that they are interpreting (e.g. the sectaries of Qumran).

The Law As Commandment and Standard for Judgment

We turn now to what is in one sense the major consideration of our paper—the commandments and requirements which the Book contains. This is what Christians generally think of when the discussion concerns the Jewish view of the law, and it is certainly a significant component.

The commands are viewed as expressions of God's will, given for our good. We have already noted that the rabbis counted the commandments and gave the total as 613. They did not consider the number as so great that it created a burden trying to remember or carry all of them out. Rather, the number had to be sufficient to cover all of life, treating every area as thus never leaving us in the lurch. On occasion, the number could be reduced to fundamental commandments. Thus the rabbis, for example, held that Gentiles without the aid of the written Torah had revealed to them through nature the so-called seven noachic laws. The *goyim*, apart from special revelation, should know of God's spiritual nature and obey His will in certain fundamental areas of life (not unlike the point Paul makes in Rom. 1:18ff.).¹⁸ Also there is the rather famous story of Hillel the Great being asked by an inquiring Gentile whether he could state the whole law while standing on one foot. To this the learned sage replied: "Do not do to your fellow what you would not have done to you. This is the whole law, entire; the rest is explanation. Go, learn!" (bShab. 31a). The observation that stating this rule, the golden rule, in the negative form shows the inferiority of the Jewish ethic to the Christian has no merit. It is sheer special pleading. Jews actually did believe that the primary requirement was concern or love of one's neighbor. Buechler earlier in this century showed that terms used of pious persons, such as *hasid*, were generally attributed because of generosity, not because of meticulous religious observance.¹⁹ For Judaism, as for Christianity, love was the supreme commandment.

It is, however, in consideration of the doctrine of retribution that Christians especially see the Jewish viewpoint. Here the Law is the standard of judgment and the means of gaining merit.

The doctrine of retribution appears within the Old Testament (Deut. 4:8; Prov. 24:12), in Judaism (Sir. 35:19; 2 Macc. 5:9f.; Philo, *Flac.* 115); and in the New Testament (Mt. 16:17; 2 Cor. 5:10). Nowhere, in fact, is it expressed more clearly than in Rom. 2:6: "For he will render to every man according to his works"—from the pen of Paul who is supposed by some to have overturned this doctrine once and for all.²⁰ Thus again the presence of a doctrine or teaching is not, by itself, peculiar to Judaism. Most Christian scholars are somewhat aware of this. The question is, can we assume that the doctrine gives the clue for understanding the character of Judaism? Or does Judaism have a doctrine of grace which moderates the impact that the doctrine of retribution would have by itself?²¹

For those who would answer affirmatively the passages in Jewish literature which express the doctrine of retribution are clearly legalistic. In fact, this charge against Judaism surfaces so regularly that we must set the issue in sharp focus. It is assumed here that in Judaism God had an artificial and mechanistic relationship with His people. He no longer dealt with them in a personal way but instead used a juristic system in which He did little more than tally debits and credits and hand out punishments or rewards.²² Such

observations are made with great assurance and by noted authorities. Are they accurate?

While there were probably some Jews who prided themselves on their moral achievements and others who may have been crushed with a sense of guilt, it is doubtful whether their numbers (or the percentages) exceeded those with the same tendencies in Christianity. In any case, we are working on hunches—psychological projections—which are very hard to verify or dispute. Our question must be: What did Jews say about this subject and how did they understand the idea of retribution? We will get at these questions in two ways.

The first is to examine what Jews indicate the term merit to mean. The word would seem to suggest that, according to them, God would grant some kind of reward for obedience. But what kind of reward? And should the reward be sought for? Three statements from the Mishnah will help us to clarify the problem:

Ab. 1:3: Antigonus of Soko received (the Law) from Simeon the Just. He used to say: Be not like slaves that minister to the master for the sake of receiving a bounty, but be like slaves that minister to the master not for the sake of receiving bounty; and let the fear of Heaven be upon you.

Ab. 2:8: Rabban Johanan ben Zakkai received (the Law) from Hillel and from Shammai. He used to say: If thou hast wrought much in the Law, claim not merit for thyself, for to this end wast thou created.

Mikk. 3:16: R. Hananiah says: The Holy one, blessed be He, was minded to grant merit to Israel; therefore hath he multiplied for them the Law and the commandments.

These passages, and others like them, suggest that a merit is the natural result which arises from a deed. It is, in one sense, inherent in the deed. Thus to obey God is to set in motion a chain of events which results in good things in life because they follow quite naturally.²³ This conforms to the way that a good and gracious God has made and sustains the world. The reverse applies to disobedience and punishment. However, ethical motives are also to be considered. At the popular level they can arise from simple eudaemonism. The rabbis, however, talked about lifting the vision so that the reason for obedience becomes more idealistic. It should really be offered because love and trust for God pervade the life. We want to please Him.

A second element which bears on this issue concerns the doctrine of forgiveness. What is the place for such an element within Judaism? Again we can mention that Christian scholars often misrepresent Judaism by ignoring this component. We are supposed to learn from such observations what the true experience of Jews was. Because their perfectionistic ethic always broke down on the hard reality of human sinfulness, they must have gone around all day long in despondency. This misrepresentation is aggravated because Christians, seeing atonement and forgiveness granted solely through the death of Jesus Christ, cannot imagine Jews having any significant doctrine of atonement.²⁴ They refuse to believe that the Jewish experience of atonement and forgiveness could have been satisfying or brought any significant, psychological relief from guilt. On occasion Christians will see the

temple cultus, which was still functioning at the time of primitive Christianity, in relation to this question, often telescoping the entire cultus into the ritual for the Day of Atonement. This, however, obscures the way in which atonement worked for them and places far too much weight on particular vicarious concepts of atonement.²⁵ The result of this is that Christian scholars assume there was a great lacuna in Jewish theology and that as a result therefore as it would have been pointed out to the Jews that they had a solution, they could not help but have been persuaded to accept the Christian solution. In the light of this assumption, it is amazing how little is made of this argument in the New Testament. Other than in the Epistle to the Hebrews, there is little polemic against the Jewish doctrine. And even here the argument is not so much against Jewish thought and practice as against the adequacy of Old Testament provision. Generally in the New Testament it is not argued but assumed that the death of Christ provides atonement for sin.²⁶

This point is so critical that I need to pursue it a little further. A number of years ago Professor Fritsch of Princeton Seminary reported to me a personal conversation he had had some time before with the great Jewish philosopher, Martin Buber. The essence of their discussion was something like this. He asked Buber why Jews did not accept Jesus as the Messiah. He replied, "We don't need Him." In other words, they experienced what they understood as salvation without Jesus of Nazareth. However surprising such a statement is to most Christians, it represents the general feeling of Jews and explains why the Jewish mission has, as a rule, proved so fruitless. Jews did not hope for salvation on the basis of perfectly fulfilling the 613 commandments and despair because they might have failed at one another point. They were among those, they believed, guaranteed salvation through election and the means provided within the Law for atonement of sin.

Proselytism

The final major issue which we address concerns proselytism. In such respects this issue might seem to revolve around the question whether, according to the Jews, Gentiles had any possibility of inheriting the life of the world to come apart from becoming proselytes. We have already seen that, according to some rabbis, Gentiles could know and keep the seven Noahic commandments. But did this mean that Gentiles, as Gentiles, could inherit the world to come?²⁷ For Gentiles, who were not the beneficiaries of the covenantal promises, the possibility of sharing the world to come, it would seem, hinged entirely upon merit. Election, forgiveness, and grace had no bearing on their cases.

The evidence on the subject of Gentile salvation is not as clear as it might hope. In fact, it suggests that there was more than one opinion. For example, there is reported a debate between R. Joshua b. Haninah and Eleazar b. Hyrcanus, scholars from the second generation of the Tannaim (c. A.D. 90-130). Said R. Eleazar:

No Gentiles have a portion in the world to come, as it is said, "The wicked shall return to Sheol, all the Gentiles who forget God" (Ps. 9:19). The first clause, those who "return to Sheol"

are the wicked of Israel; the second, "who forget God": includes all Gentiles.

R. Joshua responded:

If the verse had said, "the wicked shall go into Sheol and all the nations," and had stopped there, I should have agreed with you (that non-Jews have no share in the world to come), but as it goes on to say, "who forget God," it means that there are righteous men among the nations who have a share in the world to come" (tSanh. 13:2).

Having accepted, however, that some Jews might have believed that righteous Gentiles could receive the future reward does not entirely close the question. That is, we cannot assume from this that for a Gentile the option is only salvation by works while for the Jew there is both works and grace. We must explore this issue from several angles.

To begin with, beyond the possibility of sharing in the world to come without proselyting, were there other advantages which might encourage a Gentile to take this step? All Jews would have argued that there were. For example, the doctrine of election, for all practical purposes, guaranteed a future inheritance, as stated in mSanh. 10:1.

All Israelites have a share in the world to come, for it is written, "Thy people also shall be all righteous, they shall inherit the land for ever; the branch of my planting, the work of my hands that I may be glorified." And these are they that have no share in the world to come: he that says that there is no resurrection of the dead prescribed in the Law, and [he that says] that the Law is not from Heaven, and an Epicurean.

The exclusionary phrases here refer to people who, in the opinion of the rabbis, were not real Jews—those who denied the future world (Sadducees), those who denied the divine origin of Scripture, and those who lived like pagans. Such Jews, in their opinion, had apostatized. The Jewish concept was not that much different from what Christians would say: All Christians will enter into heaven. This is meant to exclude people who identify themselves as such but are really not: those who deny life after death, those who reject the authority of the Bible, and those who abandon themselves to vice. Even traditions, such as the Wesleyan, which emphasize the quality of life do not teach that all sins automatically forfeit a share in the inheritance. There is no atonement. And Jews, as Christians, safeguarded atonement theology from abuse. The final observation in the mishnaic tractate for the Day of Atonement (Yoma 8:9) is pertinent here. It states that one who sins with the intention of later repenting or who sins saying, "the Day of Atonement will effect atonement," does not receive atonement. Presuming, however, that there is genuine repentance, atonement was guaranteed.

But how are we supposed to imagine that Gentiles, apart from becoming proselytes, would be righteous? How would they qualify according to R. Joshua's criteria? Through sheer moral effort? Hardly. It would not happen apart from the influences of the synagogue. Jews welcomed Gentile inquirers at several stages of interest. Here we could enter into the interesting debate whether the term "God-fearers" concerns an actual class of

Gentiles in a quasi-official relationship to Israel or only refers to devout Gentiles who had not, as yet, become full proselytes.²⁸ In either case the essential components in identifying Gentiles as God-fearers were the practices which they followed: to forsake idolatry, to worship the one and only living God and to abandon pagan life-style. That is, whether they had become full proselytes or not, they related themselves to the synagogue and it is from here they received spiritual support to live as they ought. A Gentile outside any relationship to the synagogue would inevitably think and live like a pagan. "Extra ecclesiam nulla salus" in Jewish terms meant "extra synagoga nulla salus."

What did the synagogue in turn do to educate and encourage God-fearers? As already suggested they were welcomed to participate in synagogue worship and also were taught the basics of Israel's faith, partly in sermons and perhaps also in the *beth ham-midrash*. In any case, the instruction to the God-fearers, and even inquiring Gentiles who had not gone so far, seems to have centered around these topics: the nature of God, social ethics, and sexual ethics. The Holiness Code (Lev. 17-26) provided the biblical basis for such catechetical instruction.²⁹

However, to enjoy all the benefits promised to Israel required, as stated above, full conversion which involved additional steps. According to the classic rabbinical pattern these were: baptism, circumcision, a gift to the temple (as long as it stood), and a commitment to obey all 613 commandments of the Torah. A passage from bYebamoth 47a-b describes a view of the process from a time several centuries later than the New Testament but certainly reflecting the concerns and procedures of the earlier period.

Our Rabbis taught: If at the present time a man desires to become a proselyte, he is to be addressed as follows: "What reason have you for desiring to become a proselyte; do you know that Israel at the present time are persecuted and oppressed, despised, harassed and overcome by afflictions?" If he replies, "I know and yet am unworthy," he is accepted forthwith, and is given instruction in some of the minor and some of the major commandments. He is informed of the sin of the neglect of the commandments of Gleanings, the Forgotten Sheaf, the Corner, and the Poor Man's Tithe. He is also told of the punishment for the transgression of the commandments. Furthermore, he is addressed thus: "Be it known to you that before you came to this condition, if you had eaten suet you would not have been punishable with kareth, if you had profaned the Sabbath you would not have been punishable with stoning but now were you to eat suet you would be punished with kareth; were you to profane the Sabbath you would be punished with stoning." And as he is informed of the punishment for the transgressions of the commandments, so is he informed of the reward granted for their fulfillment. He is told, "Be it known to you that the world to come was made only for the righteous, and that Israel at the present time are unable to bear either too much prosperity, or too much suffering." He is not, however, to be persuaded or dissuaded too much. If he accepted, he is circumcised forthwith. Should any shreds which render the circumcision invalid remain, he is to be

circumcised a second time. As soon as he is healed arrangements are made for his ablution, when two learned men must stand by his side and acquaint him with some of the minor commandments and with some of the major ones. When he comes up after his ablution he is deemed to be an Israelite in all respects.

This is a remarkable passage and has a bearing on many aspects of our study as well as the New Testament.³⁰ For example, we do not know for sure whether the Judaizers with which Paul debated in the Galatian controversy were of the opinion that Gentiles had to fully convert in order to inherit eternal life. They may have been of the opinion that full conversion was a significant advantage but not absolutely necessary. It is equally possible that they believed full conversion necessary. This, in fact, seems more likely in view of Paul's argument that those who have faith are the true children of Abraham. In either case, however, Paul departed from them not only in the view that proselyting was not necessary for salvation³¹ but that it was no advantage. In the view of Judaism conversion provided an enormous spiritual benefit. Such is not to be understood in a mechanical, artificial sense then. By becoming proselytes, Jews believed, Gentiles gained two great advantages: First, they were guaranteed all the benefits promised to Israel through the fathers, both within this life and in the next—they became children of the covenant. Second, they gained the full value of the Law, to guide them in this life and to protect them from inner sin.

Conclusions and Considerations

This part of the paper will be broken into two sections: The first is a brief summary of our study of the Jewish view of the Law and the second records some of my considerations which grow out of the results of the study in relation to some theologoumena in contemporary Evangelicalism. This second part is, of course, meant to be suggestive.

Conclusions

1. Judaism was an entire religion with all of the components in it that make up a religion: a world-view, ethical standards, cultus, domestic rituals, and so on. Thus the notion of the law must be understood in terms of its place within this complex. It is especially important that we see, for example, the doctrine of retribution in relation to the doctrines of election and atonement. To atomize the components, as is typical of Christian studies, will inevitably result in a distorted view, generally one in which retribution is seen as the most characteristic doctrine of Judaism. And this is then taken to support the view that Judaism is essentially a legalistic religion which, because of the inescapability of human sinfulness, left its people in a hopeless situation of either falsely believing themselves righteous or despairing in their guilt. Such caricatures of Judaism, however comforting to us because they may seem to buttress our conviction of having a superior faith, are inaccurate.

2. Judaism was a religion of a book. Of course there were other components by which the religion lived, as the temple or synagogue rituals and domestic rituals (such as *haburah* meals), and these had powerful, formative influence. But the theoretical and cognitive bases for the religion centered around a corpus of literature. Every theological conviction had, in one way

or another, to find its origin and support in this written Word. Considerable energy was spent examining this Book, in various settings, and with various degrees of sophistication. The working assumption was: The Book holds within it the answer for all questions, the clue to the mystery of the universe and life. Careful examination of its words and obedience to its ancient will pay rich dividends.

3. As time passed different methods of interpreting the Word began to shape themselves into traditional forms, and we have looked at three kinds: the hellenistic Jewish (Philo), the rabbinic, and the sectarian (Qumran). It would be possible to further clarify our study and sharpen the characteristics of each one of these schools, but our purpose has been fulfilled. We have shown in broad terms that, within this religion which based its thought on a corpus of literature and belonged to a large population, observable differences arose in opinions which hardened themselves into traditional traditions and interpretative methodologies.

4. By its very nature the Book discussed such topics as ethics and human destinies. It defined who is inside and who is outside the group of people, and it outlined how one who is outside may come inside. It described how one who is inside may remain inside, and how failure to live up to some minimum standard would result in exclusion.

The different traditions examined these items found within the Book and interpreted them according to their own viewpoints. In many respects they agreed, but we are not surprised to see some disagreement, at times exclude one another.

5. To put the matter sharply: Judaism as a whole saw the value of the Law in two respects: First, it expressed the mind and will of the Creator so that, if we study and reflect upon it, we can sufficiently understand the mystery of the universe and human life so that we can live in a way which agrees with nature, conforms to God's expectations, and results in goal within this life and a share in the world to come. Second, by faithfully following the law we can counteract the powerful, negative influence of inner sin which, otherwise, would drive us into self-destruction through sin and apostasy.

Considerations

1. Any religion which is basically a "religion of a book" will, over the course of time, develop traditions. These arise because the social situation has changed, the number of cases not covered explicitly by the written word requires application or clarification, and different interpretations will face. Conservatives tend to see that the new situation does not modify the literal force of a theologoumenon or a commandment. Liberals tend to see some situations as so different that to keep the spirit of the written word, we must depart from the letter. The actual fact is that with the passage of time, both conservatives and liberals develop traditions which to one degree or another depart from the written word. As the new traditions are formed they are gradually laid over the old, often so skillfully that, in the debate, both parties can no longer read the book without reading their traditions right into it. And the peculiar phenomenon has happened, then, that within the Protestant church, as in Judaism, sectarians, who vehemently denounced the Roman Catholic understanding of "tradition" or liberal departure from

...ical teaching have themselves created non-Biblical traditions that are usually normative as the Book (in the life of their movement) but are not acknowledged to be traditions.

2. Traditions are inevitable. Evangelicals need to be more honest about their traditions are in shaping their theology. Further, they must come to terms with how important the historical and social milieu

place on the Word, they tend to view all traditions, when recognized as the pure Biblical norm. Evangelicals, if they use the Bible as the norm, must become more sophisticated in using biblical thought and models. They must sharply distinguish between using the Bible as a norm and the impulse to reprimarinate. They tend to think that a return to primitive Christianity—would save the day and remove all theological and religious problems. This is utterly naive and impossible. It is naive when we consider the historical setting and the complexity of primitive Christianity. The sociological milieu within which the early church arose is gone forever. Further most Evangelicals cannot sink themselves behind the Aldersgate experience or the Westminster or Augsburg Confessions, let alone to Augustine, Nicea, or Paul. That is, what we call Biblical is really not Biblical but North American Evangelicalism

reprimarinate something which was appropriate in the early church is not necessarily adequate for us today. We have to adapt to be faithful to the Gospel. In my opinion, Evangelicalism is a legitimate tradition within the Christian church, but it would be quite another thing to say that it is the only legitimate tradition or, strictly speaking, the Biblical one. Yet, because Evangelicalism has taken a certain position on the normative character of the Word in opposition to ecclesiastical traditions, we find ourselves spending enormous amounts of energy trying to prove that our viewpoint is the "Biblical" one rather than the more important task—in my opinion—of using our tradition as a way of addressing contemporary needs.

3. How can we update a Biblical theologoumenon into a new situation which is faithful to the old and yet appropriate to the new? At times such updating, at least on certain levels, can amount to a contradiction of the Word. For example, when Paul argued with the Judaizers about the practice of circumcision for Gentile converts, he had no explicit Scripture to support his claims while they did. Merely pointing to a written passage, therefore, does not end the discussion. The Protestant battle cry, *sola scriptura*, while it has been followed, even by those who claim ardently that they are following the Bible, simply does not work in every case and has never been followed, even by those who claim ardently that they are following the Bible. An updating therefore would require: (1) that we allow the Bible to speak for itself in its own forms and traditions that are, in many respects, appropriate to the modern world; (2) that we own up to our tradition as an extension beyond Scripture but powerfully shaping how we do theology; and (3) that we listen to the contemporary world as possessing legitimate forms for understanding reality. That is, the theological task of today must include dialogue with at least these three sources.

4. If I were to write a definition of legalism, I would say that it arises when there is an attempt to follow the directives of the written Word but the situation has so changed that enforcement amounts to an inappropriate

hardening of the written commandment or of a tradition which has developed from the Word. Legalism depends upon the written Word and justifies itself by reference to the written Word. It claims that it is fully carrying out what the normative Word requires. Whether that, of course, is where the debate arises.

I indicated in my definition that legalism appears when the strictness of a commandment is no longer appropriate—that is, it does not result in holiness and righteousness but in bondage and persisting sin. But how do we determine when that is the case? To answer that is of course the province of the theologian. It happens, as a matter of fact, in all denominations and it is quite common to find the point to absolve ourselves by heaping guilt on those who adhere to the "traditions" as being spiritually weak and rebellious against God. They are not wrong, in cases, but they may also be deeply committed. The Pharisees perpetrated some vicious crimes, but they did so because they really did want to serve God. Paul granted them this (cf. Rom. 10:2).

5. In its classical form the Roman Catholic Church has developed various forms of legalism which are no longer appropriate. Whether they ever were appropriate is an important question and must be considered separately in each case. Once a tradition is started and has secured its place, it develops a life of its own and continues to grow. What may have been an understandable and helpful tradition at one point can, over the course of time, come to the point that it defeats its original purpose. (It is interesting, for example, to trace in Catholic practice what has happened over the centuries to the penitential system and the attempts of Vatican II to restore it to something more helpful.)

6. Evangelicalism is a more recent historical phenomenon and has frequently had not so long for its traditions to develop. However, as we can see, on occasion, considerable growth and change. The movement which arose as the Great Awakening created in North America something which reacted to the deadness of Protestant scholasticism and has in our century evolved into a kind of Christianity that sees the touchstones of genuine faith in a correct faith and the experience of being "born again." The historical development of this came about something like this: The Reformers, protesting the Roman Catholic understanding of how salvation is granted, emphasized salvation by faith. In time, whatever the Reformers intended, the concept of faith was split into two categories: right belief and right living; God; and the pietists, protesting what they understood as an error in the Protestant tradition and the neglect of genuine Christian life emphasized piety. Thus, there came to exist in Protestantism at least two traditional understandings of "faith." These two great streams have resulted in progressive roots movements in North American Christianity which certainly do not meet one another at points but are also distinguishable—e.g. the Bible Belt movement emphasizing right faith and Pentecostalism right experience. Both of these streams have developed distinct forms of worship, hermeneutics, and ethos. Both of them claim to represent true Christianity around which all other Evangelicals should rally. And both of these are theological traditions, not Biblical Christianity per se, as they so fervently claim. They use the Bible as their guide and resource to promote their traditional concerns. For many people, life within these traditions is liberating and helpful. For others, it has been paralyzing—that is, they have become legalistic. These for

Christianity, by definition, do not allow for diversity. In this respect they are analogous to the Qumran community. They cannot see or admit the differences between their traditions and the Bible or that there are other ways of interpreting the Bible. In my opinion, the legalistic danger within Evangelicalism arises from the right which: (1) confuses its traditions with the written Word and (2) tries to make its tradition the norm for all those who use the written Word as the norm. There is, of course, a danger to the left; that is beyond the scope of the present discussion.

Notes

¹Examples of this are numerous. What is disconcerting is the influence of such primary studies have. For example, Bultmann's characterization of Jesus (vol. 1, pp. 12f.) or Paul (p. 273) differed from Judaism given the unreliable picture of Judaism (*Theology of the New Testament*, ET [1952]). It depends, however, as do so many others, on the specialized works which presumably give accurate pictures, such as F. Weber, *System der altjudaïsch-palaestinetischen Theologie aus Targum, Midrasch und Talmud* (1880); W. Bousset, *Die Religion des Judentums im neutestamentlichen Zeitalter* (1903). This judgment applies even to the somewhat better *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch* (1924 and the following years) by H. Strack and P. Billerbeck.

²I mention only a few works which have been sharply critical of Christian summaries of Judaism: G. F. Moore, "Christian Writers on Judaism," *JTR* 14 (1921), pp. 197-254; S. Schechter, *Aspects of Rabbinic Theology* (1909); and E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (1977).

³See G. F. Moore, *Judaism* (1971, first published 1927), vol. 1, pp. 312ff.

⁴See Moore, *Judaism*, vol. 1, p. 526.

⁵Cf. also Test. Levi 13:1f.; 19:1; Dan. 5:1; Asher 3:1; CD 2:14-16; Wisd. 10f., 17-20; 4 Macc. 1:30b-35; Philo. *L.A.* 3:18ff. and *Abr.* 3-5.

⁶I dealt with this whole issue at some length in my dissertation, "The Setting and Argument of Romans 1:18-3:20" (1978), pp. 78-140.

⁷*Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ET of 1559 edition by John Murray, Book II, chpt. 7:12.

⁸See the fascinating article on this subject by Renee Bloch, "Midrash," *Dictionnaire de la Bible Supplement*, vol. 5 (1951), coll. 1263-1281. Bloch also discusses how interpretation occurs in the Bible itself, as the Chronicler's revisions of deuteronomic history show. This subject, which is also important, stands outside of our study which is dealing with the Book as a closed entity.

⁹See H. Strack, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrasch*, ET (1931), pp. 93-98. D. Daube has argued that even the rabbinic norms arose under the influence of the hellenistic world in "Rabbinic Methods of Interpretation and Hellenistic Rhetoric," *HUCA* 22 (1949), pp. 239-264.

¹⁰See Schechter, pp. 152ff.; Moore, *Judaism*, vol. 2, pp. 37f.

¹¹Cf. Moore, *Judaism*, vol. 2, pp. 142-146.

¹²See Moore, *Judaism*, vol. 1, pp. 251ff.

¹³For example, consider the vigorous debate between E. R. Goodenough, *By Light* (1935) and H. Wolfson, *Philo* (1948), and Goodenough's review of Wolfson in *JBL* 67 (1948), pp. 87-109.

¹⁴Wolfson, vol. 1, p. v-viii.

¹⁵See W. H. Brownlee, "Biblical Interpretation among the Sectarians of the Dead Sea Scrolls," *BA* 14 (1951), pp. 54-76. Note also the detailed study of the halakoth at Qumran by Lawrence H. Schiffman, *The Halakah at Qumran* (1975) and *Sectarian Law in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (1983).

¹⁶I am using the translation found in Millar Burrows, *The Dead Sea Scrolls* (1955).

¹⁷See Moore, *Judaism*, vol. 1, pp. 235-248.

¹⁸See my dissertation, pp. 30-40, 142-180.

¹⁹A. Buechler, *Types of Jewish-Palestinian Piety* (1921), pp. 7ff.

²⁰In his commentary on Romans C. K. Barrett cannot accept the usual meaning of the language in 2:1ff. He ends his discussion of Paul's doctrine of retribution by standing it on its head (*A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* [1957], pp. 46f.). Says Barrett: "The reward of eternal life, then, is promised to those who do not regard their good works as an end in themselves, but see them as marks not of human achievement but of hope in God." E. Kaesemann is more sensitive to the dilemma but discusses the passage in such an obscure way that we hardly know where he ends up (*Commentary on Romans*, ET [1980], pp. 57-61). We cannot then, but smile with approval of J. Huby's rather biting criticism of the forward way in which Protestants generally stumble on Paul's words. Huby observes that it would have been strange for Paul to deny to the Jews salvation on the basis of God's favoritism and election [see 2:1-5] what he would soon grant to Christians (favoritism on the basis of God's gift in Christ apart from obedience) with the argument that the Jews are found wanting according to the doctrine of retribution (2:6-11) (in *Épître aux Romains* [1968], p. 110)!

²¹See my dissertation, pp. 59-77.

²²Consider the offensive, smug, and inaccurate observations made on this subject in W. Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament*, ET (1967), vol. 1, pp. 421-423.

²³Cf. H. Odeberg, *Pharisaism and Christianity*, ET (1964), pp. 30-31.

²⁴E.g. Eichrodt, vol. 2, pp. 412-413.

²⁵Cf. the massive study by A. Buechler, *Studies in Sin and Atonement* (1927).

²⁶Note how this works even in Pauline literature. For example, many scholars believe, and I agree, that in Rom. 3:24f. we have a pre-Pauline formula dealing with the vicarious atonement achieved by Christ's death which is not the conclusion of Paul's argument but its premise; that is, something already accepted by his auditors.

²⁷See on this entire issue the important study by B. Baumberger, *Proselytism in the Talmudic Period* (1939).

²⁸Two examples: one who believes that the God-fearers formed a distinct class is Baumberger, pp. 135-138, and one who does not is Moore, *Judaism*, vol. 1, pp. 339-341.

²⁹See the relevant sections in P. Carrington, *The Primitive Christian Church* (1940), A. Seeberg, *Der Katechismus der Urchristenheit* (1930) and *Die Didache des Judentums und der Urchristenheit* (1908), and H. Daxer, *Roemer 1:18-2:10 im Verhaeltnis zur spaetjuedischen Lehrauffassung* (1914).

³⁰See a discussion of this passage from *Yebamoth* by David Daube in *The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism* (1956), pp. 109-111.

³¹C. G. Montefiore argues in *Judaism and St. Paul: Two Essays* (1915), pp. 85-100, that Paul was following a trend in hellenistic Judaism. Obviously there were some who felt that circumcision was not necessary for conversion, but did their numbers become so great that they amounted to an actual movement? Compare the interesting story of the Gentile king, Izates, who was first counseled against and then strongly for circumcision as the path to conversion as it is reported by Josephus (*Ant.* 20:34-38).