

Judaism, A Religion of City Dwellers The Internal

City

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on The Effects of Urbanization on Religion

I

Judaism is no stranger to cities. It has known them all, endured them all, survived them all: cities scarcely larger than villages and cities with teeming millions; cities spawned by flood plains and cities built on trade and commerce; cities of administration and cities of industry; cities of priests and cities of kings; cities of guilds and cities of finance. Indeed, if one traces the history of cities from their earliest origins in the ancient Near East till our own day, he will find few cities that did not at some time or other sustain a viable form of Judaism. No religion has functioned in so many cities, in so many parts of the world, in so many cultural and civilizational complexes, and over so vast a stretch of time. And the powerful appeal of Judaism today to Jews living in cities of every

size and type surely indicates that neither the megalopolis, nor suburbia find Judaism wanting.

What is there about Judaism that has given it this power to function so adequately in cities of all kinds? The question becomes especially pertinent in view of the fact that, although Jews have been predominantly dwellers in cities only since the eighth century or so, the primal source of Judaism, the Pentateuch, is oriented towards the semi-nomad, the peasant, and the priest and not towards the artisan, craftsman, shopkeeper or merchant. Cities are rarely mentioned in the Pentateuch, even though many Israelites had been living in cities for hundreds of years prior to the canonization of the Pentateuch. The rewards and punishments listed in the Pentateuch are almost solely agricultural and pastoral;

"The Lord will give you abounding prosperity in the issue of your womb, the offspring of your cattle, and the produce of your soil in the land that the Lord swore to your fathers to give you, The Lord will open to you his bounteous store, the heavens to provide rain for your land in season and to bless all your undertakings." (Deut, 28:11-12)

Cities are not entirely unmentioned in the Pentateuch but they are not the center of concern. Laws presupposing urban life are to be found in the Pentateuch but they are promulgated from a mountain and a wilderness, Jerusalem is referred to as "the place which Yahweh will choose" and not the city. The elaborate cultic system is carried-out in the "Tent of Meeting" and not in a "house." The Pentateuch rivets the reader to tent-dwelling, cattle-raising, and "well-seeking patriarchs; to quarrelsome tribes roving about in a wasteland; to leaders like Moses, Aaron, and Joshua who are at home in tents; to the oft" reiterated promise that a land flowing with milk and honey will some day bring to an end the semi-nomadic way of life, The urban materials are lost in the wilderness, and covered over by the land.

The Pentateuch is oriented towards the land and towards the cult. It envisions a society which will consist primarily of a peasantry and a priesthood; it does not contemplate an urban culture. And this despite the fact that the, Pentateuch, was promulgated as a single unified work sometime after the .Babylonian Exile, i.e., at a time when the promulgators were fully aware that Israelites had lived in cities for hundreds of years. Those responsible for the final form of the Pentateuch deliberately turned their back on the cities because they were promulgating a blueprint for a new hierocratic society. They visualized a simple structure of Aaronide priests, Levites, and .peasants. They did not contemplate a significant role for the artisan, craftsman, shopkeeper or merchant. The peasant was to till the soil, offer a share of his produce to the Aaronide priests and the Levites, provide for the necessary sacrifices and look to the altar and the Aaronide priests for the expiation of his sins,

The overall purpose of the Pentateuch is made crystal clear, even though it is now known to be a composite work that contains Mosaic revelations geared towards a different kind of social order. The Book of Deuteronomy, for example, not only envisages a monarchy, but it provides for a much simpler cultus than does the Book of Leviticus. Of even greater importance is the fact that whereas the Aaronides are vested with absolute control over the expiatory, sacrificial system in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, they are not differentiated from the Levitical priests in Deuteronomy. Those who put the Pentateuch into its final shape did not exclude previous Mosaic revelations, but overwhelmed them with the mass of Aaronide material and subordinated them to the dominant motif of Aaronide supremacy.

The Pentateuch is thus simultaneously the end of an historic process and a beginning. As the end, it incorporates the various historical phases of Israel's history that preceded the canonized Pentateuch — phases that involved multiple cultural forms -- semi-nomadism, agriculture, urbanization -- and multiple political forms — patriarchy, tribalism, monarchy -- and subordinates them to Aaronide cosmic monotheism. As a beginning, it seeks to establish a hierocratic society based on agriculture, committed to a Single cosmic God, Elohim-Yahweh, and free of the evils that had brought on exile from the land.

The Pentateuch proved to be a remarkable document. It not only succeeded in creating the kind of structure that it had envisioned, but it became the source for all subsequent forms of Judaism. The historical records leave no doubt that by the time of Alexander the Great Judaism was functioning as a hierocracy, with the Aaronides in undisputed control. The priestly monopoly assigned them by the Pentateuch had indeed been realized. The sacrificial cultus was carried out with all the elaborate ritual that the Pentateuch had demanded. The authority over the laws was undisputedly in Aaronide hands. A single cosmic God was worshipped with massive sacrifices offered up by a select priesthood. The principle of cultic intermediation was in effect: expiation from sin, thanksgiving for God's bounty, purging of uncleanness, festival celebration — all were through the Aaronide priests, and by means of the sacred altar. The monotheistic idea had been successfully concretized in a hardy and functional system that could cope adequately and meaningfully with problems generated by the Near Eastern structural matrix.

And then came the polis revolution!

The penetration of the polis form into the Near East disturbed, disrupted, and dissolved traditional patterns of life and thought. It was a form so vital, so dynamic, and so novel that no Institution, however grand, no class, however secure, no individual, however pious could remain unaffected. The *polis*, thrust into a society structured on radically different lines, created new economic and social classes, compelled the re-structuring of Institutions, and revolutionized the patterns of thought,

The polis was exported from Greece. It had not developed in Syria, Palestine, and Egypt. It was a form that had achieved supremacy for the city, and that had created a variety of self-governing structures. It was utilized as an instrument of Macedonian control and exploitation of its Near Eastern empire. The polis were established by Alexander and by the Ptolemies and the Seleucids to enable them to rule the conquered peoples by means of a structural form familiar to them and which could be entrusted to the Greeks and Macedonians brought in as privileged settlers. These Greeks and Macedonians were not native to the Near East, but were elevated above the conquered peoples by the grant of polis rights, rights that accorded them a high degree of autonomy and the privilege of organizing a self-governing *polis* along Greek lines. Nevertheless as new settlers they were in some sense uprooted, torn or separated from their moorings, compelled to work out their lives in an alien environment, The old ties of kinship, of religion, of native city and land were severed and a new life built on a Hellenistic polis identity had to be fashioned.

The Hellenistic poleis thus compelled radical readjustment even for the privileged classes, those with full polis rights. It required an even more radical adjustment for the large numbers of polis dwellers who had no such privileges. These latter were for the most part those who had been peasants prior to the establishment of the polis. Since the poleis were usually new cities, the mass of settlers had to create identities for themselves, mitigate the pain of separation from the familiar, cushion the shock of the novel and the unexpected. And this process was bound to take place, even when an old city was transformed into a polis. For the old urban populations had to undergo the trauma of reorientation, for a polis restructured the city in its own image,

The spread of poleis throughout the Near East set large masses of people in motion, churned up the populations, dissolved old patterns and weaved new, stirred the lethargic and wakened the dormant. The tempo and the intensity of this churning process were heightened by the continuous warfare between the Seleucids and the Ptolemies. The lands changed hands and so did the cities. Mercenaries from one part of the world settled down in other parts, Slaves of one culture became freemen in another. The refugees from warfare in Palestine settled in Antioch, Corinth, or Alexandria. And all the while, the expansion of trade and commerce, the growth of Industry, the ebb and flow of prosperity, bound merchants, artisans, craftsmen, peasants into novel relationships and unanticipated interconnections, The polis revolution uprooted the peoples, intermixed the cultures, blended the religions, and stripped the individual of his former identity. It confronted the merchant, the artisan, the craftsman, the peasant, the sage, and the priest with a question never before posed on so cosmic a scale: what is the individual, the separate person, the one severed from the many, the isolated, lonely soul? Who is to be mindful of him, and take him into account?

The Jews ..were drawn into the vortex by compulsion, not choice. Their way of life had for several centuries been securely anchored in the Pentateuchal system.

The Aaronide priests and the cultus assured them daily that they had the one, cosmic God who cared for them, as He had cared for their ancestors. They were swept into the vortex because they lived in Palestine, a land that is never left alone. A slip of territory between the Seleucids and the Ptolemies, Palestine felt the polis revolution not only in the mushrooming of these cities in her territory, but in the marching to and fro over its lands of the mercenaries of the great Hellenizing monarchs of Syria and Egypt. The Jews were deeply affected by the economic changes, the political changes, the cultural changes. They too experienced uprooting, shock, trauma, disconcerting novelty. Their world too was churned up. Peasants became artisans, craftsmen, merchants, shopkeepers. Priests became tax farmers and large scale merchants. Thousands were spurred to leave not only the soil, but the country itself. Jews made their way in considerable numbers, now voluntarily now by constraint, to the world of poleis, to Alexandria, to Antioch, to Thessalonica, to Athens, to Rome. The diaspora grew in the pre-Hasmonean period, it grew even more in the post-Hasmonean period. The polis revolution was momentous for the Jews, for it not only thoroughly transformed their land, but it created a worldwide diaspora.

And the Jews wherever they might be had to ask themselves the searing question: Who are we, and why are we, and what are we? Thrown on our individual resources, what kind of identity will save us? The Pentateuch had some answers, but it did not have them all. It could reassure them that there was one cosmic God who would protect them. It could offer the cult and its priesthood for expiation, But not much more. The promise of a land flowing with milk and honey, of rain and dew, of well-stored granaries and abundant harvests was reassuring to the peasants In Judea, but was of little comfort to a shopkeeper in Jerusalem, an artisan in Antioch, a merchant in Alexandria, The promise of a long life for the God fearing keeper of the commandments was scarcely succor enough for the individual grappling with his uprootedness, his loneliness, his sense of worth and dignity. The Pentateuch, oriented as it is towards the people as a whole, towards the land, towards the peasant as a class, towards the priests as intermediators, has precious little to offer the individual coping with life in a *polis*.

The Pentateuch could not give all the answers. Neither could the prophets, nor the sacred historians, nor the weaver of maxims and the spinner of proverbs, Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel had prophesied in cities, but not in poleis, They were Intense individualists, but their prophecies were concerned with the broken, covenant, with sinful kings, with moral degradation, with whoring after Baal. The individual is called upon to repent not to gain salvation for himself, but to save his land and his people. The sacred chroniclers, record a history of the vicissitudes of the land, the people and Yahweh, and not of the individual's striving for a sense of worth. The wisdom literature is full of good advice, but it can offer the individual nothing but a long and honored life as an inducement to be upright and God-fearing, The Psalms, it is true, express the deep yearnings of the Individual, but they are bound up with the

sacrificial cult, and offer the individual the rewards and punishments of the Pentateuch.

The writings of a pre-polis age could not possibly be adequate for problems so startling novel. The polis revolution compelled the Jews -everywhere in Palestine and in the diaspora to make a choice: either abandon the Pentateuch and adopt polytheistic Hellenism, or create new forms of Judaism. Some Jews took the former course, most Jews the latter.

III

The spread of the polis did not at first have any negative effect on the hierocratic system in Palestine, Jerusalem remained a Temple city; it did not become a *polis*. It grew in size and in population; it became economically more complex; it supported a higher degree of social interaction; it was drawn into contacts with Alexandria and Antioch; it was exposed to the pressure of poleis springing up on all sides. Nevertheless it remained primarily the city of the world-renowned Temple to the One God. And though the Aaronides became more wealthy and sophisticated, and though a class of hierocratic intellectuals, called Sopherim, or Scribes took great delight in pursuing Wisdom, and though the urban class structure became more complex, the first phase of the polis revolution did not seem to undermine the hierocratic system, The Pentateuch held sovereign sway and the Aaronides carried out their expiatory functions in the Temple with pomp, pageantry, and sincerity.

Indeed the first effects of the polisification process in the Near East were highly stimulating to the Pentateuchal system. The new ideas and interests found expression in literary efforts that did not challenge the Pentateuch, but developed alongside it. Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Job and the *Wisdom of Ben Sira* illustrate the successful method that was worked out. They take for granted that "fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge," that Torah and Wisdom are one, that the weaving of maxims and the spinning of parables are appropriate for the God-fearing,

Nowhere is this adjustment to Hellenization more vividly brought out than in Ben Sira. Although we cannot be sure when he wrote, it was, at the earliest, sometime after the establishment of the Hellenistic monarchies. He is a *sopher*, a hierocratic intellectual. He is a man of the new bustling city of Jerusalem. There is no rusticity in him. He extols the life of leisure, for it permits the pursuit of wisdom. He turns a neat maxim, concocts a sententious proverb, tosses off a ready parable. He surveys a bustling society and offers distillations of wisdom for its welfare. For him the new city enhances and enriches his hierocratic loyalty; the addiction to Wisdom only heightens his esteem for the Pentateuch. He loves the priests and he is moved to deep feeling by the cultic display.

Such an accommodation, however, was much more difficult for big tax farmers, large scale merchants, and cosmopolitan Aaronides whose economic, social

and political activities were increasingly hampered by the lack of polis rights and privileges. Among them Hellenization set in earnest and ultimately undermined the integrity of the entire system. A rapid drift towards Hellenization began after the Seleucids gained control of Palestine in 197 as the lure of polis rights heightened dissatisfaction. Powerful priestly families and their allies sought to gain control of the Temple by putting in a High Priest committed to Hellenization. Struggles broke out over the extent to which Hellenization should be pushed. The introduction of forced Hellenization by Antiochus IV, supported as it was by the radical Hellenist High Priest Meneleus, spelled doom for the hierarchical system. -The Jews, unwilling to abandon the Pentateuch and its institutions, rose in revolt,

The course of the Hasmonean revolt is generally known. An uprising led by Mattathias was brought to successful issue by his sons. After years of bitter struggle, in which defeat vied with victory, an independent state was established in 142. A Great Synagogue Invested Simon with power as High Priest and ruler, and in doing so set in motion a system that was radically different from the hierocratic-Pentateuchal one, though the cultus and the Pentateuch were retained. The new High Priest was Pentateuchally illegitimate, for he was not a direct descendent from Phineas and Zadok, and was beholden for his authority to the Great Synagogue, an institution previously unknown. Ultimate authority now rested in a new class that had emerged during the Revolt, and had not existed in the days of Ben Sira. This class now determined what the laws were to be and how the Aaronides were to carry out their duties. They created novel institutions for legislating new laws, protecting old laws, and carrying out all laws. This new class was the Pharisees, its new legal concept, the two-fold law, its stronghold the Great Legislature, or Beth Din Ha-Gadol. This class carried through one of the most momentous revolutions in history and in doing so solved the problem of the polis for Judaism.

IV

If the Pharisaic Revolution has remained hidden these many centuries, the Pharisees themselves are primarily to blame. They did not think that they were carrying out a revolution, but a restoration. They did not consider themselves to be a new ruling class, but one whose founder was Moses himself. They did not see themselves, as the creators of the Oral Law, but its transmitters. They did not look upon the institutions that they brought into being as innovations, nor their radical new concepts as novel. They viewed themselves as the champions of the eternal two-fold law, revealed at Sinai, transmitted through the ages by leaders like themselves, and sustained by the powerful institution embodying their authority as a class, the Great Legislature, or Beth Din Ha-Gadol. They believed themselves to be traditionalists, and restorationists, not revolutionaries; for even when they introduced new legislation, they believed that they were carrying out a traditional function, and following in the footsteps of their authoritative predecessors, Moses, Joshua, the Elders, and the

Prophets.

The Pharisees never boasted of their revolution because they were unaware that they had led one. They did not even preserve historical records of their own birth, To this day we do not know the precise date when the Pharisees made their appearance in history. When Josephus, himself a loyal follower of the Pharisees, wrote the history of the Jews in his Antiquities, he was unable to find any documents pertaining to their origins, for he suddenly thrusts them into his narrative of the Hasmonean Revolt without any explanation of how they came to be,

The Pharisees were not interested in their history, or for that matter in any history. They were not averse to utilizing historical Incidents to teach a religious lesson; nor did they entirely refrain from narrating anecdotal and episodic reminiscences. But history as sustained narrative, or as continuum, or as a series of interconnected events, or as facts — such history had no allure. One looks desperately, but in vain, in the Misnah, the Tosefta, the Tannaite Midrash, the Talmud for facts or details of such institutions as the Keneseth Ha-Gedolah, of such crucial events as the split between the Hasmoneans and the Pharisees, of such significant personalities as Jose ben Yoezer, of such momentous upheavals as the Revolt against Rome, Even the greatest leaders of the Pharisees, Shemaiah and Abtalion, Hillel and Shammai, Rabban Gamaliel and Jochanan ben Zaccal are known to us only through incidentalia. Nowhere do we find a connected biography; only exempla.

The Pharisees have obscured their history, because they regarded history as irrelevant. They left no records because they were a class committed to the oral transmission of both law and doctrine. They were a non-writing scholar class. They did not even commit their legislation to writing, much less their doctrines. The Pharisees did not write books. Shimeon ben Shetach, Shemaiah and Ab-talion, Hillel and Shammai were not authors, but teachers of the spoken word. Any book written prior to the first century or so A.D, could not have been written by a Pharisee. The Pharisaic Revolution precluded written records because its major revolutionary doctrine was the supremacy of the Oral, the unwritten Law over the Written. These unwritten laws and these unwritten teachings —committed to writing only hundreds of years after the Pharisaic Revolution — are the evidence of the Revolution; they are the irrefutable proof that a radically different kind of Judaism arose during the Hasmonean Revolt. They do not, it is true, give us a factual history of the Revolution, no precise dates, no interconnected events, no Interlinked facts, but their very existence testifies to an upheaval of staggering proportions,

The Pharisees did not exist prior to the Hasmonean Revolt. They are not mentioned either explicitly or implicitly in-Ben-Sirah or in any pre-Hasmonean book. They are not referred to by Josephus as playing any role in Jewish history prior to Jonathan the Hasmonean, though they are frequently mentioned by him subsequently. They do not appear in the tannaitic literature as having been active prior to the

Hasmonean Revolt. Their doctrine of the two-fold Law is nowhere in evidence before this time; nor their distinctive institutions, such as the Beth Din Ha-Gadol, and the synagogue; nor their novel doctrines, The Pharisees, therefore must have emerged during the struggle against the forced Hellenization policies of Antiochus and against the Jewish Hellenizers. They transformed the Hasmonean Revolt which had begun as an effort to restore the Pentateuchal system into a revolution that established the supremacy of the two-fold Law, the Oral and the Written.

The concept of the two-fold Law permitted the Pharisees to reconstruct and re-fashion Judaism so that it could function meaningfully in a polis world. It accorded to the new scholar class the right to legislate new law when necessary, and to determine the meaning of Pentateuchal law and doctrine. This power was assigned to a law-preserving, law-making, and law-interpreting body that had not previously existed, the Beth Din Ha-Gadol, the Great Legislature. For the new type of law, the Oral as distinguished from the Pentateuchal, a new term was coined, Halakah, "the way one should walk," "the norm." This word is not to be found in the Pentateuch though the Hebrew root is. Halakah came to me a "law par excellence," the supreme law, and its transgression was viewed as an aberah, 'a misstep.' In addition two other kinds of law came into use and for these too new names were coined; the Takkanah, i.e., a law introduced to repair a breach or a lack, to make a necessary adjustment to changing conditions, and a Gezerah, a decree, a restriction of some sort. These words for Law likewise are not to be found in the Pentateuch. The Pharisees thus developed the Halakah system of Law in contradistinction to the mitzwoth, hukkim, mishpatim, and toroth of the Pentateuch. They continued to underwrite these other laws, but subordinated them to the Halakah, i.e., they determined the actual meaning of the Pentateuchal laws in the light of their own legal concepts,

In instituting the Beth Din Ha-Gadol, the Pharisees broke the power of the Aaronide hierarchy. They made their laws mandatory on the priests themselves, and even the High Priestly ritual on the Day of Atonement was prescribed by the Halakah. Every detail of the Temple ritual was now determined by the Beth Din Ha-Gadol; and though the priests continued to enjoy a monopoly of the sacrificial function, they no longer determined how it was to be carried out.

The Pharisees transformed Judaism in every way. They not only made new laws, but also developed religious concepts that were novel. Though the Pentateuch, the Prophets and the Psalms use many names for God, the Pharisees found it necessary to coin additional names to express their distinctive concepts. They referred to Him as Makom, "the All Present," Shechinah, "the Divine Presence," Ha-Kadosh Barukh Hu, "the Holy One Blessed be He," Mi she-amar we-hay ah olam, "He who spoke and the world came into being," abinu she-bashamayim, "our Father who art in Heaven," Shemayim, Heaven."

The Pharisees made central the novel belief in personal, individual salvation in

the World to Come, and in the revival of the dead. They made prayer mandatory, requiring every Jew to say the Shema twice daily so that he could take upon himself "the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven," and to pray the Tefillah testifying to God's power and concern. They urged acts of loving-kindness: burying the dead, clothing the naked, redeeming the captive, visiting the sick, dowering the bride, and welcoming guests.

The Pharisees underwrote God's Fatherhood of all mankind. All men were his creations and not the Jews alone. They speak of briyoth, God's creatures, who should be brought under the wings of the Shekinah, the Divine presence. The universe is full of individuals who have the same Creator and they must be valued as such.

Surely if the word revolution has any meaning it is applicable to the transmutations that we have sketched above. What, however, was its essence, the dynamics that brought about such far-reaching transformations? The basic achievement of this revolution was the establishment of the principle of individuality, of personal worth. It abolished from Judaism the primacy of priestly, cultic intermediation and substituted for it a direct relationship to the cosmic, father God. It made personal, individual salvation the central doctrine of Judaism, and the halakah system the means for its achievement. It internalized the laws and built them into the conscience. The individual could know where he stood with God only by looking into his individual self and by scrutinizing his individual deeds, for the Halakah, the way, had been made known to him and his veering from the path through sin (averah) - a new term - could not be hidden from God. The one Father-God, the Shekhinah, the Makom, the Ha-Kadosh Barukh Hu who had given the individual the halakah system was always with him. God cared for the individual as a person, and never left him alone.

The Pharisees made the individual the ultimate concern of Judaism. It is no longer the people, no longer the land, no longer even the Temple, it is the individual and his personal salvation through the laws that is paramount. The people are now these who internalize the laws; the land, an object of the laws; the Temple the place where sacrificial laws are obeyed. The individual was spurred to keep the laws foremost in his mind so that he could secure personal salvation in the world to come and be raised from the dead. The dicta "everyone in Israel has a share in the world to come" and "The Holy One Blessed be He desired to benefit Israel and he therefore multiplied the laws for them," express this concept.

The centrality of the individual is nowhere more strikingly revealed than in a passage in the Mishnah dealing with the admonishment of witnesses about to testify in a trial involving the death penalty:

"You should be aware that judgments involving property are not the same as judgments involving life, In property matters an error in testimony can be atoned for through a money payment, but in a matter of life and death, his

blood and the blood of his descendents depend upon it, to the end of time,,,
For this reason man was created one, to teach you that anyone who destroys a
single human soul, is reckoned by Scripture as having destroyed the entire
world, And anyone who preserves a single soul it is as though he kept the
entire world alive..." (Sahhedrin IV:5)

God is thus pictured as concerned with every human
being, be. he of Israel or be he a Gentile, A Jew about to
testify in a Jewish court of law is reminded that every human
life is precious,

And but a few lines further on. God is portrayed as committed to Individual
variation by the nature of his creative powers:

"The greatness of the Holy One Blessed Be He is attested by the
fact that whereas a human being in making coins from a single
stamp can only impress upon them the same likeness, the King of
Kings, the Holy One Blessed Be He stamps every individual with
the form of the first man, yet each individual is different from every
other.

"For this reason everyone is obligated [bound by law] to
say, 'It was on my account that the world was created.'"
(Ibid.)

The awareness of the individual and the determination to offer him personal
salvation through the single cosmic God Impelled the Pharisees to seek proselytes. In
doing so, they willfully turned away from Pentateuchal precedent. Unlike Ezra, they
wanted even Amonites and Moabites in the congregation of the Lord, and found a way
of abrogating the Pentateuchal decree. So daring and audacious were they in their-
espousal of proselytism, that they canonized the Book of Ruth which makes of a
Moabite woman the great-grandmother of David. They developed the concept of Israel
as a brotherhood of those bound together primarily by the halakah system and not only
by race and blood, Indeed, such great leaders of Pharisaism as Shemaiah and Abtalion,
teachers who presided over the Beth Din Ha-Gadol, were believed to have been
proselytes, and Hillel's methods of winning over proselytes were remembered with
approval and satisfaction. The writer of the Gospel of Matthew was uttering only the
truth when he bemoaned the fact that the Pharisees traverse sea and land to win a single
proselyte.

Pharisaic Judaism was thus a Judaism that was oriented towards the world and
all the inhabitants thereof. It fashioned a radically new form of Judaism in the very
process of attempting to make the old Pentateuchal form of Judaism fit novel
conditions. It took the revelation meant for peasants and elaborated it into a revelation

for every human soul. It took a cosmic God who ruled the world, but who was committed to a single people and a single land and made of him a loving, protecting, and law-giving father of each and every individual therein, According to Pharisaic law, Rosh Ha-Shanah commemorated the creation of the world and the day of judging all who come into it. Yom Kippur became the day for each individual to pray that God forgive his personal sins, whether sacrifices be offered or not, Pharisaism took the concept of the One and only God of the Pentateuch and daringly elaborated His scope, His functions, and His realm of concern.

Pharisaism forged its Judaism out of the crucible of polisification. It fought resolutely against Hellenism, but it absorbed its most distinguishing features - not in the obvious manner of Alexandrian and Antiochean Judaisms, but in a more subtle and more creative way. It took over the concept of the primacy of laws from the polis world, and developed the halakan system for the individual with the constitutions of the Hellenistic cities as models, The Beth Din Ha-Gadol is a legislative body that bears far closer resemblance to Greek and Roman law-making institutions than to anything Pentateuchal. The concept of oral laws as distinct from written laws, of law as distinct from non-law, of logical deductive modes of reasoning and hermeneutic devices -- these were ready to hand in the poleis; not in the Pentateuch. The Pharisaic Revolution was thus a novel form of Judaism fashioned by men of genius out of Pentateuchal and polis raw materials. And its most significant accomplishment was an internalized system of laws for the individual.

Earlier, when discussing the impact of the polis revolution on the individual, I placed considerable emphasis on the desperate need to find an Identity. Often, especially in the golden age of polis growth under the early Hellenistic monarchs, this identity was achieved through the status of citizenship. One belonged to the polis and one was protected by the constitution, the laws of the polis. Laws were held in high esteem in the Hellenistic cities, and the great lawgivers, like Solon and Lycurgus were deeply venerated. Indeed, the very heart of the polis form was its constitution.

The constitution of a city surrounded the individual. As long as he was a citizen, and as long as he lived in his city, the politea gave him a sense of belonging, of Identity, of self-esteem. Once, however, he left the city, either voluntarily or by force, the system of laws was no longer operative. He severed his connections with his city's laws. They no longer applied to him.

The Pharisees solved the problem of the laws and the individuals in a unique way. They built a system of laws, the Halakah, but instead of surrounding the individual with the laws of a single city or country, they had the individual surround the laws. They erected a constitution, a politea, to be put inside the individual and not outside him, a system of law that he carried with him wherever he went, and to which he was always and everywhere to be faithful. The giver of this constitution was the one, cosmic Father God who was the Makom, the All Present, and the Shekhina — a God who was with one everywhere, in Jerusalem, in Corinth, in Athens, in Rome, in

Ephesus. He was always watching with discerning eye the individual's fidelity to the laws, keeping an exhaustive record of his every thought and deed, and calculating the ultimate distribution of reward and punishment. God's justice was the application of measurement to man's mode of life, the establishment of a set of standards; God's mercy, the tempering of the quantitative principle with the qualitative.

An internal city, a politeuma, engraved on the soul of the individual, this was the crucial achievement of Pharisaism. Citizenship was available to all who internalized the halakah system. It was a politeuma fashioned for "all who came under the wings of the Shekhinah," a constitution for briyoth, living persons, and not for a fixed place. All who accepted it were linked together in brotherhood and fellowship, and the place for affirming their steadfast loyalty to the internalized laws was the synagogue, a novel institution created by the Pharisees. It emerged spontaneously in the course of the Pharisaic Revolution; it was not deliberately invented. Once in existence, however, it spread rapidly through Palestine and the cities of the diaspora. It was an institution that was especially appropriate for the city. It was a place that could be set apart in any polis. In contrast to the Temple, it was neither limited to a specific city, nor dedicated to sacrificial worship. Rather it was a decentralized gathering where each individual could listen to the reading of the Law and the Prophets and pray to his personal God and Father directly and renew his allegiance to the internalized halakah along with like-minded fellow-citizens. The Pharisees never sought to destroy the Temple or to challenge the efficacy of sacrifices, but in developing the synagogue they made both irrelevant. A religious institution had been born where neither priest nor altar intervened between the individual and his God. The synagogue, in underwriting an unmediated relationship between the single soul and the single God, became the patria, the concrete symbol of one's commitment to an internalized constitution transcending spatial boundaries. God and not a fixed Temple had become the Makom, the Place, the All Present.

V

The triumph of Pharisaism was the triumph of the internalized politela. This fact, however, can be confirmed only after a painstaking analysis of the tannaitic texts which preserve the laws and doctrines of the Pharisees. Since these texts were written down centuries after the Pharisaic revolution, and since they are not set down in chronological order, and since they do not explicitly reveal their link to the polisification process, the scholar must devise highly refined techniques to extract this very crucial interconnection. Fortunately, however, there does survive precious testimony that underwrites this tie, testimony offered by a life-long follower of the Pharisees and a sophisticated student of the Graeco-Roman polis culture, namely, Josephus,

Josephus informs us in his autobiography, the *Vita*, that he determined to follow the Pharisees when he was nineteen years old after he had-made himself

thoroughly at home, with the doctrines of the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes. It is significant that when he tells of his choice he says that he began to follow politeusthai "the mode of life," "the system of Law," "the constitution" of the Pharisees, He clearly wished to convey to his Greek or Roman reader that he had adopted a system of rules, laws, and norms. It was equivalent to saying that he accepted the Halakah mode.

It is also significant that in his description of the Pharisees in his Antiquities, Josephus makes the following assertion:

"The cities give fulsome testimony to their goodness, to their devotion, and to their surpassing excellence both in their mode of life and in their teachings." (Antiquities XVIII)

Josephus is thus clearly confirming the special link of the Pharisees to the cities and underwrites the basic hypothesis of this paper. But this evidence is not nearly so telling as that which he makes available in his apologia for Judaism, the Contra Apionem.

Contra Apionem was written as the shadows lengthened on his amazing life, Josephus did not pen this apologia either in the exuberance of his youth or in the days of imperial favor. He wrote it after the turbulence of the years, and after exposure to all the glories and grandeur of Rome. He wrote it because he had always remained loyal to the internal constitution of Judaism, however faithless he may have been to nation, to land, to Temple. With virtually the last stroke of his vigorous pen, he sought to proclaim to the world the unique preciousness of Judaism. The Solons and the Lycurgus had framed constitutions that rules the individual from without, Moses, one that ruled from within. It was this internal constitution that Josephus contemplated with wonder as he penned the Contra Apionem.

Time prohibits full exploration of Josephus' leitmotif. He reiterates it time and time again with all the eloquence and rhetoric at his command, Moses was a law-giver beyond compare. Unlike Solon, Lycurgus and Plato, he had framed a constitution immune to the erosion of Time and to the blows of Fortune. Engraved on the conscience of the individual, it served as the standard and the rule by which he could regulate his total life. It served as his father and master,

This politeuma offered no enticing external rewards -"not silver or gold, no crown of wild olive, or of parsley, nor any such public mark of distinction. No; each individual relying on the witness of his own conscience and the lawgiver's prophecy, confirmed by the sure testimony of God, is firmly persuaded that to those who observe the laws and, if they must needs die for them, willingly meet death. God has granted a renewed existence and in the revolution of the ages the gift of a better life."

The internalized laws evoke a loyalty transcending all others. It is deeper than that attached to a city, or nation, or native land. "We have trained our courage," affirms

Josephus, not with a view to waging war for self-aggrandizement, but in order to preserve our laws. To defeat in any form we patiently submit, but when pressure is put upon us to alter our statutes, then we deliberately fight against tremendous odds, and hold out under reverses to the last extremity...

Robbed though we be of wealth, of cities, of all good things, our Law at least remains Immortal; and there is not a Jew so distant from his country, so much in awe of a cruel despot, but has more fear of the Law than of him."

The temptation, however, to continue quoting Josephus must be resisted, and I must content myself with a final remark. Josephus was struck by the remarkable fact that whereas the laws of the Graeco-Roman world were externally related to the individual, those of Judaism were internally related. This distinction must be attributed to the beliefs that the single, cosmic father God was their promulgator, and that He looked into the soul of every individual to determine his loyalty.

The Pharisees thus created Judaism for the individual. They eliminated intermediation. They substituted for altar and priest an internalized system of law. They compelled the individual to wrestle with his conscience. He was now alone with the one God and was swept into a relationship with the entire cosmos. He was a person and God was a personality. He talked to Him in prayer, and he served Him through His laws. Every thought, feeling and action of every individual was known to Him because He was a God who was concerned with the individual. All experiences had to be related to Him; all phenomena "attributed to His power. Since God was One, the individual was compelled to participate in a cosmic drama. The universe weighed on his soul, because God was its creator and his Father, God's concern for him intensified his concern for God — and his own salvation,

VI

Judaism became a religion for the city by becoming a religion oriented towards the cosmic importance of the individual. It is not likely that it would have become such had not the problem of the Individual Jew been raised by the polis revolution. The .disruption .of the old order of peasant, priest, and sacrifice was the outcome of the Hellenization process. The Pentateuch had proved to be no longer adequate to meet the challenges of a polisified society.

The Pharisees saved the Pentateuch by carrying through a daring revolution. They expanded the functions of the One God of the Pentateuch and made him truly universal and cosmic. They introduced new legislation to deal with urban concerns by proclaiming the existence "of a two-fold law. But above all, they became aware of the individual, and they sought to mitigate his loneliness, elevate his sense of worth, and give him cosmic status. They offered him a cosmic Father God, an internalized system of laws, and a promise that he need never be alone.

A Judaism thus emerged out of the crisis of polisification that proved to be of inestimable value in enabling Judaism to master the intricate problems that beset its subsequent history. Most of this history was played out in cities because, for a variety of reasons, Jews came to be concentrated in urban settlements. These, however, were no longer polises, nor were they cities of a single type. Rather they were of the most varied kind; Nehardea and Pumbedita in the Sassanian Empire; Baghdad of the Abassid Caliphs; Cordova, Granada and Seville of Moslem Spain; Worms, Mayence and Troyes of Christian feudal Europe; Florence, Mantua and Venice of Renaissance Italy; Amsterdam, London, and Bordeaux of the rising centers of commercial capitalism; London, New York and Los Angeles of the industrial and nuclear age. Each of these types of city necessitated some modification of Judaism, some fashioning of a new form, but these were but elaborations of the two archetypal forms: Pentateuchal and Pharisaic Judaism.

Pentateuchal Judaism introduced the principle that all historical experience, all natural phenomena, and all economic and social functions must be attributed to the workings of a single, omnipotent, cosmic God. Pharisaic Judaism elaborated this principle, by having the One omnipotent and cosmic God become the all-present and all-seeing Father, by Internalizing within the individual the standards of this cosmic Father God, and by holding out the promise of personal salvation. Firmly committed to these concepts, Judaism found no subsequent experience beyond its competence. It merely elaborated, modified, or extended these principles. It fashioned new forms for each novel set of experiences; and it reshaped and repatterned forms already fashioned to absorb the shock of structural change and the tremors of unanticipated innovations. The monotheistic principle proved to be highly efficacious in systematizing, organizing, and mastering a universe in process, and, in enabling the individual to orient himself meaningfully to the dynamics of uncertainty and to the bewilderment of change. He was tutored by Judaism to filter diversity through the concept of unity. The city, be it polis or be it megapolis, was and still is for Judaism an experience to be mastered through an elaboration of the concept of unity, and through a reiteration of the previous worth of the individual in the cosmic processes. As such, the city is but a distinctive realm of experience to be subsumed under the principle of unity, not an independent entity. Judaism never abandoned the peasant when it adopted the city, anymore than it abandoned the semi-nomad when it adopted the peasant. As a religion that has successfully interpreted the complexity of dynamic historical processes as exemplifications of the principle of unity, Judaism seems committed to the yoking of all future experience to this principle, be it in cities, in villages, in the countryside, or in outer space.

The crucial test was met by Judaism when the Pharisees brought the polis revolution under the wings of the Shekhinah, the Divine Presence, by offering the individual cosmic order, cosmic personality, and cosmic worth. The unity of the individual was yoked to the unity of the phenomenal world. All that was and all that

was yet to be was interlinked to the individual person through God's unifying omnipotence.

The adequacy of the Pharisaic solution is confirmed not only by the continued viability of contemporary Judaism, but by the phenomenal successes of the two other great monotheistic religions of the western world, Christianity and Islam, and by the collapse of polytheism in late antiquity. Like Judaism, these religions have flourished in a variety of urban societies without relinquishing the appeal to the countryside. And is not the reason the very one we have advanced to explain Judaism's sustained adequacy for mastering every kind of experience? Do not both Christianity and Islam affirm that all phenomena must somehow be attributed to a single God and that every individual is cosmically meaningful, even though his stubbornness and sinfulness may justify his obliteration? Have not both Christianity and Islam continuously fashioned new forms, and repatterned old to bring new experience under Christ's grace or Allah's sovereignty? Are we not witnessing at this very moment a mighty Church with its roots in Pharisaism, weaving the complexities and diversities of the nuclear and space age into a unity, and assuring the individual that his soul has not lost its meaning?

Judaism is an adequate religion for city dwellers because it is an adequate religion for the individual seeking meaning in the cosmos. In building an internal city regulated by the constitution of the one and only Father God, Judaism created a religion which grows and thrives on the solution of problems churned up by the novel and the unanticipated. How Judaism will respond to the specific problems of modern urbanization may not be predictable, but that they will be mastered by the unity principle is about as certain as certainty can be in our uncertain universe. The internal city seems to have set enduring foundations for an eternal religion.