

LAKE SHORE DRIVE SYNAGOGUE

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DIFFERENCES IN JUDAISM

Rabbi Bauman's recent Wednesday night Zoom classes have concentrated on the differences between the four major Jewish religious denominations, Orthodox, Conservative, Reconstructionist, and Reform. He hasn't drilled down to the differences between various strands of the Orthodox community, such as Chasidic, Litvish, Neturei Karta, modern Orthodox, standard Orthodox, partnership Orthodox, and Traditional, nor to the different siddurim used in the Orthodox community: Ashkenazic, Sefardic, Arizal, Romi. He also hasn't dissected the Chasidic community, to differentiate between Lubavitcher, Satmar, Ger, Bobover, Bratslaver, and other smaller sects. As one can see from this list, current Judaism is variegated. But was it always thus?

In this Bulletin we drill back 2000 years and see what was then the state of Judaism. Those with an acquaintance of the writings of the historian Josephus know that in temple times there were three major sects of Judaism, the **Pharisees** פרושיים, **Sadducees** צדוקים, and **Essenes** אסניים. There was also an (unmentioned by Josephus) fourth sect, namely the **Boethusians** ביתוסים (see Shabbat 108a), who may have been a variant of the Sadducees. The Phariseean Rabban Gamaliel (40-68 CE) lumped Gentiles (נכרי), Sadducees, and Boethusians into a single category for a legal ruling (see Eruvin 68b).

The **Pharisees** tended to be a plebian group, which emerged after the John Hyrcanus, Judas Maccabaeus's nephew, established a new monarchy in the form of the priestly Hasmonean dynasty in 152 BCE. They were "separatists" (from the Hebrew word פרוש), a group of scribes and sages (but not priests) who were more concerned with laws of purity and the laws of sacrifice than laws relating to the priesthood. The **Sadducees** tended to be a patrician group, typically priests descended from Zadok (צדוק, 2 Samuel 8:17), the High Priest at the time of Solomon's Temple. The distinction between the Pharisees and the Sadducees centered around their view of the religious practices that were not explicitly defined in the Torah. The Pharisees believed that the religious practices not explicitly defined in the Torah were nonetheless given to Moses at Sinai orally, and Moses taught these oral laws to Joshua, who in turn passed them on orally to the judges and prophets of the Tanach and thence to the rabbis of the Sanhedrin. By contrast, the Sadducees tended to follow only the laws of the written Torah, along with a set of oral laws not consistent with those of the Pharisees. One can see the contrast between them clearly in the last three *mishnayot* of Chapter 4 of Yadaim.

The **Essenes** were a small sect who lived an ascetic life, and some scholars think it was they who were responsible for the Dead Sea Scrolls. Some believe the name אסניים is a corruption of the Hebrew for "the outsiders" (ההוצינים) used in Megillah 4:8 to refer to the sect that covered their tefillin with gold and/or wore them over their sleeves. Scholars even discerned subgroups within the Essenes. Epiphanius, a church father of the end of the 4th century CE, said that there were seven sects of Jews, mentioning by name two sects, the **Nasaraeans** and the **Ossaeans**. He described these sects as follows: "*The Nasaraean—they were Jews who kept all the Jewish observances, but they would not offer sacrifice or eat meat. They claim that these Books [i.e., the Tanach] are fictions, and that none of these customs were instituted by the fathers.*" "*The Ossaeans are Jews like the former [i.e., the Nasaraeans]... Though it is different from the other six of these seven sects, it causes schism only by forbidding the books of Moses like the Nasaraean.*"

In addition there were Jews dubbed as the **Minim** (המינים), usually translated as "the heretics," one of whose practices was to wear the tefillin on the palm of their hand (see Megillah 4:8). (The Soncino Talmud translates מינים as "sectarians," and in a footnote to the use of this term in Shabbat 116a, it says, "The term denotes various kinds of Jewish sectarians, such as the Sadducees, Samaritans, Judeo-Christians, etc., according to the date of the passage in which the term is used.") Berachot 29b recounts that the nineteenth added blessing in the *Amidah*, labelled on page 107 of the Art Scroll siddur as AGAINST HERETICS, was "*the benediction relating to the Minim.*" (Censors later changed the wording of the Talmud from "Minim" to "Sadducees.") The Talmud continues (Berachot 30a) to say, "*Said Rabban Gamaliel to the Sages: Can any one among you frame a benediction relating to the Minim? Shmuel HaKattan arose*

and composed it.” But what is now the blessing beginning with the word ולמלשינים (“and for slanderers”) may not be the original such blessing. The following blessing, found in the Cairo Geniza, refers instead to *meshumadim*, *notrim*, and *minim* (“converts [from Judaism], Nazarenes [i.e., Christians], and Minim”), and contains a clause relating to *tsadikim* (“righteous”) and a quote from Ezekiel 18:30

למשומדים אל תהי תקוה ומלכות זדון מהרה תעקר בימינו והנצרים והמינים כרגע יאבדו ימחו מספר החיים ועם צדיקים אל יכתבו שובו והשיבו מכל-פשיעכם ולא-יהיה לכם למקשול עון ברוך אתה ה' מכניע זדים

Berachot 30a goes on to say of Shmuel HaKattan, “*The next year he forgot it and he tried for two or three hours to recall it.*” The Soncino edition of Berachot has the following footnote justifying Shmuel HaKattan’s memory lapse: “Apparently this benediction was at that time not recited daily as now, but on special annual occasions.” My (irreverent) take on this matter is that perhaps the version found in the Cairo Geniza was the original one, one that Shmuel HaKattan had conveniently forgotten because it was politically incorrect.

Even within the Pharisees there were differences of opinion. The most famous of these were the disputes between the students of Hillel and Shammai, where one lasting three years was reported in Eruvin 13b with the famous resolution being a cry from Heaven announcing “*both are the words of the living God.*” But their differences were even bloodier. Here are two Talmudic versions of an incident between the two groups.

Babylonian Talmud Shabbat 17a: “They [Beit Shammai] thrust a sword into the study house and declared: “Whoever wants to enter may enter, but no one may leave!” And on that day Hillel sat in submission before Shammai, like one of the disciples, and it was as wretched for Israel as the day on which the golden calf was made.” Jerusalem Talmud Shabbat 1:4 [3c] “That day was as wretched for Israel as the day which the golden calf was made.... It was taught in the name of Rabbi Yehoshua Oniya (290-320 CE): The students of Beit Shammai stood below them and they began to slaughter the students of Beit Hillel. It was taught: Six of them ascended and the others stood over them with swords and lances.” This occurred on the 9th of Adar and that as many as 3,000 (one source says 28,000) were killed. That date is even declared a fast day in Karo’s Shulchan Aruch, to commemorate that tragic event. (For more detail, see my March-April 2014 Bulletin.)

Finally, let us turn to two Jewish-related sects, the **Karaites** and the **Samaritans**. On the surface, the **Karaites** are similar to the Sadducees in their rejection of rabbinical authority and the Oral Law. But the Karaites claim that there are major differences, and that their beginnings was a group called Benei Sadeq during the Second Temple period (see http://www.orahsaddiqim.org/History/Events/The_Name_Karaite.shtml). The British theologian John Gill (1767) believes that the Karaites arose in the times of John Hyrcanus and were first called the congregation of Judah ben Tabbai, which was afterwards changed into the name Karaites. The movement flourished in Baghdad in the 9th century, under the leadership of Anan ben David (considered by some the founder of Karaism). In 1897 there were about 13,000 Karaites in Russia. On January 5, 1939, the Reich Office for Genealogical Research issued a written opinion stating that it did not view the Karaite community as being racially connected to the Jews, and so they survived during World War II. The Karaite sect exists to this day, with 30,000 in Israel (mostly in Ashdod), and 4,000 in the United States (with a synagogue in Daly City, CA).

Samaritans claim they are descendants of the Northern Israelite tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, who survived the destruction of the ten tribes of Israel (whose capitol was Samaria) by the Assyrians in 722 BCE. The Talmud and Josephus refer to the Samaritans as *Cutheans* (כּוּתִיִּים), referring to the ancient city of **Kutha**, located in what is today **Iraq**. (2 Kings 17: 24 says, “*And the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from **Cuthah**, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the people of Israel; and they took possession of Samaria, and lived in its cities.*” 2 Kings 17:29 goes on to say “*Then one of the priests whom they had carried away from Samaria came and lived in Beth-El, and taught them how they should fear the Lord.*”) Samaritan worship is based on the Samaritan Pentateuch preserved by those who remained in Israel. (According to Wikipedia, there are some 6,000 differences between the Samaritan Pentateuch and the Masoretic Jewish Pentateuch text.) Samaritans see Judaism as a related but altered and amended religion, brought back by those returning from the Babylonian captivity. There were an estimated one million Samaritans in Biblical times. Today there are about 800 Samaritans in Israel; half reside in modern homes at Kiryat Luza on Mount Gerizim, and the rest in the city of Holon, just outside Tel Aviv.

As John Keating of the Dead Poets Society said, “’twas always thus and always thus will be.”

LAKE SHORE DRIVE SYNAGOGUE FAMILY NEWS

MAZEL TOV to:

NAOMI and JAY STONEHILL on the marriage of their son Ronald to Rachyrah Ayewouadan.

מזל טוב!

SINCEREST WISHES FOR COMPLETE RECOVERY to:

All who have succumbed to COVID-19.

LEE STRAUSS who was hospitalized.

רפואה שלמה!

SINCEREST CONDOLENCES to:

BENNY HAHAMY on the death of his wife TSIPORAH HAHAMY.

IRIS and DAVID NAVON on the death of their mother TSIPORAH HAHAMY.

PHYLLIS WALDMANN on the death of her husband, OTTO WALDMANN.

המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים

May the Almighty comfort you among the other mourners for Zion and Jerusalem

KIDDUSHIMCANCELLED DUE TO COVID-19

HONORABLE MENSHEN

Please forgive me for any errors and omissions. AM

Lake Shore Drive Synagogue wishes to thank the following for their contributions. In memory of Tsipora Hahamy: **Eric and Marnie Baer, Rose Dessau, Naomi Glasky, Alice and Frank Kleinman, David Kuhaneck, Susan and Bob Mednick, Henry Winograd. Liliane Dayan and her children:** in memory of Oscar Novick. **Mina Grinshpan:** in memory of Veniamin Grinshpan, Genrikh Iosifovich, and Ida Meyerovnova. **Gail Hendler:** in memory of Max Hendler. **Heide and Joice Hirschtick:** in memory of Rose Bloch. **Carol and Marc Marcovich:** in memory of Lillian Bolozky. **Ron Marmer:** in memory of Marian Marmer. **Aviva Samet and James Matanky:** in memory of Elaine Izaks, Dinah Palacci, and Nadia Zickmann. **Eli Michaels:** in memory of Abraham Michaels. **Ede and Aaron Snyder:** in memory of Louis Browner. **Aimee and Lee Strauss:** in memory of Lillian Moscov and George Strauss. **Michael Traison:** in memory of Howard Gilbert. **Paul Wolfman:** in memory of Seymour Wolfman. In honor of Sam Schuster's speedy recovery: **Morene Dunn and Barry Axler.** In honor of Seth Kleinman's Bar Mitzvah: **Beverly Alpern, Morene Dunn and Barry Axler, Ron Marmer, Aimee and Lee Strauss, Henry Winograd.** In honor of Shane Zickmann's Bar Mitzvah: **Morene Dunn and Barry Axler.** In honor of the birth of Edith and Itamar Goldberg's third grandson: **Tina and Bruce Corson.** In honor of Ede and Aaron Snyder's daughter's wedding: **Rose Dessau.** In honor of the marriage of Ron and Rachyrah Stonehill: **Tina and Bruce Corson, Rose Dessau.** In honor of their 58th wedding anniversary: **Carol and Marc Marcovich.**

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

Lake Shore Drive Synagogue is pleased to announce the continuation of a series of Zoom classes led by Rabbi Bauman on topics of interest. The sessions will begin at 7:30 PM on Wednesday evenings. The link is given in the weekly Constant Contact message that our administrator, Tory May, sends out every Tuesday.

We now have Zoom morning minyanim every morning, from Sunday through Friday, at 8:30 AM. And stick around for the post-minyan *divrei torah* delivered by our congregants. The meeting ID is 832 7810 7218 and the password is 810153.

The next meeting of the Book Group will be on Tuesday, January 12, 2021 at 10:00 AM, where Robert Alter's paper, "Biblical Type-Scenes and the Uses of Convention," will be discussed. Regulars of the Book Group have already received a copy of the paper. Copies of the paper can be sent by email to those interested; just contact me at albert@chicagobooth.edu. We plan to discuss Rabbi Jonathan Sachs's book, *Morality: Restoring the Common Good in Divided Times*, at our February 9, 2021 meeting. The meetings will be held via Zoom with meeting ID 894 5589 1665.