



סכום בלשון האנגלית

Reviewed work(s):

Source: *Zion / ציון*, Vol. (תשי"ד ג-ד), pp. I-III

Published by: [Historical Society of Israel/](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/70063108>

Accessed: 15/11/2011 07:54

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SUMMARY

THE RELIGIOUS IDEAS OF THE JUDEAN DESERT SECT

by D. Flusser (pp. 89-103)

Three stages in the development of the Judean Sect are embodied in the "Dead Sea Scrolls" which have so far been published: —

a) The fundamental doctrines of the Sect — the division of the world into two hostile camps, and the doctrine of the predestination — were the ideological basis of a warlike activism (the Scroll of the War of the Children of Light and the Children of Darkness).

b) The members of the Sect do not renounce activism completely; they postpone the destruction of the wicked to a remoter date in the future, and now adhere to a conditional pacifism. Their hatred of society has been transformed into a "hatred of the world in a spirit of concealment", and as far as outside world is concerned they submit slavishly to the ruling order of things. The members of the Sect base their new attitude on the doctrine of the predestination in its passive form: as the End of Days has not yet come, a member of the Sect may not rebel against the will of God and must restrain himself from taking any action against the wicked Serekh Hayahad and Thanksgiving Scroll).

c) Within the Sect there arose a new doctrine: the Election of man by God's Decree of Grace. This doctrine rests (1) on the belief held by the Sect in those days that defilement and sin are part of man's nature, and (2) on the doctrine of the predestination in its passive form, which teaches that all man's deeds originate in God's exclusive will (Thanksgiving Scroll and Psalm in Serekh Hayahad). Hence it may be assumed that after the sectaries had, owing to circumstances, given up their activist policy, they accommodated their doctrine to the new conditions and contented themselves with a controlled hatred of the society surrounding them, and with the hope of their future victory.

In the end the Sect becomes inward-looking; its members turn their back on human society, which is sunk in "the impurity of man and sin of mankind", and became absorbed in the doctrine of the Election of Man by God's Grace which shows them the way to individual salvation.

RABBENU TAM'S ATTITUDE TO THE PROBLEMS OF HIS TIME

by Shalom Albeck (pp. 104-141)

Rabbenu Tam (1100-1171) lived at a time when the Jews of Europe were dispersed in small centres. In those days there arose among them problems of Halakha which did not exist in Talmudic times. When Rabbenu Tam came to settle differences between the Halakha and the custom of his generation, he did not explain them by saying that reality had changed since Talmudic times (as most contemporary sages did), but solved the problem by giving new interpretations to Talmudic dicta. For example, he tried to prove from the Talmud that it was permissible to lend on interest to Gentiles and also that it was permissible to negotiate with Gentiles on their holidays.

His new interpretations were not in fact relied upon much by Rabbenu Tam himself. In principle he did not permit these relaxations, lest people might drop the customs altogether. For this reason he tried to compromise between the Halakha and even those customs that appeared to contradict it.

As Rabbenu Tam used to conceal the reality, which may nevertheless be seen in his work, an attempt is made here to gain a picture, from his interpretations, of the actual causes of his judgements. From them the author draws a picture of the economic life of the Jews in the wine industry, in cattle dealing, etc., and especially in moneylending, and of the problems that arose in connection with it, (such as the different forms of interest) and of the ways of the Jewish merchants as part of life in France in the Middle Ages. In the interests of their business, the Jews borrowed money from the rich, who either had a share in the business (dividing the profits between the owner and the lender of the money), or else became agents of the rich, sharing the profits.

In the sale and purchase of land and houses also, Rabbenu Tam tried to remove restrictions on dealing both with Jews and with Gentiles, for example the regulations concerning the buying of land, which gave preference to a neighbour over a stranger. We also learn of the extensive use of Christian servants and labourers in the service of Jews, of the well-established business connection with Christians, of the status of Jews within the feudal system (from the discussions of Rabbenu Tam in the case of the *Banalités* for example), or in the ownership of land, etc.

In matters of public administration, Rabbenu Tam introduced the innovation that even the majority cannot compel an individual against his will, according to the usual conception of the Middle Ages as it existed among Christians as well as among certain Jewish Hahamim. Even so, Rabbenu Tam is of the opinion that the community can expel the "violators", people who disturb the everyday work of the the Kehilla, etc. The author interprets also Rabbenu Tam's regulations as to using the force of non-Jewish authorities in internal matters of the Kehilla.

WEALTH AND POVERTY IN THE TEACHING OF THE PREACHER

REB EPHRAIM OF LENCZYCA

by H. H. Ben-Sasson (pp. 142-166)

The author is of the opinion that the 'drashoth' of this preacher, who lived most of his life in Poland-Lithuania (1550-1619), make it possible to gain an idea of his views on social justice.

Reb Ephraim strongly criticized the way of life of the wealthy of his generation. He was angered by the respect shown to the rich in Jewish society; Some people, he declares, believe that success in acquiring wealth denotes commendable mental abilities and Divine grace. As against these mental qualities, he gives preference to that wisdom which has an element of 'silliness', which is pure and without practical application.

As against the evidence that God favours the rich, he presents a system of argument based on the humble position of Israel in the Diaspora compared with the position of other nations, and on the position of individuals who are wicked in the eyes of the Gentiles too, and are also wealthy. Hence for the sake of the honour of their people, rich Jews must admit that wealth carries within itself a flaw, and is given to those who are by nature unworthy. Christians must, in the interests of Divine justice, admit the same.

Even the doctrine of the "Deposit" (פקדון) of Ashkenasi Hassidim receives a special colouring: Reb Ephraim has no answer to the argument that it would be possible to deposit the money in the hands of another person, who would also use it to dispense charity. It appears that he employs this doctrine in order to put an obligation upon the rich, he does not use this doctrine to bind the poor.

Reb Ephraim criticises in detail the avidity, the striving and the avarice of seekers after wealth. With bitter irony he paints a picture of the miser absorbed in his business, love of money driving him to lead the life of an abject pauper, and lust for wealth forcing him to toil incessantly and in the face of danger all his life. Reb Ephraim and other sages of his generation attack the exaggeration of the importance attached by the rich to the bequeathing of as great an inheritance as possible to children and relatives. They see this attitude as an obstacle in the way of charity, and an excuse for hardness of heart. Here too they appeal to the impulse of man and his love of self, in order to divert him from excessive devotion to his family.

In the author's opinion these 'drashoth' contain much that Reb Ephraim had absorbed both from the rich people whom he hated, and from the clamour of the middling shopkeepers and poor scholars around him. Thus these sermons reflect public opinion on matters of riches and poverty, and include opinions with which the preacher disagreed wholly or in part.

The author believes that the teaching of Reb Ephraim on questions of wealth and justice reflects the tensions pervading Jewish society in Poland-Lithuania at that period.

THE FILES ON THE DAMASCUS AFFAIR (1840) IN THE ARCHIVES OF THE FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTRY

by Zosa Szajkowski (pp. 167-170)

The anti-Jewish part played by the French Consul in Damascus, Ratti-Menton, in the Affairs of 1840 is fairly well known. Hitherto the dossier on this Affair in the Archives of the French Foreign Ministry has been closed to historians. During World War II, the Germans made photostatic copies of the file and of these we found nearly a thousand prints. The Yiddish Scientific Institute — Yivo — in New York possesses a description of the French dossier, prepared by the Nazi "historian" Karl Funk at the end of 1944 and the beginning of 1945. The French dossier came into the possession of the Archives of the French Ministry only in 1892. Until then it was in the custody of the French Consulate at Damascus. The dossier consists of letters and reports written by Ratti-Menton to Paris between April 23 1840, and July 23 1841, and two reports sent by Maxime Renaud d'Avènes de Méloizes, of the French Consulate in Alexandria, who was sent to investigate the Affair.

THE HISTORICAL COMMISSION FOR THE HISTORY OF THE JEWS IN GERMANY

by Josef Meisl (pp. 171-172)

Josef Meisl reports on the establishment of the commission, especially on the reasons why Heinrich Graetz was been excluded from participating in its work. Despite the opposition of many Jewish Communities the exclusion was inevitable in view of the differences of opinion between Graetz and the members of the Commission on the principles of Jewish historiography. Graetz's Jewish standpoint also made him unacceptable to the chairman of the commission, Prof. Harry Breslau, and his political partisans.

ON HABBI ISRAEL SRUK

In his article in "Zion" No. 5 (1940, pp. 214—241), Professor G. Scholem proved by an examination of the French and Italian traditions, that there is no foundation for the view that R. Israel Sruk was a disciple of R. Isaac Lurie "Ha-Ari".

The author, who accepts Prof. Scholem's conclusion, adduces a similar tradition from R. Jacob Zemach of Damascus; this tradition, he thinks, is also of Italian origin.