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*The Rabbinic Traditions About the Pharisees Before 70, Part I: The Masters (Dove Studies in Bible, Language, and History) [Jacob Neusner] on www.nxgvision.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers.*

Consequently, scholars often refer to rabbinic traditions about the Pharisees as though everyone knows how the Jews of this period passed on these traditions—and to what extent they are historically reliable. Prolific scholar Jacob Neusner produces an accurate history of the Pharisaic masters and houses in the Second-Temple period in Palestine. In the first part of this three-volume set, Neusner focuses on the Pharisaic masters. *Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity* Publisher: These volumes offer invaluable insight into events in rabbinic tradition such as Passover and the Festival of Tabernacles. In the first four parts, Neusner provides an in-depth analysis of each chapter within the Mishnah tractates of the law of Appointed Times. In the fifth and final part, he concludes his research of these laws by explaining how they formed and changed over time. *A History of the Mishnaic Law of Damages* 5 vols. These laws pertain to destruction done to oneself, to others, or to property, including animals. In the first four parts, Neusner provides an in-depth analysis of each chapter within the Mishnah tractates of the law of damages. Neusner uncovers the history of the formation of early Rabbinic Judaism, down to the redaction of Mishnah in A. Neusner evaluates the meaning of these tractates in their original contexts and analyzes which literary and intellectual traits these sources exhibit, providing invaluable insight into the Mishnaic Temple and the cult surrounding it. *A History of the Mishnaic Law of Women* 5 vols. The Mishnaic law of women defines the position of women in the social economy of Israel during early rabbinic times, both in natural and supernatural terms. These laws reflect a system in which what women do on earth provokes a response in Heaven, and the position of women in Heaven and on earth is invariably relative to men. In the first four parts, Neusner provides an in-depth analysis of each chapter within the Mishnah tractates of the law of women. *A History of the Mishnaic Law of Purities* 22 vols. Neusner claims that a disproportionately large part of Mishnah-Tosefta deals with purity. In addition, a strikingly large segment of sayings assigned to the masters of Yavneh also concerns purity. He asserts that if the themes of any legal materials in Mishnah-Tosefta go back to the Pharisees of the period before 70, they are those of purity laws. Purity laws, moreover, assuredly belong to the Pharisaic sect and express part of what is unique to this group. *Jacob Neusner Works on Judaic Hermeneutics* 7 vols. In his new translation and analysis of the rabbinic document *Genesis Rabbah*, Neusner explains how it affected the Jewish interpretation of creation in Genesis. *His Judaism and Story* documents a chapter of rabbinic tradition that explored the possibility of historical orientation by means of stories. These and other volumes in this collection provide a strong foundation for interpreting some of the most important texts in the history of Judaism. *Jacob Neusner Select Works on Judaism* 7 vols. In these works, Neusner paints a sociological portrait of Judaism by comparing not only ancient and modern Judaism but Judaism with other religions. Using primary source references and gathering research from notable scholars in Jewish Studies, Neusner provides an in-depth look into Jewish culture and sociology. In this four-volume collection, Jacob Neusner, a distinguished scholar of Jewish Studies, contends that the shortage of dialogue between the two Abrahamic religions throughout history has resulted in a divide that makes it impossible for either side to understand the beliefs and traditions of the other. Why is it assumed that widely separated and culturally diverse Jewish communities of the past 18 centuries constitute an essentially harmonious expression of a single set of values and ideals? The answer is that nearly the whole world of Jewry from Talmudic times to the nineteenth century in the West share a single and inclusive view of life and way of living. That view is built on a single symbol: Amassing a wealth of knowledge from numerous scholars of Judaic studies, Neusner expands on a wide range of topics concerning the history of Judaism, beginning with the first-century Jews, and continuing on through such areas as the Pharisees, the Old Testament, the Babylonian Talmud, and the Torah. Neusner and his colleagues also comment on more modern eras of Judaic history, such as the Holocaust and Russian Jewry. *A History of the*

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Chapter 2 : Cultic Piety and Pharisaism before 70 AD | Religious Studies Center

Jacob Neusner is Research Professor of Religion and Theology at Bard College and Senior Fellow of the Institute of Advanced Theology at Bard. He has published more than books and unnumbered articles, both scholarly and academic, popular and journalistic, and is the most published humanities scholar in the world.

Cultic Piety and Pharisaism before 70 AD The theology of Torah learning, so important in Judaism from the end of ancient times to our own day, emerges in the pages of the Babylonian Talmud and certainly speaks for the rabbis of the late second through the seventh centuries and beyond. But at what point in the history of Judaism does the ideal of Torah learning enter the theological arena of Judaism? Under whose auspices do we find that ideal shaped into the important component of normative Judaic theology? The answers to these questions are assumed in nearly all accounts of the history of Judaism to be as follows: Since the ideal of Torah learning is central to the theology of the talmudic rabbis, it surely derives from, and wholly characterizes, the Pharisees. It follows that the Pharisees are represented as a group formed around the ideal of Torah learning, and that their principal interest lay in the interpretation of scriptures and their application to contemporary affairs. In my view, that picture is not correct. My argument now unfolds in two parts. In the present lecture, I shall discuss what it is that the sources do tell us about the Pharisees. The next then will deal with the beginnings of the ideal of Torah learning and with the context in which the ideal takes shape as a theological norm, which in my view, is the period after So let us first ask, Are the Pharisees represented as a sect devoted to the preservation and mastery of Torah traditions? What, in fact, do the sources describe as the center of Pharisaic piety? I Information on the Pharisees before 70 comes from three sources, all of which reached their present state after that date: These three sources are different in character. The first are found in a systematic, coherent historical narrative. The second are in collections of stories and sayings, whose polemical tendency vis a vis the Pharisees is readily discernible. The third consists chiefly of laws and stories arranged according to legal categories in codes and in commentaries on those codes over a period of four hundred years and more after The purpose of Josephus is to explain that Rome was not at fault for the destruction of the Temple and that the Jews were misled in fighting Rome. The rabbinical legislators promulgated laws of the administration of the Jewish community. To none were the historical character and doctrines of the Pharisees of primary concern. Much that we are told about them anachronistically reflects the situation and interests of the writers, not of the historical Pharisees. For pharisaism before 70 our sources of information tell little of theological interest. A number of books in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament are attributed by modern scholars to pharisaic writers, but none of these documents identifies its author as a Pharisee. We may reliably attribute a work only when a peculiar characteristic of the possible author can be shown to be an essential element in the structure of the whole work. No reliance can be placed on elements which appear in only one or another episode, or which appear in several episodes but are secondary and detachable details. These may be accretions. Above all, motifs which are not certainly peculiar to one sect cannot prove that that sect was the source. No available assignment of an apocryphal or pseudepigraphical book to a pharisaic author can pass these tests. That supposition is untenable. We therefore omit reference to apocryphal and pseudepigraphical literature. Perhaps when scholarly progress in the study of that literature permits, we may expand our conceptions about pharisaism before II Writing toward the end of his life, ca. He says that he spent the years between age sixteen and nineteen exploring the Jewish sectarian life, successively as a Pharisee, Sadducee, and Essene. He also spent three years in the wilderness with a monk, Bannus. He therefore cannot have devoted much time to the three named sects. Entering the pharisaic order involved a long preparation. It is unlikely that Josephus completed it or actually became a Sadducee or an Essene in addition. The pharisaic party is not alleged to have dominated the affairs of Jewish Palestine. This claim first appears in Antiquities, written some decades later. The Pharisees of War occur first in connection with Alexandra Salome. Josephus reports that Alexander Jannaeus left the throne to his wife. Second, Josephus

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asserts that Herod accused his wife of subsidizing the Pharisees to oppose him. Finally, Josephus states that the Pharisees are the most accurate interpreters of the laws and are the leading sect. They attributed everything to fate and God. The soul of the good man passes into another body; those of the wicked suffer eternal punishment. The Pharisees are affectionate toward one another; the Sadducees are boorish. We find no claim that the Pharisees have a massive public following, or that no one can effectively govern Palestine without their support. All we hear is their opinion on two issues, fate, or providence, and punishment of the soul after death. The Sadducees do not believe in fate or in life after death. The Essenes, who are described at far greater length War 2: Here the Sadducees and Pharisees address themselves to identical issues, and take two extreme positions. Neither one receives a significant description. The Pharisees are seen not as a political party, but as a philosophical school among other such schools. In 95, twenty years after he wrote War, Josephus greatly expanded his picture, adding important details to familiar accounts and entirely new materials as well. To understand the additions, we must recall that at the same time he wrote Antiquities, Josephus was claiming that he himself was a Pharisee. If one reads only War without knowledge of the Life, one might suppose Josephus took a most keen interest in the Essenes and certainly sympathized with their ascetic way of life. That surmise would receive support if we knew that he spent three years of his adolescence with Bannus, whose way of living corresponded in important ways to that of the Essenes, though Josephus does not call him an Essene. The Essenes of War are cut down to size. In Antiquities, the Pharisees are accorded a substantial description. Josephus now says that the country cannot be governed without their cooperation, and that he himself is one of them. Josephus had in fact been part of the pro-Roman priestly aristocracy before the war of 66â€” But nothing in his account suggests that he was a Pharisee, as he later claimed in his autobiography. Because of these views they are, as a matter of fact, extremely influential among the townsfolk; and all prayers and sacred rites of divine worship are performed according to their exposition. This is the great tribute that the inhabitants of the cities have paid to the excellence of the Pharisees because of their practice of the highest ideals both in their way of living and in their discourse. What is new here is the allegation that the townsfolk follow only the Pharisees and that even the Temple is conducted according to their law. In the twenty years between writing the one and the other, he discovered that the Pharisees, who play a minor role in War, were the most influential and important party and could break any regime which opposed them. Its Role in Civilization [N. It is almost impossible not to see in such a rewriting of history a bid to the Roman government. That government must have been faced with the problem [after A. Which group of Jews shall we support? To this question Josephus is volunteering an answer: The Pharisees, he says again and again, have by far the greatest influence with the people. Any government which secures their support is accepted; any government which alienates them has trouble. The Sadducees, it is true, have more following among the aristocracy. As for the other major parties, the Essenes are a philosophical curiosity, and the Zealots differ from the Pharisees only by being fanatically anti-Roman. So any Roman government which wants peace in Palestine had better support and secure the support of the Pharisees. Twenty years had now intervened since his trouble with Simeon ben Gamaliel, and Simeon was long dead. But the mere cessation of personal hostilities would hardly account for such pointed passages as Josephus added to the Antiquities. The more probable explanation is that in the meanwhile the Pharisees had become the leading candidates for Roman support in Palestine and were already negotiating for it. In the first century A. The Pharisees, then, probably did not constitute an organized political force. Evidently the end of the pharisaic political party came with Aristobulus II, who slaughtered many of them; so far as Josephus is concerned, after this the Pharisees as a group played no important role in the politics and government of Jewish Palestine. The Pharisees are represented as a philosophical school by Josephus, who thought of groups in Jewish society distinguished by peculiar theories and practices as different schools of the national philosophy. When they were a political party, the Pharisees probably claimed that they ought to rule because they possessed true and wise doctrines. The specific doctrines ascribed to them, however, seem quite unrelated to the political aspirations of the group. It is not clear why people who believe in fate and in the immortality of the soul should rule or would rule

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differently from those who did not, nor is it clear how such beliefs might shape the policies of the state. These are matters of interest to Greek readers, to be sure. But evidently what characterized the group—these particular beliefs—and what rendered their political aspirations something more than a powergrab were inextricably related, at least in the eyes of their contemporaries. Josephus thus presents us with a party of philosophical politicians. He gives us no hint as to the origin or early history of the Pharisees. In fact we have no information on that question from any source. The Pharisees claim to have ancient traditions, but these are not described by Josephus as having been orally transmitted, or attributed to Moses at Sinai, or claimed as part of the Torah. Nor is the study of such traditions represented as important in their piety. Josephus says they were excellent lawyers, marked off from other groups by a few philosophical differences. As a party they functioned effectively for roughly the first fifty years of the first century B. While individuals thereafter are described as Pharisees, the group seems to end its political life as a sect before the advent of Herod. III The generally negative picture of the Pharisees given by the New Testament produced, in the later history of the West, a highly partisan caricature. One of an ancient Jewish sect distinguished by their strict observance of the traditional and written law, and by their pretensions to superior sanctity. A person of this disposition; a self-righteous person; a formalist; a hypocrite.

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Hellenism in Jewish Palestine: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, A History of the Jews in Babylonia. The Mishnah described in detail the ritual procedure as it was observed during the era of the Second Temple, and the route that was followed by the goat as it was led away. It noted that a special architectural structure had to be erected in order to distance the goat from the throng of eager worshippers who gathered to observe its progress: The implication is that they were behaving in a crude manner inappropriate to a solemn religious ceremony, and might even be violating a biblical prohibition by plucking hairs on a holy day. Elsewhere in the Mishnah, the rabbis dealt with another question that would arise periodically in the observance of the Day of Atonement in the Temple. Although the system that was later adopted for reckoning the Hebrew calendar does not allow Yom Kippur to ever fall on a Friday, evidently that was not the case in earlier generations. This could create a problem with respect to the festival sacrifices. Normally the meat from sacrifices would be eaten by the priests, but this could not be done on a fast day. According to the laws of the Torah it was permissible to delay eating sacrificial meat until after the end of Yom Kippur—but no later than the following night. In the current scenario, however, the night after Yom Kippur was a Sabbath, when cooking is prohibited. Evidently the Israeli rabbis who composed those passages in the Mishnah did not regard their Babylonian coreligionists, even the priests among them, with much admiration; and they depicted them as so many boorish Homer Simpsons who were driven by impatience, impulsiveness and gluttony. Nevertheless, the Talmud cited an earlier and more authoritative source that made the same point in the name of two disciples of Rabbi Akiva from the mid-second century: Perhaps the sage was offended by the implied ethnic stereotyping though apparently he was less disturbed by the targeting of Alexandrians. In more recent times, scholars have proposed different solutions to the Alexandrian-Babylonian conundrum. This, he explained, is why mainstream Judaism ultimately chose to follow the Babylonian Talmud rather than its Jerusalem counterpart. In the present instance, Halevy explained that the rabbis were referring to people who were indeed both Babylonian and Alexandrian; that is to say, an enclave of Jewish immigrants to Egypt who continued to exist as an identifiable minority even after several generations of residency in Egypt to which they had originally been invited to serve as soldiers as attested by Josephus Flavius. Halevy made effective use of his approach to resolve another apparent contradiction between ancient documents. Josephus related how Herod the Great, determined to wrest the high priesthood from the hands of the Hasmonians, removed it from the traditional high priestly dynasty and assigned it instead to a non-pedigreed outsider from Babylonia named Hananel. A high priest of that name is indeed mentioned in the Mishnah, but he is designated there as an Egyptian! This inconsistency, Halevy argued, can also be resolved on the assumption that Hananel was a member of the Babylonian Jewish enclave in Alexandria. The familiar talmudic tales about this pioneering sage—aside from their hagiographic and moralistic tone that makes them very suspect as historical documents—are inconsistent as to whether Hillel acquired his learning in Jerusalem or in his prior native land. And yet modern scholarship has been impressed by how many details of his life and teachings would fit better into an Alexandrian setting. In one well-known instance, for example, he resolved a legal question related to Alexandrian wedding practices by carefully expounding the wording of their marriage contracts. Of greater interest to scholars has been the uncanny resemblance between the seven hermeneutical midrashic rules introduced by Hillel for the interpretation of the Bible and the methods that were employed by the Hellenistic philologists of the Alexandrian schools for the elucidations of Homer or of legal texts. This has led several scholars to propose that Hillel must really have hailed from Alexandria. Jewish folk culture has never been inhibited about attributing derogatory character traits to our brethren from different corners of the diaspora. Distinctive personality types are evoked by the mention of Litvaks, Romanians, Galicianers, Yekkes,

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Persians, Iraqis or immigrants from other lands. While such stereotyping might not be completely preventable, we probably should not make it too easy to label us as vulgar rednecksâ€™ at the very least, we might refrain from plucking hair from goats or gorging ourselves on raw meat.

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Chapter 5 : Who Were the Pharisees? Bible Definition and Meaning

The Rabbinic Traditions About the Pharisees Before 70, Part III: Conclusions: Volume 3 (Dove Studies in Bible, Language, and History) Paperback - 6 Oct

From Cultic Piety to Torah Piety after 70 AD As I shall now show, the destruction of the Temple marks the shift from cultic piety to Torah piety, that is, from the conception that the holy life consists in imitating at ordinary meals the cleanness required of the priest in the Temple, to the notion that the holy life consists in studying Torah and carrying out its requirements commandments. We have concentrated on sects: But the common religion of the country consisted of three main elements: In addition, we know of a number of peculiar groups, or sects, which took a distinctive position on one or another aspect of the common, inherited religious culture. Among these sects, the best known are the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes; this third group, described chiefly in the writings of Josephus, exhibits traits in common with the group known to us from the so-called Dead Sea Scrolls, but cannot have been identical to it in every respect. The reason is that the Temple had constituted one of the primary, unifying elements in that common life. The structure not only of political life and of society, but also of the imaginative life of the country, depended upon the Temple and its worship and cult. It is there that people believed they served God. On the Temple the lines of structure—both cosmic and social—converged. Consequently, the destruction of the Temple meant not merely a significant alteration in the cultic and ritual life of the Jewish people, but also a profound and far-reaching crisis in their inner and spiritual existence. The response to the destruction of the Temple is known to us only from rabbinic materials, which underwent revisions over many centuries. But these late materials referring to earlier days—that is, fourth-century stories about first-century teachers—are serviceable, because they give evidence of how important shifts and turnings in the character of Judaism are recognized later on and given specificity and concreteness in the period in which, on firmer grounds, we conceive these changes to have taken place. One such story, about Yohanan ben Zakkai and his disciple, Joshua ben Hananiah, captures in a few words the main outline of what became of the pharisaic-rabbinic view of the destruction: We have another atonement as effective as this. And what is it? It is acts of loving-kindness, as it is said, For I desire mercy and not sacrifice. How shall we relate the arcane rules about ritual purity to the public calamity faced by the heirs of the Pharisees at Yavneh? To the Yohanan ben Zakkai of this story, preserving the Temple is not an end in itself. He teaches that there is another means of reconciliation between God and Israel, so that the Temple and its cult are not decisive. What is the will of God? It is doing deeds of loving-kindness: Earlier, pharisaism had held that the cleanness of the Temple should be everywhere, even in the home and the hearth. Now Yohanan is represented as teaching that sacrifice greater than the Temple must characterize the life of the community. If one is to do something for God in a time when the Temple is no more, the offering must be the gift of selfless compassion. The holy altar must be the streets and marketplaces of the world, as, formerly, the purity of the Temple had to be observed in the streets and marketplaces. But this is essentially a backward-looking solution. How do we contend with the destruction of the cult, focus of the ancient piety? There was a second perspective, the one on the future: How shall we reshape the focus of piety, so that it is relevant to the conditions of contemporary life, when there is no Temple, and when the cultic analogy is no longer evocative? Pharisaic piety in the new age evokes a certain dissonance, since it rests on the comparison between the home and the Temple—but the Temple is no more. A new shape and focus for piety are to be found. II The reconstruction of a viable cultural-religious existence is the outcome of the next half century, for, between ca. It was in response to the disaster of the destruction that Rabbinic Judaism took shape. Rabbinic Judaism claimed that it was possible to serve God not only through sacrifice, but also through study of Torah. There is a priest in charge of the life of the community, but a new kind of priest, the rabbi. As we saw, the old sin offerings still may be carried out through deeds of loving-kindness. Not only so, but when the whole Jewish people will fully carry out the

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teachings of the Torah, then the Temple itself will be rebuilt. To be sure, the Temple will be reconstructed along lines laid out in the Torah—that is, in the whole Torah of Moses, the Torah taught by the rabbis. And, like the prophets and historians in the time of the First Destruction, the rabbis further claimed that it was because the people had sinned, that is, had not kept the Torah, that the Temple had been destroyed. So the disaster itself is made to vindicate the rabbinic teaching and to verify its truth. III Now let us stand back from this synthesis and ask, How was it put together? What are its primary elements? What trends or movements before 70 are represented by these elements? Two primary components in the Yavneh synthesis are to be discerned, first, the method or mode of thought of pharisaism before 70, second, the putative values of the scribal profession before 70. The former lay stress upon universal keeping of the law, so that every Jew is obligated to do what only the elite—the priests—are normally expected to accomplish. Pre pharisaism thus contributed the stress on the universal keeping of the law, on the pretense that all live like Temple priests. The second component derives from the scribes, whose professional ideal stressed the study of Torah and the centrality of the learned man in the religious system. The unpredictable, final element in the synthesis of pharisaic stress on widespread law—including ritual law, observance, and scribal emphasis on learning—is what makes Rabbinic Judaism distinctive, and that is the conviction that the community now stands in the place of the Temple. The ruins of the cult, after all, did not mark the end of the collective life of Israel. What survived was the people. It was the genius of Rabbinic Judaism following upon pharisaism, to recognize that the people might reconstitute the Temple in its own collective life, just as was the case with purity before 70. The rabbinic ideal further maintained that the rabbi served as the new priest, the study of Torah substituted for the Temple sacrifice, and deeds of loving-kindness were the social surrogate for the sin offering, that is, personal sacrifice instead of animal sacrifice. We see that Talmud Torah is only one element in the reformation of the symbolic structure of Judaism accomplished by the rabbis of the period after 70. It is part of a larger system in which study of Torah, the rabbi, the importance of moral and ethical action, all are put together into a coherent structure, upon the foundation of the people of Israel, the Jewish people, as the locus of the sacred in this world. These elements—religious behavior, religious official, religious way of life, and religious community—together form a whole and harmonious system. When we isolate Talmud Torah, it is only to discern how one of the several elements of the Judaic structure has been received into the whole. And in many ways, you will agree, it is the most distinctive element of the structure. The centrality of community, the importance of ethics, the authority of a religious leader qualified by learning—these are not uncommon in the religious experience of humankind. But the idea that what everyone—and not merely the virtuosi—must do to serve God is to study revelation is unusual. In my view, as I hope is clear, that notion derives from two disparate sources: The method is pharisaic, the substance, scribal. But putting the two together quite changes what each was before. And, as is now clear, the context in which the two are put together is what accounts for the fact that they become something entirely fresh and important. Both stress the same concerns: The Pharisee was a layman pretending to be priest and making his private home into a model of the Temple. The laws about purity and careful tithing were dietary laws, governing what and how a person should eat. IV Of the important sects known to us in the period before 70, present at Yavneh were surely the Pharisees and probably also a fair sampling of another sort of group, not a sect but a profession, namely, the scribes. It is, as I said, in the amalgamation of the method of pharisaism and the doctrine of scribism that Rabbinic Judaism, with its stress on universal learning in Torah, emerges. We have a good picture of the viewpoint of a putative adherent, after 70, of the conceptions of pharisaism in the person of Eliezer b. Hyrcanus, an important authority of Yavneh. I may briefly summarize his conception of the laws necessary for the new age. Issues important to pre Pharisees predominate in his laws. Issues absent in the rabbinic traditions about the Pharisees are mostly absent in his as well. Eliezer therefore comes at the end of the old pharisaism. He does not inaugurate the new rabbinism, traces of which are quite absent in his historically usable traditions. Indeed, on the basis of his laws and sayings, we can hardly define what this rabbinism might consist of. Since by the end of the Yavnean period the main outlines of rabbinism were clear, we may postulate that the transition from pharisaism to rabbinism,

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or the union of the two, took place in the time of Eliezer himself. But he does not seem to have been among those who generated the new viewpoints; he appears as a reformer of the old ones. His solution to the problem of the cessation of the cult was not to replace the old piety with a new one but, rather, to preserve and refine the rules governing the old in the certain expectation of its restoration in a better form than ever. V Let us now turn to the scribes and their ideal of Torah. Scribes and Pharisees are by no means regarded as one and the same group. To be sure, what scribes say and do not say is not made clear. One cannot derive from the synoptic record a clear picture of scribal doctrine or symbolism, if any, although one certainly finds an account of the pharisaic law on ritual uncleanness and tithing. Since the materials now found in the synoptics were available in Palestine between 70 and 90, however, they may be presumed accurately to portray the situation of that time, because their picture had to be credible to Christians of the period. Now, having seen in Eliezer an important representative of the old pharisaism, we find no difficulty in accounting for the pharisaic component of the Yavnean synthesis. It likewise seems reasonable to locate in the scribes the antecedents of the ideological and symbolic part of the rabbinic component at Yavneh. Admittedly, our information on scribism in the rabbinic literature is indistinguishable from the later sayings produced by rabbinism. But if we consider that scribism goes back to much more ancient times than does pharisaism, and that its main outlines are clearly represented, for instance, by Ben Sira, we may reasonably suppose that what the scribe regarded as the center of piety was study, interpretation, and application of the Torah. To be sure, what was studied and how it was interpreted are not to be identified with the literature and interpretation of later rabbinism. But the scribal piety and the rabbinic piety are expressed through an identical symbol, study of Torah. And one looks in vain in the rabbinic traditions about the Pharisees before 70 for stress on, or even the presence of the ideal of, the study of Torah. Unless the Torah ideal of rabbinism begins as the innovation of the early Yavneansâ€”and this seems to me unlikelyâ€”it therefore should represent at Yavneh the continuation of pre scribism. But pre scribism continued with an important difference, for Yavnean and later rabbinism said what cannot be located in pre scribal documents: So Yavnean scribism made important changes in pre scribal ideas. It responded to the new situation in a more appropriate way than did the Yavnean Pharisaism represented by Eliezer. Eliezer could conceive of no piety outside of that focused upon the Temple. But Yavnean and later scribism-rabbinism was able to construct an expression of piety which did not depend upon the Temple at all. While Eliezer appears as a reformer of old pharisaism, the proponents of rabbinism do not seem to have reformed the old scribism. What they did was to carry the scribal ideal to its logical conclusion.

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Chapter 6 : List of books by Jacob Neusner - Wikipedia

Jacob Neusner-The Rabbinic Traditions About the Pharisees Before 70 Parts I II III -Brill Uploaded by Eddie White This work continues the inquiry begun in Development of a Legend: Studies on the Traditions Concerning Yohanan ben Zakkai (Leiden,).

Sources[edit] The first historical mention of the Pharisees and their beliefs comes in the four gospels and the Book of Acts, in which both their meticulous adherence to their interpretation of the Torah as well as their eschatological views are described. The other schools were the Essenes , who were generally apolitical and who may have emerged as a sect of dissident priests who rejected either the Seleucid -appointed or the Hasmonean high priests as illegitimate; the Sadducees , the main antagonists of the Pharisees; and the "fourth philosophy". It was likely written by a Pharisee or someone sympathetic toward Pharisees, as it includes several theological innovations: The Mishnah was supremely important because it compiled the oral interpretations and traditions of the Pharisees and later on the Rabbis into a single authoritative text, thus allowing oral tradition within Judaism to survive the destruction of the Second Temple. However, none of the Rabbinic sources include identifiable eyewitness accounts of the Pharisees and their teachings. He did not, however, allow the restoration of the Judean monarchy , which left the Judean priests as the dominant authority. Without the constraining power of the monarchy, the authority of the Temple in civic life was amplified. It was around this time that the Sadducee party emerged as the party of priests and allied elites. This provided the condition for the development of various sects or "schools of thought," each of which claimed exclusive authority to represent "Judaism," and which typically shunned social intercourse, especially marriage, with members of other sects. In the same period, the council of sages known as the Sanhedrin may have codified and canonized the Hebrew Bible Tanakh , from which, following the return from Babylon, the Torah was read publicly on market-days. The Temple was no longer the only institution for Jewish religious life. After the building of the Second Temple in the time of Ezra the Scribe , the houses of study and worship remained important secondary institutions in Jewish life. Outside Judea, the synagogue was often called a house of prayer. While most Jews could not regularly attend the Temple service, they could meet at the synagogue for morning, afternoon and evening prayers. On Mondays, Thursdays and Shabbats , a weekly Torah portion was read publicly in the synagogues, following the tradition of public Torah readings instituted by Ezra. These men maintained an oral tradition that they believed had originated at Mount Sinai alongside the Torah of Moses; a God-given interpretation of the Torah. The rift between the priests and the sages developed during this time, when Jews faced new political and cultural struggles. He imposed a program of forced Hellenization , requiring Jews to abandon their own laws and customs, thus precipitating the Maccabean Revolt. Although the Hasmoneans were considered heroes for resisting the Seleucids, their reign lacked the legitimacy conferred by descent from the Davidic dynasty of the First Temple era. Their name comes from the Hebrew and Aramaic parush or parushi, which means "one who is separated. One of the factors that distinguished the Pharisees from other groups prior to the destruction of the Temple was their belief that all Jews had to observe the purity laws which applied to the Temple service outside the Temple. The major difference, however, was the continued adherence of the Pharisees to the laws and traditions of the Jewish people in the face of assimilation. As Josephus noted, the Pharisees were considered the most expert and accurate expositors of Jewish law. Josephus indicates that the Pharisees received the backing and good-will of the common people, apparently in contrast to the more elite Sadducees associated with the ruling classes. In general, whereas the Sadducees were aristocratic monarchists, the Pharisees were eclectic, popular, and more democratic. The word is often, but incorrectly, translated as "illegitimate". In their personal lives this often meant an excessively stringent lifestyle from a Jewish perspective, as they did away with the oral tradition, and in turn the Pharisaic understanding of the Torah, creating two Jewish understandings of the Torah. An example of this differing approach is the interpretation of, "an eye in place of an eye". The Pharisaic

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understanding was that the value of an eye was to be paid by the perpetrator. The Pharisees preserved the Pharisaical oral law in the form of the Talmud. They would become the foundation of Rabbinic Judaism. The sages of the Talmud see a direct link between themselves and the Pharisees, and historians generally consider Pharisaic Judaism to be the progenitor of Rabbinic Judaism, that is normative, mainstream Judaism after the destruction of the Second Temple. All mainstream forms of Judaism today consider themselves heirs of Rabbinic Judaism and, ultimately, the Pharisees. The Hasmonean period[edit] Main articles: Hasmoneans and Maccabees Although the Pharisees did not support the wars of expansion of the Hasmoneans and the forced conversions of the Idumeans, the political rift between them became wider when a Pharisee named Eleazar insulted the Hasmonean ethnarch John Hyrcanus at his own table, suggesting that he should abandon his role as High Priest due to a rumour, probably untrue, that he had been conceived while his mother was a prisoner of war. In response, he distanced himself from the Pharisees. His actions caused a riot in the Temple and led to a brief civil war that ended with a bloody repression of the Pharisees. However, on his deathbed Jannaeus advised his widow, Salome Alexandra, to seek reconciliation with the Pharisees. Her brother was Shimon ben Shetach, a leading Pharisee. Josephus attests that Salome was favorably inclined toward the Pharisees, and their political influence grew tremendously under her reign, especially in the Sanhedrin or Jewish Council, which they came to dominate. After her death her elder son Hyrcanus II was generally supported by the Pharisees. Her younger son, Aristobulus II, was in conflict with Hyrcanus, and tried to seize power. The Pharisees seemed to be in a vulnerable position at this time. As Josephus was himself a Pharisee, his account might represent a historical creation meant to elevate the status of the Pharisees during the height of the Hasmonean Dynasty. In their day, the influence of the Pharisees over the lives of the common people was strong and their rulings on Jewish law were deemed authoritative by many. The Roman period[edit] Main article: Judaea Roman province Pompey in the Temple of Jerusalem, by Jean Fouquet According to Josephus, the Pharisees appeared before Pompey asking him to interfere and restore the old priesthood while abolishing the royalty of the Hasmoneans altogether "Ant. In Rome, Herod sought the support of Mark Antony and Octavian, and secured recognition by the Roman Senate as king, confirming the termination of the Hasmonean dynasty. Herod was an unpopular ruler, perceived as a Roman puppet. The family of Boethus, whom Herod had raised to the high-priesthood, revived the spirit of the Sadducees, and thenceforth the Pharisees again had them as antagonists "Ant. While it stood, the Second Temple remained the center of Jewish ritual life. According to the Torah, Jews were required to travel to Jerusalem and offer sacrifices at the Temple three times a year: The Pharisees, like the Sadducees, were politically quiescent, and studied, taught, and worshiped in their own way. At this time serious theological differences emerged between the Sadducees and Pharisees. The notion that the sacred could exist outside the Temple, a view central to the Essenes, was shared and elevated by the Pharisees. The Pharisaic legacy[edit] At first the values of the Pharisees developed through their sectarian debates with the Sadducees; then they developed through internal, non-sectarian debates over the law as an adaptation to life without the Temple, and life in exile, and eventually, to a more limited degree, life in conflict with Christianity. Beliefs[edit] No single tractate of the key Rabbinic texts, the Mishnah and the Talmud, is devoted to theological issues; these texts are concerned primarily with interpretations of Jewish law, and anecdotes about the sages and their values. Only one chapter of the Mishnah deals with theological issues; it asserts that three kinds of people will have no share in "the world to come: Another passage suggests a different set of core principles: Judah haNasi, however, said that Jews must "be meticulous in small religious duties as well as large ones, because you do not know what sort of reward is coming for any of the religious duties," suggesting that all laws are of equal importance. In comparison with Christianity, the Rabbis were not especially concerned with the messiah or claims about the messiah or ranking the laws in importance. Monotheism[edit] One belief central to the Pharisees was shared by all Jews of the time is monotheism. This is evident in the practice of reciting the Shema, a prayer composed of select verses from the Torah Deuteronomy 6: Wisdom[edit] Pharisaic wisdom was compiled in one book of the Mishna, Pirkei Avot. The Pharisaic attitude is perhaps best exemplified by a story about the

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sages Hillel the Elder and Shammai , who both lived in the latter half of the 1st century BCE. A gentile once challenged Shammai to teach him the wisdom of the Torah while he stood on one foot. Shammai drove him away. The same gentile approached Hillel and asked of him the same thing. Hillel chastised him gently by saying, "What is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow. That is the whole Torah; the rest is the explanation" now go and study. This also accords with the statement in Pirkei Avot 3: All is foreseen, but freedom of choice is given". According to Josephus, Pharisees were further distinguished from the Sadducees in that Pharisees believed in the resurrection of the dead. Afterlife Unlike the Sadducees, who are generally held to have rejected any existence after death, the sources vary on the beliefs of the Pharisees on the afterlife. According to the New Testament the Pharisees believed in the resurrection of the dead , but it does not specify whether this resurrection included the flesh or not. This was a more participatory or "democratic" form of Judaism, in which rituals were not monopolized by an inherited priesthood but rather could be performed by all adult Jews individually or collectively; whose leaders were not determined by birth but by scholarly achievement. Many, including some scholars, have characterized the Sadducees as a sect that interpreted the Torah literally, and the Pharisees as interpreting the Torah liberally. He claims that the complete rejection of Judaism would not have been tolerated under the Hasmonean rule and therefore Hellenists maintained that they were rejecting not Judaism but Rabbinic law. Thus, the Sadducees were in fact a political party not a religious sect. He suggests that two things fundamentally distinguished the Pharisaic from the Sadducean approach to the Torah. First, Pharisees believed in a broad and literal interpretation of Exodus Moreover, the Torah already provided some ways for all Jews to lead a priestly life: The Pharisees believed that all Jews in their ordinary life, and not just the Temple priesthood or Jews visiting the Temple, should observe rules and rituals concerning purification. The Oral Torah[edit] Main article: Oral Torah The standard view is that the Pharisees differed from Sadducees in the sense that they accepted the Oral Torah in addition to the Scripture. Saldarini argues that this assumption has neither implicit nor explicit evidence. A critique of the ancient interpretations of the Bible are distant from what modern scholars consider literal. Saldarini states that the Oral Torah did not come about until the third century AD, although there was an unstated idea about it in existence. Every Jewish community in a way possessed their own version of the Oral Torah which governed their religious practices. Josephus stated that the Sadducees only followed literal interpretations of the Torah. To Saldarini, this only means that the Sadducees followed their own way of Judaism and rejected the Pharisaic version of Judaism. The Oral Torah was to remain oral but was later given a written form. It did not refer to the Torah in a status as a commentary, rather had its own separate existence which allowed Pharisaic innovations. As Jacob Neusner has explained, the schools of the Pharisees and rabbis were and are holy "because there men achieve sainthood through study of Torah and imitation of the conduct of the masters. In doing so, they conform to the heavenly paradigm, the Torah believed to have been created by God "in his image," revealed at Sinai, and handed down to their own teachers If the masters and disciples obey the divine teaching of Moses, "our rabbi," then their society, the school, replicates on earth the heavenly academy, just as the disciple incarnates the heavenly model of Moses, "our rabbi. These beliefs today may seem as projections of rabbinical values onto heaven, but the rabbis believe that they themselves are projections of heavenly values onto earth. The rabbis thus conceive that on earth they study Torah just as God, the angels, and Moses, "our rabbi," do in heaven. The authors of the Gospels present Jesus as speaking harshly against some Pharisees Josephus does claim that the Pharisees were the "strictest" observers of the law.

Chapter 7 : The Rabbinic Traditions about the Pharisees before 70 : Jacob Neusner :

Reprise and reworking of materials in Rabbinic Traditions about the Pharisees before 70 I and III, and A History of the Mishnaic Law of Purities XXI. Oral Tradition in Judaism: The Case of the Mishnah.

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