



Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

Featuring collections from the Western Reserve Historical Society and
The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives

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

Series V: Writings, 1909-1963, undated.

Reel
182

Box
68

Folder
733

Problems of Jewish history, 1947.

1. Many problems - 4000 - solutions - adjustments -
- capacity for survival proved by -
- a frequently changing environment - global -
- a hard, inner core - ego - genius - adjustments

2. Diff. races have diff. endowments, talents -
- Greeks produced great artists, philosophers -
- No Greek ever died for his religion -
Roman - English - Jews - sp. sensitivities -
- a overwhelming interest in the government of
the Universe - God - Man's relation - Human
destiny - Theology - Ethics - "Our God"

3. Our God - 3121 - Canaan - 14C - Nomadic -
Simple ritual - no Temples - no priesthood
Canaanites - Polytheists - elaborate - polytheistic
- 3121 - Ex 2

(a) Jews - syncretize - First problem?
Had they done so - Just another Levantine

(b) Deuteronomy - Long struggle
Elijah (very God is 31) - 9C.
Ahab, Jezebel! Phoenician princess
introduce worship of Phoen. HZ - found
State religion -
Mt. Carmel - I K. 18
17-40

(c) All succeeding prophets - idolatry
to 6C - Monotheism - firmly established
in Jews.

(d) First Problem. First Solution - Yield to God - 500

4/ Second Lecture - What Kind of Religion?

Where Emphasis - Culture or Conduct

① Is this the God to be worshipped all the many gods? - Temple - Purity - Sacrifices

② What does this one God want / man?

① Micah -

② Isaiah - (Jer 1)

↳ A new conception of Religion - 'Divinely motivated Ethics' - Justice!

5/ Third Lecture - moved by Destruction / Temple + Babyl. Exile.

① Has YHWH been defeated? No! The Babylonians have been punished - (Blame God) is God all the world +

② He is in Babyl. too - He can be worshipped there too! Need no Temple - No / escape

③ Sinner's sin - Even after Return - kept the Levites -

④ Strong Group Responsibility - People's sin will be the hope of redemption for the individual

Ezekiel 18.2-20

Jer 31.29

⑤ The individual man is entrusted with his own moral responsibility.

6/ Assimilation - danger of complete ~~to~~ Submergence
How to save Israel - his faith - Survival.

(R) Ezra^{5C}-X Drastice - (Chap. 9)
10-4.

Intermarriage - not on losses; Revs - 'Let them

(Ruth) conversion -

7/ People determined to survive - high for
172

Till this day -



① Hellenism - Hebraism - Assimilation - Antiochus -
I. Macc. 1.11-15. # 1.41-50 - of monarchy - decadence
Resistance . 2.19-29 (count 26)

a captivity? yes! Assimilation, no! to do do do
el 1/5/12 201

① Fanned Out - if I did not lead to identity

② Philosophy - Atheism - materialism

Significant to legislation - strong of monarchy
all Western religion

Master or Slave?

A People, the Bible!

2/ Pharisees - Sadducees . 2 c. B.C. + 1 c. A.D.

Pharisees - "to separate" - more strict - story -
- more loyal to Jud. - develop Halakha - develop Halakha

① How far is Halakha to be interpreted?

What alibi new laws required?

② Sadducees held only written text binding
(point to text for the direction as the
new authority) D. 17. 9-11

③ This would make Halakha obsolete - a new
direction was required

④ There was an Oral Tradition - equally
authoritative - going back to Moses -
- full & final authority - Everything in it

Reduced by humanistic interpretation
Available to all

Keep Jud. a living religion

⑤ Pharisees centered in Synagogue & School

① Developed a bl. independent Temple + Purity
Fall, Temple - destruction 12. 5th

Saved Judaism (Robles) - 31x1x

② Karant (82) (17) - rejects Rabbinic

tradition - 31x1x - lived they as Writter
21x

Avram F. David - Survived to this day!

3/ Exrb. to A.D. - 135 A.D. - Persecution - Dispersion

2 Competing Faiths - Blind Orthodox - Shitler - Haraam -
How to live in this world and survive? - John Rapp
depends on
themselves

① To ~~not~~ have as many free contacts as nations
would permit - to give & take ideas - but preserve
their faith & rel. culture at all costs.

② Jews were voluntarily segregated 800 -
Learned & spoke Arabic in Arab - Arabic
Philos - Josephus - Saadia - etc - Spanish Jewish
Latin or Spanish Portuguese - Language & Writing
Scholars met -

③ Jews translated Greek lit. from Arab. - the Latin
(Roth "p. 52")

④ But defended their faith - ⑤ Martyrdom - degradation
used not - ⑥ Therapy - Phil. works -

④ Preserved their civilization by - organization

⑤ (Lives) Scholasticism - Philanthropy - In our life
1 dignity & culture - channels -

4/ From the Middle Ages

Relatively healthier in spite

Intel. was about - how he found the 19C

Wendy Bauer → 1840s - 1900

Stuart, Deborah - leader in movement, looking



12-19-47

- I 18th Century ideals of humanism and liberalism. The Encyclopedists in France -- the Rights of Man -- the French Revolution.
- II Even before legal enfranchisement of Jews -- attitude of cultured non-Jews reversed -- Moses Mendelssohn -- Lessing and Nathan the Wise -- essays on improvement of the condition of the Jews -- famous Jewish salons -- tens of thousands of Jews converted. "A cheap ticket of admission" to European life -- Heine -- Disraeli -- Felix Mendelson.
- III Various reactions of Jews to their emancipation
 1. Complete assimilation -- Judaism old-fashioned and a bar to complete equality -- conversion -- the descendants of Mendelssohn and Berlin Jews.
 2. Adjustment rather than assimilation
 - a. Western Europe -- Reform Judaism plus anti-nationalism.
 - b. In Eastern Europe -- the Haskalah -- modernisation plus Jewish nationalism. Little revision of religion -- concentration on modern schools and secular education
- IV Disillusionment with emancipation -- growth of anti-Semitism in Germany -- Bismarck -- reaction and pogroms in Russia after the ascension of Alexander II in 1881 -- beginning great migrations of Jews westward.
- V Rise of Zionism
 1. Moses Hess - 1862
 2. Dr. Pinsker - 1882 -- founding of first Jewish settlements in Palestine -- 1882.
- VI Organization of Political Zionism by Dr. Theodore Herzl following the Dreyfus Affair in France -- the Jewish State -- the first Zionist Congress 1897 -- the Balfour Declaration, November 2, 1917.
- VII Opposition to Zionism.