



Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

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The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives

MS-4787: Abba Hillel Silver Papers, 1902-1989.

Series IV: Sermons, 1914-1963, undated.

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Judaism and Christianity Compared, 1917.

III. It was Paul who made of Christ a Church, gave ch. a theology and Paul represents a definite break with Judaism.

1. His life. b. in Tarsus, a city next in importance to Alexandria, not a Hebrew scholar, nor a pupil of Gamaliel I. a Hellenist. influenced by Greek thought.
2. never knew Jesus. Saw him in vision on way to Damascus. subject to epilepsy. ^{in his incarnation} He identified Jesus with the Greek Christ. Robbed Jesus of practically all his humanity. Jesus was the earthly form of a heavenly spirit; a spirit incarnated & sent to earth that by his death humanity may be redeemed. To Paul Jesus became literally ^{metaphysically} the Son of God - supermundane, pre-existent, participant in the works of Creation, the heavenly Adam, the mediator between God and man.

3. Influenced by Mithraism & Persian dualism. Justices taught that the world was intrinsically bad, so was the flesh. That the soul was incarcerated in the body. The soul longed for freedom from the fetters of the flesh. The soul has to be saved. But death doesn't save it. For it is met after death with evil spirits who desire to thrust it into hell. Hence the ancient myths of gods descending from heaven into hell were revived, & their victory was death. The men can gain similar victory over death by connecting themselves with this god who was called the god of salvation, by gaining part of his life. Hence the mysteries whose initiatory rites were aimed at the dying & being reborn in the god, at eating & even drinking of his body & blood. Paul borrowed his ideas of

- 1- Vicarious Atonement Original Sin. Of evil, of Satan
2. Vicarious Atonement.
- 3- Baptism. | In Jud. symbols. In Paul. sacraments.
- 4- Lord's Supper.

- 5- Opposition to Law. Because faith saves. not Law. ^{1. first as transgressing law.}

Paul gave to ethical teachings of Jesus a mythical, heathen ~~and~~ dressing and it is with these

When I was a boy when all men will be caught up in a cloud to meet the Lord in the air!

Law & Early Christianity
The first 15 Bishops of Jerusalem were circum-
cised Jews & their congregations united law &
Moses with the doctrine of Christ.

At the time of Jesus' law - Matt. 5:17-19
So were all ~~his~~ disciples who knew him
How Jews felt towards law. Intro p 30!
הנהגה הדינית -

P. was a spoke to heaven. Had to
make concessions to paganism.

But Pales. judaea gradually disappeared.
Esp. did Hadrianic war scatter them. So
that they soon became known as a
heresy - as paganism or Ebionite Pauline
leather community there!

Justin's influence Ch. Was dualistic
system. good & evil. -

Arianism in fight Trinitarianism.
Heresy in Church. Political influence
determines Ch. Theology.

Paul.

Saul, b in Tarsus a f.k. city in Cilicia
Trained in school of Gamaliel as teacher & law
Tarsus was next to Alexandria the main seat
of Jk. culture, especially of Stoic school.
P. influenced by Stoics.

In Tarsus the mystery-cults had spread.
was seat of Mithra religion which had come
from Persia, Paul borrowed idea of Chr.
baptism as a ceremony of death & resurrection
with Christ from M. initiatory service of
dying & being reborn. (p. 158 Ch. Origins)

Also Sacred Meal sanctified bread
& cups of water & wine served in M. sacrament
as symbols of the distribution of the divine
life to the Mithra-believers.

Baptism & Lord's Supper find origin
with Paul. Are not in older tradition. Are
borrowed from Mithra Rel.

Faith not
righteousness

Paul

(2)

was instrumental in bringing about death of Stephen; became zealous persecutor of early ch. Sent to Damascus for that purpose. As enroute on way there saw vision. Psy ch. Explanation Pauline Theology. Tried to destroy law but succeeded in establishing another

1. Conceived of the man Jesus as the Christ. but Jesus was the earthly form, heavenly spirit. Christ is supermundane & preworldly. Great first born. Has mediatory participation in work of Creation. Sent to earth to save by his death sinful world. Sent to earth & incarnated in man to be crucified to redeem world, to atone for him, to break the curse of the Law. "Jew-apocalypse of the spirit" P. could do it for he had not known Jesus. Had seen him only in vision. ∴ identified him with heavenly man, the Apocalypses.

Knowledge & Belief seemed inseparable

Symbols became sacrament
Jud. has symbols and ⁴¹⁰
sacrament in the Father for Myself
act possessing magic power
Muphoro Eucharist #

Creation, Centripetal for world
marriage, home, state, expecting
layman inferior to priest Jesus

Jud. High Priest was and allowed
for 9 generations Day 7 at 10. under
married



Paul

An attitude to labor and marriage
as necessary ends. Tested government,
labor, marriage ^{property} ~~the~~ achievement

1. Made Ch. break with Judaism
& enabled it to become a world religion
2. Checked ~~the~~ ^{the} bad spirit of the
early Ch. Made them think
more of the present. Made possible
the ecclesiastical existence
of early Ch. ^{the} just stages.

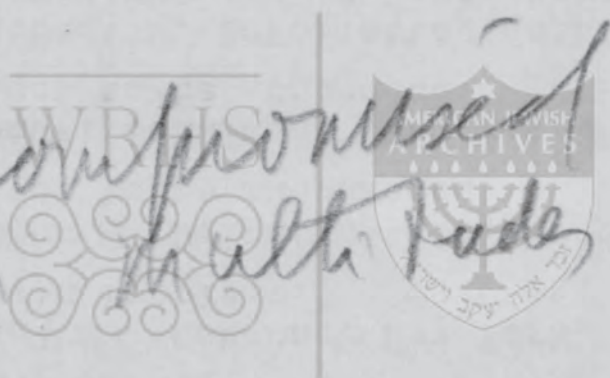
Paul's theology was almost
independent of the life and
teachings of Jesus. His were
speculations on the heavenly Christ
Spirit

Return of Christ momentarily expected
found early followers among brethren
characterized by any freedom - "speaking
with tongues" psalms, hymns, O.T. interpreta-
tion, prophecy, tumultuous uproar,
moral tone - lax life. Excessive expression
of the new spirit - Reforms freedom and
ascetic unfreedom. Christians freedom
from the Law interpreted as license
which Paul condemns.
Also interpreted as coming to
perforate disregard of all social
order - Paul urges obedience to Rome
tolerated slavery.

People became ascetic communities
overruled labor & property. Overestimated
poverty & charity (Thess I, 4, 11 seq.)

The East. Churches always partook unt.
ideas. Syria. That why Abraham. Heremph.
there.

~~The~~ ~~perception~~ of the Virgin Mary - Isis,
Ishtar # Image-worship
Thou shalt not make unto thyself any
graven images. Relic worship
and Saint worship. Pagan
idolatry

The Church compromised in it
desire to join 

Satan + Christ - blasphemy. Spand
powers.

mediators
Happy are ye Israelites. Before whom
do ye purify yourselves + who
be ye who purify you, but
my Father in Heaven. -

Quaker Movement

Quaker Movement, completely
altered Jesus to a distinctly
But Jesus insisted to retain
earthly character, Jesus. ^{to}
Compromise was effected

Idea of Trinity originated under
Quaker influence
Qu. disdain of things bodily.

Under Qu. influence the hope of German
Kingdom a earth road with moral
teaching was to delay eternal
life to be begun on earth & continue
after death.

Paul's position to law was
Quaker

for for original was perma-
nent among heathen Jews. ^{Traditional} Church kept Jesus
Attitude to O.T. was compromise bet. ^{and} Jesus

Paul

(3)

Ch. death was end of law & beginning of
new religion, Faith & Apostles give evidence
to new community

Makes death & resurrection of Jesus
symbolic of death & rebirth of followers
Influenced by heathen ideas - Adonis,
Attis, Ormis. (p. 175)

WRHS



Vicarious Atonement

Combined ethical teaching
& Jesus with mystical
doctrine of apocalypse -
(death/mithra) worship

Others - stoic.

Law - What is it?

6. Man may not be a Jew + yet admit need to
come - 2nd pt. of pt. 1, 1775 -

7. Resume

1. Ch. - emphasizes. salvation
of service.

2. Other worldly
- This world

3. Helplessness of man
Willingness of man

9. Life
death

WRHS



8. Can it supplant Judaism

A surely not its mystic element.
the offering of ancient mythology
B as to its ethics. wherein does
it differ from the present and
Judaism?

that Jud. was. Paul was all things to all men.
His passion was to purely be. He made compromises
He threw the door wide open for pagan influences. His
theology became the theology of Christendom and
we shall therefore enumerate the various principles
of his N. Ch. theology and show wherein Jud. differs
from it.

IV. 1. Jew. & Ch. Attitude to Faith. - Jew. faith in God. For Ch. such
a faith is not enough. You must believe in an alleged historical
occurrence, in the coming of a certain ^{time & place} ~~time & place~~ ^{There is something magical and mysterious about it} concerning
God etc. That faith alone has saving power. It is a faith ^{imposed from without} ~~imposed from without~~. Neither reason makes such a faith
~~necessary~~ necessary nor the promptings of the human heart. But
if faith of Jud. is not substantiated by sc. it is at least not
contradicted by it. But if science, Phil. study shows the mythological
basis of this Christ-faith ~~what~~ ^{what} it then becomes ~~credulity~~ ^{credulity}
and an ~~irrational~~ ^{irrational} ~~belief~~ ^{belief} ~~it is~~ ^{it is} ~~paramount to~~ ^{paramount to} ~~a~~ ^a ~~reason~~ ^{reason}. Hence credo quia absurdum. Faith does
not save. but ~~righteousness~~ ^{righteousness}.

2. Monotheism & Trinity. ~~We have shown source of Trinitarian~~
~~except A. Source of Trinity.~~ Trinitarian: Bad, Tshar, Tarnuz,
Marduk, Ashtar, & Tarnuz. Zeus, Kemur & Adonis.
Mythological origin.

B. Idealism. Chr. based on Idealism. Else
no need of Christ. But Judaism says
~~God will do it~~ ^{God will do it}. ~~God will do it~~ ^{God will do it}.
This leads to ^{Aseticism} ~~Aseticism~~ - High priests labor ~~tholness~~ ^{tholness} of life.

3. Original Sin and Fall of Man. Adam & Eve
will. Evolution.

4. Salvation by Righteousness - No mediation. Man can
speak to God.

5. Messiah. Never a god - Messianic Time.