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# Biblical, Rabbinic, and Early Christian Ethics

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## BIBLICAL, RABBINIC, AND EARLY CHRISTIAN ETHICS

Asher Finkel

*What are the core principles of biblical ethics? How did the Pharisees, the Essenes, Jesus and the gospel writers, and Rabbinic Judaism interpret biblical ethics? What are the continuities and discontinuities between early Christian and Rabbinic ethics? These are the fundamental questions dealt with by Asher Finkel.*

### 1. "*Imago Dei*" and the Polarity of Good and Evil

The ethical system of biblically oriented tradition, which gave rise to the Rabbinic and early Christian teachings, was grounded in a particular view of human nature and of the divine will. Ethical perfection was exemplified by the "Way of God." Such a life will result in the ideal state of human existence. Thus the eschatological reality of the biblical tradition, which describes the end-time, also presents a long history of inner and outer conflict of good and evil which will finally come to an end. Accordingly, human life before the end-time is to be transformed by the ethical imperative to love. This determines the "Way of God" and the very aim of his revelation is to lead humanity to *shalom*, wholesome peacefulness.

The Jewish Bible opens with two significant archetypal stories of creation that focus on human existence. In contradistinction to ancient theogonies or creation myths that ascribe a personalistic view to nature, full of wills, feelings and thoughts, the Torah offers a revolutionary religious orientation. There is only one transcendental God who creates all, both nature and human beings. The latter, however, enjoy a particular relationship to the creator,<sup>1</sup> in that both genders are endowed with the divine image. "*Imago Dei*" defines the special characteristics of humanity. Beyond its physical existence, it possesses a spirit, a mind,

and speech. These divine gifts enable the person to enjoy freedom to decide, to choose, to evaluate and to aspire, to create and to control. Thus, the human being shares a partnership with God the creator in the maintenance and mastery of nature. For this reason, the person is held responsible for his/her actions before the God of creation.

The second biblical story of creation focuses on the human predicament and destiny, in view of the person's ability to choose what is good and what is bad. In choosing, a person displays his free will and self-control in the face of human drives and value judgments. God himself chose to create the world as an act of his love and goodness. The person, who is endowed with the "image of God," can aspire, by emulating God, "to walk in the way" of love and goodness. This understanding governs the historical narrative of the Bible and it is central to the biblical view of morality. In the mythopoeic outlook of the ancient Near East, the person is subject to the whims of the gods and of demons in nature, to their clashing wills and conflicting feelings. The person is not free to choose by his/her own will. In contrast the Bible frees the person to seek for him/herself the very way of God.

The second story of creation presents the first encounter between God and humanity as an archetypal event.<sup>2</sup> It relates to God's intent to create a person (Adam) in his image. "You shall multiply and increase upon the earth" (Gen 1: 28). This is a primary obligation of humanity to perpetuate itself through mating.<sup>3</sup> The prophet Isaiah explains (45:18), "God did not create the world to be chaos but He formed it to have it populated."

The paradigmatic account of Adam and Eve illustrates the basic human act of choosing to love, "becoming one flesh." Marriage is endowed with God's presence;<sup>4</sup> for God himself brings Adam his mate. Choosing a mate is described as good in Proverbs 18:22, and even God mourns when marriage fails, according to rabbinic thought.<sup>5</sup> Yet it becomes obligatory to issue a divorce when the marital relationship lacks love. For one should not live in a situation in which the principal commandment to "love thy neighbor" is violated. To be good in a relationship is determined by altruistic love, and God's attributes of goodness<sup>6</sup> describe his compassion and love.

The relationship of love between husband and wife is the model for all human relationships. Proper human relationships require altruistic love, for God is loving and compassionate. This understanding was revealed to Moses, when he sought and was granted divine forgiveness for the heinous sin of the Golden Calf. All the Prophets of Israel understood that the covenantal relationship between God and Israel is rooted in love. Human marriage that is rooted in mutual love becomes the metaphor for the way God relates to Israel. The covenant is depicted nuptially, as in the prophetic tradition (Hos 2:18-22; Ez 16; Is 61:10-62:5) and not from a model of suzerainty,<sup>7</sup> the relationship of a feudal overlord to his dependent subjects. Early Rabbinic exegesis<sup>8</sup> accordingly interprets the Canticles as a parable of the sacred experience of Israel's love for God.

Adam in paradise has the capacity to enjoy wholesome love as he relates to God and to his mate. However, being human, his physical drives toward what is pleasurable affect his choice between good and evil. Thus, the second story of creation continues with the paradigmatic event of Adam and Eve driven from Paradise. This depicts the human predicament in the world: For enticement and desire induce human beings to choose the forbidden and the harmful. In this way, man and woman display independence from God and even estrangement (biblically "hiding") from God. Human beings remain controlled by physical drives, feelings, and will that affect their behavior and moral decisions. Biblical anthropology depicts a polarity of forces which are rabbinically described<sup>9</sup> as a constant struggle between the "*yeser hatov*" (good inclination) and the "*yeser hara*" (evil inclination).

## 2. Torah and the Ethical Decalogue

In light of the human predicament, God in his expression of love, offers the Torah to humanity as a guide to the ethical way of life. "See I place before you life and good, death and evil.... Love God and walk in His way and keep His commandments...so you may live.... Therefore, choose life!" (Dt 30:15, 16, 19). God offered the Torah to all nations but it was only accepted by Israel at Mount Sinai.<sup>10</sup> It directs human behavior through a system of "*miswoth*" (commandments), positive and negative. As a system of living, it guides all relationships, whether between person and God (the transpersonal), between persons (interpersonal), between person and non-person (subpersonal), and between person and self (intrapersonal).

The primary form of biblical legislation is presented apodictically in the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai. The first four commandments determine a transpersonal relationship.<sup>11</sup> "I am the Lord, thy God" (Ex 20:2) binds Israel to God's kingship, as it is experienced through the expression of divine love. He "took them out of Egypt, a land of bondage," a historical restoration to humanity of physical and spiritual freedom.

"Thou shalt not have other gods" (20:3), defines the human response in free will to a transpersonal reality. It requires a total rejection of the polytheistic orientation that was rooted in the personalistic view of the ancient mythology common to Egypt and Near Eastern civilizations.<sup>12</sup> One is not to ascribe divinity to any part of the universe: "not in heaven above, not in the earth below, and not in the nether world." This is the essential thrust of the biblical injunction, a complete denial of the nature worship that subjected humanity to its bondage.<sup>13</sup>

"Do not utter God's name in vain" (20:7). The world view of primitive society was rooted in imitative and contagious magic,<sup>14</sup> which in practice supported the idolatrous myths of polytheism. Magic and myth are absent from the biblical tradition,<sup>15</sup> and they are totally rejected by the prophets and in biblical



legislation. The Bible advanced a new human consciousness of reality. God transcends the cosmos which he creates and maintains. He remains eternal even after the world comes to an end.

The commandment to "Remember/Keep the Sabbath to sanctify it" (20:8) offers an effective dramatic occasion enabling the person to experience a transpersonal relationship. It deepens consciousness of God who created the human person and nature, the non-personal. For "in six days God created heaven and earth and all therein" (20:11). The transpersonal relationship is separated from the subpersonal. One cannot attribute to nature a personalistic divine reality. The person relates to the cosmos as a created, inanimate reality that depends on God. Nature itself is subject to human will and work, for the person is made in the image of God. Therefore, on the sabbath, the person frees himself from all work as related to nature<sup>16</sup> in order to enjoy a relationship with God only. Accordingly, the subpersonal relationship must conform to the experience of rest on the sabbath.

The sabbath offers the opportunity for the individual to attain peaceful wholeness through separation from the work and anxiety that come with the secular week. A subpersonal law is placed under a transpersonal law of the sabbath: "Let your animals rest." This human concern for animals gives rise to subpersonal laws in biblical legislation.<sup>17</sup> The person is to be guided by care and compassion towards the creation, which is placed under his stewardship during the secular week. On the sabbath, the way of peacefulness and love governs interpersonal relationships, when all acts of violence, forced labor, and war are forbidden. So too, one abstains on the sabbath from hunting animals or destroying nature, even the killing of an insect or plucking out of a plant.

The last six commandments (20:12-14) deal with interpersonal relationships that end with a specific law governing the intrapersonal. "Honor thy father and mother.... Thou shalt not murder, nor commit adultery, nor kidnap, nor commit perjury." These apodictic laws stand unqualified. They promulgate uncompromising principles that guide interpersonal relationships. Their adoption in human behavior engenders a social order in which parent, life, family, human freedom, and truth are inviolable values.

The final commandment governs the human impulse to covet, the very failing of Adam and Eve. "Do not desire [the reading in Dt 5:18]...anything that belongs to your neighbor." It deals with the evil inclination (*yesser hara'*), while the corresponding law<sup>18</sup> in the "Holiness" Code's Decalogue (Lv 19:18) prescribes "love thy neighbor," which guides the good inclination (*yesser hatov*). This intrapersonal principle promotes altruistic love and restrains egoistic desire. It dominates prophetic teachings and became a cornerstone of Torah legislation in rabbinic thought.<sup>19</sup>

Torah guides Israel in its covenantal relationship to God. The covenant is rooted in love, which affects both the transpersonal and the interpersonal. Its "way" aspires to realize what God intends as good and it seeks to arrest the

destructive evil inclination in human nature. Thus the prophetic vision of the desired end-purpose of human perfection in history describes a person who is free from the evil inclination. In messianic times, harmonious peace will reign among persons and non-persons, in the spirit of love and compassion. Such peace gives rise to a transformation of humanity, a return to paradisaal life.<sup>20</sup>

The prophet Ezekiel (36:26) of the Exilic period promises a new spirit will be given to a humanity that will be free of a stony heart, i.e. the evil inclination. At that time the Torah legislation will become unnecessary, when human nature is motivated only by love and doing good.<sup>21</sup> Thus a messianic ideal emerges that is rooted in a dual commandment of love, love of God and love of fellow humans.

### 3. Beyond the Measure of the Law and "*Imitatio Dei*"

The ethical condition of humanity after the expulsion from paradise is determined by the conflict of the two inclinations, historical circumstances, and the individual's freedom to choose. The first situation gives rise to values that are good or bad, relative to human pleasure and pain. The second offers the opportunity to translate values into action, and the third entails human accountability to God. In facing the three predicaments, the person can voluntarily invite the awe of God into his life, i.e. to be first moved by inner creature-feelings<sup>22</sup> in the face of the Wholly Other. For "All the Lord seeks from you is only to attain the awe of God" (Dt 10:12). In the Rabbinic view<sup>23</sup> this attainment is the true expression of human freedom; it becomes crucial to transformational choices. The awe of God impels the person to fulfill the divine commandments, which ultimately results in the pursuit of the good and in abstention from evil.

The experience of awe produces a new consciousness. Proverbs 1:7 (cf. Ps 111:10) defines it this way: "the beginning of [experiential] wisdom is the awe of God." Thus the aim of the Torah is to cultivate the numinous feeling for the Wholly Other, rejecting thereby the worship of nature and of self. Israel was delivered from idolatry by this new consciousness, which came precisely at their redemption following the Exodus. "The people were awed by God and they believed in the Lord and Moses His servant" (Ex 14:31).

Imbued with the awe of God, the individual accepts a higher authority that ushers him/her into God's kingdom. The person lives consciously in God's presence, which moves him/her towards a higher spiritual experience, the love of God.<sup>24</sup> The individual is led to the way of righteousness and loving kindness, emulating God's way with the divine creation. This is how the Psalmist describes God's way: "The Lord is good to all and His love is bestowed on all His creatures.... For God is righteous (*saddiq*) in all his ways and is loving-kind (*hasid*) to all his creatures" (Ps 145:9, 17). Thus a person who attains to a life emulating God is called righteous (*saddiq*) and loving-kind (*hasid*). The way of

the *hasid* goes beyond the measure of what is good and what is bad, the normative way of the Torah.<sup>25</sup>

Two determinants affect the human response to God's presence, the experience of awe and the experience of love. The first liberates the person from idol worship, either that of nature, of a human creation, or of the human being. The second elevates the person to enjoy spiritual intimacy with God's presence. Thus Rabbi Pinchas ben Yair, a "*hasid*" of the tannaitic (the Tannaim were the rabbis whose views appear in the Mishnah) second century states:

Torah life brings about cautious living; cautious living brings about affective application; applicative affection brings about to be cleansed [from evil]; to be cleansed brings to set-apartness [the Pharisaic life]; set-apartness brings to purity and purity brings to holiness, which leads to *hasid* life that brings about the Holy Spirit.<sup>26</sup>

This journey follows along a road to holiness: "to be holy (*qadosh*) as I am holy" (Lv 19:2). On the one hand, *qadosh* signifies "set-apartness" (the Pharisaic life). In the Torah, it refers to separation from the ways of all nations who are idolatrous, specifying "from the ways of Egypt and Canaan" (Lv 18:2), from their ethics and religious life. In the days of the Pharisees and the Tannaim, the first two centuries C.E., it meant to separate from the ways of Greece and Rome. Their Torah way was antithetical to those who denied a transcendental reality and an ethics of compassion. On the other hand, *qadosh* means to elevate oneself in a spiritual way beyond the measure of the Torah's norms and, by intimacy with God, to emulate his way of love and compassion.

What Rabbi Pinchas teaches is that there are two successive paths to holiness: the first is the way of the Torah, the second goes beyond its bounds. The way of the Torah promotes, on the one hand, cautious living, heeding the negative commandments and, on the other hand, diligent application of the positive commandments. Thus a person is cleansed from wrong doing. This leads to the Pharisaic form of life, which adopts an even stricter discipline of Levitical purity and sanctity. Since the commandments-system of the Torah is tailored to different persons,<sup>27</sup> the male and the female, the Israelite and the priest, the full proselyte and the semi-proselyte, all embrace a biblically-oriented consciousness of God, although each pursues a different regimen. The Pharisees accepted the highest discipline of the Torah: to become a "kingdom of priests and a holy people" (Ex 19:6). They intended this approach for the entire nation, to democratize the priestly practice, and to adopt for themselves a discipline of purity and sanctity.<sup>28</sup>

However, the way beyond the measures, beyond the Torah-prescribed purity and sanctity, is the way of the *hasid* (of loving kindness). This way leads to a life endowed with the Holy Spirit. Such a way was pursued, for example,

by the Essenes who, however, radicalized it. The Essenes<sup>29</sup> (whose name designates *hasidim*) physically removed themselves from the people. They sought a life of purity and sanctity in the desert. They lived in camps facing a holy enclosure surrounded by pools of water for purification. They wished to live life in God's presence as in the days of Moses. They claimed that they enjoyed a holy spirit and the fellowship of angels. Their way of *hesed* remained exclusive, to be shared only with initiates in secret. They are the "children of light," who separated themselves from the "children of darkness." Their way gave rise to a strict monastic discipline,<sup>30</sup> governed by the ethics of communal sharing, Levitical purity, and abstinence. They awaited a final confrontation with the forces of evil.<sup>31</sup>

In contrast to the radical way of the Essenes, the Pharisees remained with the people. They became their preachers and teachers. They promoted the way of the Torah for Jews and non-Jews. However, the way beyond the measure of the Torah they reserved for themselves in private circles. This gave rise to closed associations, setting them apart from the rest of the population in the preparation of meals and in their adherence to the purity laws in a priestly manner. Thus the Pharisees were both inclusive and exclusive, eager to teach the way of Torah to others but also to remain separate from non-strict observers. Their way of behavior was perceived as contradictory by the people, who accused them of hypocrisy and division.<sup>32</sup> Yet within Pharisaism, the way of *the hasid*, or *hesed*, emerged with a special focus on emulation of God's way in human relationships.

God's way is revealed through his acts in human history. These acts serve as a paradigm for human conduct. The Torah opens with God bringing a mate to Adam in marriage and closes with God burying Moses. It also portrays God visiting the sick, namely Abraham after his circumcision, as well as comforting mourners, namely Jacob after the death of his mother and her nurse. He brings comfort to the prisoner, Joseph, and he releases an entire nation from bondage. He restores peace between man and wife, namely Abraham and Sarah. He provides food and clothing to the needy in the desert. He demonstrates a way of forgiveness of sinners, after Israel built the Golden Calf.

These are acts of loving kindness, which are rabbinically defined as "beyond the measure of Torah Law." These acts are not specifically prescribed but are simply described through epiphanic events that demonstrate God's love and compassion. They are not part of the *halakhah* (the norms) rather of the *haggadah* (the narrative). The early interpreters of these revelatory acts ("*dorshe reshumoth*," Midrash Tannaim Dt 11:22) say: "If you seek to know the One Who Spoke and the World came into Being, study the narrative. From such a reflection you will come to know the One Who Spoke and the World came into Being, and you will emulate His ways."

An early account of Rabbinic preaching in the synagogue is preserved in the Aramaic Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan to Dt 34:6 and Yerushalmi, codex Neo-



fiti, to Gn 35:9). It is preserved with its doxological opening and poetic structure of repeated forms:

Blessed is the name of the Master of the World. May His name be blessed for ever and ever. For he taught us His proper way. He taught us to clothe the naked, from (the way) he clothed Adam and Eve (Gn 3:21). He taught us to bring a groom and bride into marriage, from (the way) he brought Eve to Adam in marriage (2:22). He taught us to visit the sick, from (the way) he appeared to Abraham, in a vision of His word, when he was ill from circumcision (18:1). He taught us to comfort the mourner, from (the way) he appeared to Jacob again when he arrived from Padan Aram at the place where his mother died (35:9). He taught us to feed the poor, from (the way) he brought down heavenly bread to the children of Israel (Ex 16:4). He taught us to bury the dead, from (the way) he appeared to Moses with His Word in the company of angels (Dt 34:6).

This early understanding of the biblical narrative is echoed in the prophetic teaching of Deutero-Isaiah (58:6-7) on corporal acts of loving kindness. "Then will your light burst out like the dawn and your righteousness will go forward and God's presence will embrace you." For these corporal acts translate the way of God's love to humanity, and their performance seeks to imitate him. In the tannaitic tradition,<sup>33</sup> "to walk in God's ways" (Dt 11:22) is to imitate his divine attribute of love (Ex 34:6). It teaches humanity spiritual aesthetics. "This is the Lord, whom I beautify" (15:2), explains Abba Saul:<sup>34</sup> "Imitate Him; as he is merciful and compassionate so you shall be merciful and compassionate."

#### 4. "*Gemiluth Hesed*" and the Love Imperative

To live by God's love and to emulate his way of loving others guides and determines the way of *hasid*, which Pharisaic Judaism elevated, thus transcending the discipline of commandments (*miswoth*). The acts of loving kindness are called "*gemiluth hesed*," and they relate to the interpersonal realm. They represent non-reciprocal acts of altruistic love, involving the whole person in the act of giving.<sup>35</sup> Their pursuit transforms the person who, in his emulation of God's way, is embraced by God's love and spirit.

Simeon the Righteous of the early Hasmonean period (second century B.C.E.) taught that a biblically oriented society is based on three principles. These are Torah (system of *miswoth*), priestly and liturgical service (*'avodah*), and acts of loving kindness (*gemiluth hesed*) (Mishnah Aboth 1:2). These three principles governed the Pharisaic system during the last two centuries before the



Romans' destruction of the Second Temple in 70 C.E.<sup>36</sup> After the destruction, the Temple service was eliminated and the emphasis was shifted to prayer service. Acts of loving kindness were placed on a par with the study of the Torah. Following the destruction, which was viewed as resulting from enmity and conflict between Jewish parties, the way of *hesed* was especially stressed. Moreover, the side of Pharisaic teaching inspired by Hillel became paramount in the determination of *halakhah*, thus confirming the way of humility and love. The shift after the Temple's destruction does not, however, constitute a revolution in the ethical teaching of the Tannaim. For the stress on the life of prayer had long been known as the way of earlier *hasidim*,<sup>37</sup> and the shift to "*gemiluth hesed*" was guided by the Hillelite teaching. Thus what occurred in Judaism after 70 did not emerge as a radical departure from a particular stream of Pharisaism, which was then in the minority. At Yavneh, Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai's celebrated academy was now guided by the spirit of Hillelite Pharisaism and the way of the *hasidim*.<sup>38</sup>

The scribe in Mark 12:32-33, in a work published before 70, preserved the pre-destruction understanding of Hillelite Pharisaism. The scribe comments on Jesus' teaching of the dual commandment to love. "Loving thy neighbor as thyself is greater than all the sacrifices," which echoes the prophetic teaching of Hosea 6:6, that God desires love (*hesed*) rather than sacrifice. This is also the approach Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai took after the Temple's destruction. It is not, however, a revolutionary approach that breaks with the Pharisaic tradition of the past.<sup>39</sup> A Jewish-Christian scribe of the Matthean school after 70 was guided by the same text of Hosea in explaining the ethical approach of Jesus that parallels Hillel (Mt 9:13, 12:5). For before 70, Jesus was supported only by the minority opinion of his older contemporary Hillel, who taught that the principle "love thy neighbor" governs the Torah way.

Hillel taught<sup>40</sup> that the love imperative determines the commandments-system of the Torah. He added that "the rest of the Torah [i.e. the narrative] offers but a commentary" and explained the measure of altruistic love by the biblical criterion, "as thyself." "Whatever is detestable to you, do not do unto your fellow person." When a person lives by the commandments of the Torah, he attains a way to know what is detestable to his being. He will use this measure to show his love to the other. For the way of Torah arrests the evil inclination (*yesser hara'*) and activates the good inclination (*yesser hatov*).

Hillel also taught (Aboth 1:12), "love peace and pursue peace, love all [human] creatures and you bring them closer to the Torah." To love peace (*shalom*) is to adhere to the way of Torah, which leads to *shalom* (Prv 3:17). Thus, the ways of peace (*darke shalom*) guide the Hillelite legislation.<sup>41</sup> *Shalom* is the goal, for it designates God's name.<sup>42</sup> Loving peace emulates God's way, and in pursuing peace it is motivated by the love imperative towards all persons.

The love imperative is also related in the "Scroll of Hasidim,"<sup>43</sup> an early first-century Rabbinic collection on the way of *hesed* or the *hasid*. "If you seek

to attain an altruistic love in a relationship, seek and present the good side of the person." Love is generated in the pursuit of a wholesome relationship, one that is anchored in goodness, and this is the way to *shalom*.<sup>44</sup> What will guide humanity to *shalom*, Hillel taught, is the universal realization of God's kingship. This can be achieved through proselytization. To acquaint people with God's love they have to be led to the way of the Torah. The Rabbis interpreted<sup>45</sup> the transpersonal commandment of "*ve'ahavta*" (you shall love God) as also to be understood as "*ve'ehavta*" (cause God to be loved). For there are two vocalized meanings to the consonantal teaching of God's intent. (The Hebrew text writes only *V'HVT* with no vowels.) Similarly the Hebrew text of Leviticus 19:18 is unvocalized. It appears "*V'HVT LR'KH KMKH*," to be read Masoretically as "*ve'ahavta lere'akha kamokha*" (Love thy neighbor as thyself).

Jesus taught<sup>46</sup> that the principle of altruistic love governs the life of the biblically oriented people. He expanded the meaning of "thy neighbor" to include "thy enemy," by reading "*lero'akha*" instead of "*lere'akha*." He vocalized the consonantal text of God's intent in the scriptures differently from the early Rabbinic public reading. He argued that this was God's intent in the commandment. For "the heavenly Father causes the sun to shine on the good and bad, and He brings rain on the righteous and the wicked" (Mt 5:45). The "*imitatio Dei*" governs the love imperative which leads to wholesomeness (*shalom*). He concluded, therefore, "to be wholesome/perfect (*teleos*) as your heavenly Father is *shalem*/perfect" (5:48). This conclusion is preserved in Matthew only, but in Luke (6:36) the conclusion is based on emulating God by loving kindness (*oiktirmon* in view of Lk 10:37 doing *eleos*). For God's love leads to the way of the righteous (the Hebrew *saddiq*; Greek *o dikaios*). Jesus taught that by these two love commandments one attains eternal life (10:25-28). Matthew, however, considers the authentic experience of seeking God's love in prayer to be reflected in the way one relates interpersonally with love. "Pray for your enemy" illustrates the way "you show love to your enemies" (5:44). This affective association between the transpersonal and the interpersonal, in the manifestation of love, defines the intent of Jesus. Thus Matthew (6:14-15) juxtaposes the lesson of "forgiving one another and the heavenly Father will forgive you" with the prayer, "Our Father," in the Sermon on the Mount. Matthew further develops the teachings of Jesus, in contrast to those of the Pharisaic Shammaites, as a way beyond the measure of the law. He calls it the way of righteousness (3:15), by which wholesomeness is achieved (5:48) through emulating God. Furthermore, the same affective association that exists between the transpersonal and the interpersonal in the love commandment, should also affect the intrapersonal. Pure good intention must govern action, achieving "wholesomeness" in human conduct (15:19). For this reason hypocrisy is condemned, particularly in Matthew.

Luke focuses on another aspect of Jesus' teaching of love. For only the Gospel of Luke illustrates the particular reading of "enemy" in lieu of "neighbor" by Jesus. He offers the parable of the Good Samaritan to illustrate "Who is

my neighbor?" (10:29-37). For the Jewish classification of neighbors in the days of Jesus consisted of the priest (*kohen*), Levite, Israelite and proselyte (*ger*). The last group includes two types, (1) a full proselyte, who actually was viewed as part of the Israelite category and (2) a semi-proselyte or "Fearer of God" who remained at the periphery. He enjoys biblical rights and recognition but he is not a part of covenantal Israel. Thus an uncircumcised Gentile can become a "Fearer of God" and in rabbinic view he is a Noahide. Noahides are biblically oriented people who, in the awe of God, accept the seven basic criteria (often cited as the Seven Commandments) of the covenant of Noah, but are not obligated to live by the law of Moses.

In Jesus' days "neighbors" also included Samaritans, who accepted the Mosaic law but neither the rest of the scriptures nor the oral tradition (or oral Torah), as these had developed from the days of Ezra. The Samaritans, who worshipped in Shekhem, remained on the periphery. They were also perceived in the last centuries B.C.E. as historical antagonists of Israel.<sup>47</sup> The "enemy" of Jesus' parable is the Samaritan. He also acts by the love commandment that is stipulated in the Mosaic law. Jesus skipped over the Israelite in the parable, as he was addressing an Israelite scribe. He knew that an Israelite is also bound by the rule of "love thy neighbor" to help a victim on the road. As an Israelite, he is not bound by the strict code of the priests and Levites in "moving to the other side" as he faces a seemingly dead body. For a corpse causes Levitical pollution. Thus Jesus widens the meaning of "neighbor" to include the "enemy," namely the Samaritan, in the performance of acts of love (*eleos*). Since this category of neighbor includes the semi-proselytes, whether the Samaritan or the "Fearer of God," it is the principle that eventually guided the apostolic mission to the Gentiles in the early church. Luke reports in Acts (1:8; 6:5; 10:2) that the apostles first directed their attention to the proselytes, Samaritans, and the fearers of God. In the early church the issue was raised whether to accept the uncircumcised in the way of Jesus (15:20-29, cf. Gal 2:12-16). For the way of Jesus was the way of table fellowship; to accept the uncircumcised at the eucharist was permitted, in the view of the church, as long as they had renounced paganism. They were invited to share in the holy (Didache 9:5 on Mt 7:6).

In the Lukan view, Jesus stressed the way of love (*eleos*) and therefore he details how such acts are performed by the Samaritan. Not only does the Samaritan bind the wounds but also nurses and provides for the rehabilitation of the person. To show love is measured by "thyself": "Whatever you want others to do to you." To show love with dignity and worth to the other is the expression of "*eleos*," the highest degree of righteousness. A millennium later Maimonides,<sup>48</sup> in relating his view of Rabbinic righteousness, describes ten degrees of charity, a sequence that culminates with the rehabilitation of the poor person to economic independence. This is clearly a line of development that adheres to the Hillelite tradition of the Rabbis and reflects the way of *hesed* that transforms the person gradually.

Matthew's view of Jesus' way of righteousness centers on the emulation of God (*imitatio Dei*). Accordingly, he alone describes acts of corporal love in the parable of the "Son of Man at the Last Judgment" (25:31-46). "I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, and I was in prison and you came to me." This teaching, at the end of the Matthean apocalypse, lays bare the transformational ethics of the realized eschatology which brings the person into God's Kingdom. In Matthew it is "a kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." For the end-time corresponds to the paradisaal beginning. Matthew perceives that Jesus' ethical teachings address human life in the end-time, to be realized now by his followers. Matthew alone defines "seek first His Kingdom" in the teachings of Jesus (6:33) by the way you seek "His righteousness."

John's Gospel understands Jesus' teaching of the love commandment in the light of Jesus' own ministry, which guides the way of Christians. Thus the ultimate measure of ethics is "*imitatio Christi*." John's Gospel expatiates: "to love one another as Jesus loved them; there is no greater love than to give oneself for one's friends" (15:12-13). Jesus' act of love was directed only towards the other, as John in the beginning of the Gospel maintains: "He is the lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world" (1:29). Thus the example of Jesus governs Christian ethics.

These three views in the gospels of Jesus' teaching of the dual commandment of love reflect the early Christian understanding of ethics. Their inclusion of particular actions or teachings of Jesus indicates his way. The love imperative sets forth a way beyond the measure of the commandments. Therefore, it requires one "to turn the other cheek" (Mt 5:39; Lk 6:29). This agapic (altruistic love) expression even comes to characterize the marital relationship as a divine gift. Christian marriage can not be severed by the human writ of divorce and, if one takes another wife, he commits adultery (Mt 5:32, 19:9; Mk 10:11-12; Lk 6:18). God's intent, at the beginning of creation, was for the marital union to be "one flesh." This points again to the realized eschatology that defined the Christian relationship between husband and wife as following from God's bringing Eve to Adam. Finally, Jesus' own ministry had focused on "table fellowship." It is illustrated in different anecdotes and by Jesus' reference to the contrast between the way of John the Baptist and his own way (Mt 11:18-19; Lk 7:33-34). The purpose of conducting a "table fellowship" was to invite people to repentance and to seek God's love. This is depicted metaphorically by Jesus as a wedding feast. "As long as the Bridegroom is with them, they shall not fast" (Mk 2:19 parallels). This response, too, contrasts Jesus' way with the ascetic way of John, which also calls to repentance. John spoke of the wrath and the awe of God. Jesus's teaching of love also reflects his self-understanding as a "groom." Metaphorically he expresses covenantal love to his bride, the community (see Is 61:10). Jesus' table fellowship was depicted in the early church as an agapic meal



representing a messianic banquet. The groom signifies the messiah<sup>49</sup> and the wedding feast is the agapic event. This way of Jesus impacts on the practice of the early church in the celebration of the eucharist that is central to its worship. Through the eucharist, the worshippers are guided by the Christian ethics of emulating Jesus, and through partaking, "in remembrance of him," the Christian participants are evoked to his presence. For "remembrance" connotes affective experience, to be moved by his example.

## 5. Conclusion: Historical Development of Both Traditions

Rabbinic Judaism after 70 C.E. incorporated as normative the way of loving kindness (*hesed*) in its ethical teachings, in conformity with the Hillelite position of the Pharisaic schools. Prior to the destruction of the Temple in 70, the Pharisaic school of Shammai was paramount and its pursuit of a strict discipline prevailed. Elsewhere I have demonstrated that Jesus' teachings against the Pharisees were antithetical to the Shammaite practice,<sup>50</sup> one strand only of Pharisaism. The Shammaites adopted a priestly way of holiness and purity that was beyond the measure of the law for the Israelite, the average Jew. For they sought ethical transformation in the transpersonal realm of ritual observance. Their members belonged to a religious association (*havurah*), which was governed by this strict rule of separation.

In contrast the Hillelites stressed the way of *hesed*, the affective application of the love imperative in the interpersonal realm. They advocated transformational ethics that went beyond the measure of the law in human relations. Hillel himself is said to have practiced this way of loving kindness (*hesed*) interpersonally and intrapersonally. "They say about Hillel the elder<sup>51</sup> that he acquired a horse to ride on and a servant to escort a poor person of a well-to-do family. Once he did not find a servant to escort [the poor person] and he ran before him for three miles." His way demonstrates how he practiced charity, "extending to the poor any need that he may lack" (Dt 15:8). "To love thy neighbor as thyself" requires to show love to the neighbor to the extent of the need to which he was accustomed, not merely what the norm of charity requires. For the poor only receive a given amount, as fixed by the law of charity.

Similarly, Hillel applied the principle of *hesed* intrapersonally. Biblical Wisdom teaching stipulates that "one who shows kindness to himself is a man of *hesed*" (Prv 11:17). The story is told of Hillel<sup>52</sup> that he performed a good deed, "*miswah*," by washing himself in the bathhouse. For he taught, "I who was created in the image of God, surely must take great care of the [physical] icon," i.e. the human body. Inner purity parallels cleanliness in the manifestation of *hesed*, as it was later to be presented by Rabbi Pinchas ben Yair. Hillel's practice of *hesed*, interpersonally and intrapersonally, is grounded in humility (*'aniwuth*). This is to be realized by the transformational ethics of *hesed*.<sup>53</sup>



Prior to the Temple's destruction, the contrast was so extreme between the Hillelite way and that of the Shammaites, that Hillel and his followers were persecuted. The third-century Amora, Rabbi Yochanan of Tiberias, presents an early Rabbinic view of the history of these matters. He relates<sup>54</sup> that the unethical behavior of the Pharisaic teachers before 70, in their display of insensitivity to human abuse in the affair of Kamsa and Bar Kamsa, contributed to the destruction. Their behavior paralleled the way of a Zealotic Pharisee, the priest Zecharia of the Shammaites,<sup>55</sup> who insisted on strict observance of the priestly code of sacrifices. Rabbi Yochanan lamented that the Temple's destruction resulted from fraternal enmity and strict judgment. He observed<sup>56</sup> that Jerusalem was destroyed because the teachers judged by the way of Torah and that they did not act "beyond the measure of the law."

*Mishnah Pe'ah* 1:1 presents the halakhic categories that are beyond the measure of the law as those by which one achieves transformation in order to attain eternal reward. These include the *gemiluth hesed* and the pursuit of *shalom* interpersonally. For this way dominates the legal and ethical tradition of the Mishnah that was edited, c. 200 C.E., by Rabbi Judah, the Hillelitic Patriarch. The great thirteenth-century commentator on the Torah, Nahmanides,<sup>57</sup> finds this way to be grounded in the principle of *imitatio Dei*. The Hillelite approach appears to suggest this understanding.

"Ye shall be holy as I am holy" (Lv 19:1) means that we are to adopt a way beyond the limits of the Torah law. Holiness means moral elevation through emulation of God, who is the Holy One. Otherwise, writes Nahmanides, a person can live like a "scoundrel with Torah license." For such a one's personality was not transformed by the ethics of obligation. A person must strive to set himself apart (Hebrew: to sanctify) by transformational ethics. What is beyond the measure of the law constitutes *imitatio Dei*, the emulation of a god who is holy. This distinction between the ethics of obligation and the ethics of transformation determines the way of *hesed*, that is to say, beyond the measure of the law. Indeed, to follow "the way of the upright" (Prv 2:20) became the norm in amoraic times<sup>58</sup> and it guided the practice of the rabbis over the centuries. Thus, in the medieval period, the Tosaphist Rabbi Isaac of Corbeil in his compilation of the *Miswoth*, includes the "way beyond the measure of the law" within the system of Torah norms. The way of transformational ethics became the key principle.<sup>59</sup>

Both Rabbinic Judaism after 70 and early Christianity espoused the way of *hesed* but from two different historical perspectives. Judaism recognized that the community is living in an unredeemed world and in a period devoid of God's presence in the Temple. This historical awareness necessitated the espousal of the transformational ethics of *hesed*. For it was the failure of the Jewish people to pursue this course prior to the destruction of the Temple that wrought immense interpersonal conflict. Only diligent pursuit of the way of *hesed*, alongside a total commitment to Torah study and the performance of its *miswoth*, can

lead to future redemption. At the end-time, Israel itself will be restored to dignity and worth among all nations, when the evil inclination will have been removed from the heart of humanity. Universally, at the end-time, people will love only by a transformed God-awareness which will inaugurate the cessation of human conflict, violence, and war.

Early Christianity espoused the way of *hesed* through *imitatio Christi* and a total commitment to him as the soteric source of their transformation. Paul explains (Col 2; Gal 3; Rom 4) that transformation through faith and *hesed* makes the way of Torah through *miswoth* unnecessary. For one experiences life in Jesus as the Christ (messiah) and *hesed* through elimination of the sinful drive to do evil. This understanding of the ethical way of Jesus was rooted in a realized eschatology. In the view of Maimonides,<sup>60</sup> the Christian way has promoted a biblical awareness that possesses an eschatological significance for humanity. For both traditions have pursued the way of *hesed* and have recognized that the transformational ethics will result in redemption for all humanity.

Differences between the Rabbinic and early Christian ethics can be located in the redemptive awareness of realized eschatology in the life of the believer. The historical events of Israel at birth (Passover and Sinai) and those of Jesus at death (the Crucifixion and Resurrection) sharpened their respective foci on how to follow the "way of God." For God's way was, after all, revealed in redemptive events of history that prefigure the final redemption. This is crucial to biblically oriented peoples who seek closeness to God in their life. Their emulation of God's way determines the ideal good. The rabbis placed their emphasis on the imitation of God, who delivered the Jewish people from bondage. The Torah commandments are rooted in the Exodus experience, recalling God's demonstration of love for the persecuted and needy people as the standard for loving-kindness emulation. The early Christians preserved their ethical teachings in the "Doctrine of the Two Ways" (*Didache* 1:1). This prefaces their presentation of the ecclesiastic life of worship, which was to mark their life between the first and last coming of Jesus. For their eucharistic service ended with a dual cry of "*Maran atha*" (the Lord came) or "*Marana tha*" (Our Lord come), the two possible vocalizations of "*MRN'TH*" (*Didache* 10:6). Jesus' example offered the standard, since worship guides ethics.

In no way should one locate the differences between Rabbinic Judaism and early Christianity in the literal or blind obedience to the biblical commandments, as supposedly advocated by the Pharisees. For Rabbinic Judaism itself emerged out of the Hillelite understanding of God's way, a particular strand of Pharisaism in the days of Jesus. Hillel's way determined the Rabbinic ethical standard of emulating God in the pursuit of loving kindness, leading to harmonious, wholesome living in all areas of human relationships. Rabbinic Judaism and Christianity alike are religions rooted in the dual commandment of love.

## Endnotes

1. *Babylonian Talmud, Sabbath* 119b.
2. On archetypal stories, see H. Gunkel, *Legends of Genesis* (New York: Schocken Books, 1966). On their significance see, A.J. Heschel, *God in Search of Man* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1955), ch. 3.
3. See G. Appel, *A Philosophy of Mizvot* (New York: Ktav, 1975), 110, and refer to *Mishnah Yebamoth* 6, 6.
4. *Genesis Rabba*, 22 and *Babylonian Talmud Sotah* 17a.
5. *Babylonian Talmud Gittin* 90b. On the significance of marriage in the classical rabbinic tradition, see the opening statement of Yaakov ben Asher, *Tur, Even Haezer*.
6. Refer to Exodus 34:6, 7, and the discussion in G.F. Moore, *Judaism*, vol. 2, pt. 5 (1927; reprint, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950). See E.E. Urbach, *Hazal* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1969), ch. 15,4.
7. G.E. Mendenhal, *Law and Covenant in Israel and the Ancient Near East* (New York, 1955); see also his article, "Covenant" in *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1962). He presents the suzerain model. However, see A. Neher, *Prophetic Existence* (London: Thomas Yoseloff, 1969), pt. 3, ch. 2: he demonstrates the matrimonial model from the prophetic writings.
8. See M.H. Pope's commentary to the *Song of Songs*, Introduction, Anchor Bible (Garden City, NY: Doubleday 1982).
9. See S. Schechter, *Aspects of Rabbinic Theology* (New York: Schocken Books, 1961), ch. 15; Urbach (n. 6), ch. 15,6.
10. *Babylonian Talmud, Aboda Zarah* 2b.
11. See *Mekhilta*, ad loc.
12. See Henri Frankfort, *Before Philosophy* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1951).
13. Contrast the account of "Enuma Elish" on the creation of the human being with the biblical account. See further Y. Kaufmann, *The Religion of Israel*, trans. M. Greenberg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960).
14. See J.G. Frazer, *Golden Bough* (1922; reprint, New York: Macmillan, 1964), Introduction.
15. See Y. Kaufmann (n. 13), chs. 2-3, and H. Frankfort (n. 12), concluding chapter; Kaufmann addresses such issues as Moses' rod turning into a serpent, Samson's hair, etc.
16. See A.J. Heschel, *The Sabbath: Its Meaning* (New York: Meridian Books, 1951).

17. See Elijah J. Schochet, *Animal Life in the Jewish Tradition* (New York: Ktav, 1984) and Andrew Linzey, *Christianity and the Rights of Animals* (New York: Crossroad, 1989).
18. See *Leviticus Rabba* 19,2.
19. See L. Jacobs, *The Book of Jewish Values* (Hartford, CT: Hartmore House, 1969), ch. 9, and S. Belkin, *In His Image* (London: Abelard-Schuman, 1960).
20. See D.S. Russell, *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1964), ch. 10.
21. Contra W.D. Davies, *Torah in the Messianic Age* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1952).
22. See Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958).
23. *Babylonian Talmud*, *Berakhot* 33b.
24. Refer to L. Jacob (n. 19), E.E. Urbach (n. 6), G.F. Moore (n. 6), and S. Schechter (n. 9) on the difference between love and awe of God.
25. See Geza Vermes, *Jesus the Jew* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1973) and his study of Hanina ben Dosa and Hasidim in *Post-Biblical Jewish Studies* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1975).
26. *Mishnah Sota* 9, 15 (appendix). Compare *Babylonian Talmud Abodah Zarah* 20b and *Palestinian Talmud Shekalim* 3, 4 (47c). See M. Luzzatto, *Mesillath Yesharim*, Introduction.
27. See the analysis of G. Appel (n. 3), on the *miswoth* system and refer to the accounts of Saadiah, *Hahinukh* and *Sepher Miswoth* on the various categories of commandments.
28. See L. Finkelstein, *The Pharisees* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1962) and A. Finkel, *The Pharisees and the Teacher of Nazareth* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1974).
29. Refer to Christian Ginsburg, *The Essenes* (London: Routledge, Kegan, Paul, 1955) and Geza Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls* (London: Penguin Books, 1977).
30. Refer to Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* in view of Josephus and Philo on the Essenes.
31. Refer to Y. Yadin, *The Scroll of the War of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962).
32. Refer to the study of E. Rivkin, "Defining the Pharisees," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 40-41 and article "Pharisees" in *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962-82), Supplementary Volume.
33. *Sifre Deuteronomy* 11:22.
34. *Mekhilta Exodus* 15:2.
35. *Palestinian Talmud Peah* 1, 1 (15b, c).
36. See A. Finkel (n. 28), 17, on Simeon's statement and its parallel in Sirach's work.



37. See *Mishnah Berakhoth* 5, 1.
38. Contra J. Neusner's views in the *Life of R. Yochanan ben Zakkai* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1970); see also his *First-Century Judaism in Crisis* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1975).
39. *From Politics to Piety* (Engelwood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1973); R. Yochanan did not implement a revolution of Pharisaic Judaism, as J. Neusner claims; see my study, "The Departures of the Essenes, Christians and R. Yochanan ben Zakkai from Jerusalem" in R. Mayer's *Festschrift "Wie gut sind Deine Zelte, Jaakow"* (Gerlingen: Bleicher, 1986), 29-40.
40. *Babylonian Talmud Sabbath* 31a. See Rashi's commentary.
41. See "Darke Shalom," *Encyclopedia Talmudith*, ed. Zevin, vol. 7 (Jerusalem, 1956) and refer to *Mishnah Gittin* 4.
42. See "Pereq Hashalom, the Treatise of Peace," trans. E. Levine, *Augustinianum* 14 (1974) and refer to Judges 6:24.
43. See S. Belkin (n. 19), last chapter; refer to *Sifra Leviticus* 19:17.
44. A. Finkel, "Sabbath as the Way to Shalom in the Biblical Tradition," *Journal of Dharma* 11 (April-June 1986).
45. See *Sifra Deuteronomy* 6:6.
46. Refer to J. Jeremias, *The Proclamation of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972).
47. See Sirach 50:26.
48. *Sepher Zera'im*, *Hilkhoth Matnot 'aniyyim*, ch. 10.
49. See R. Gordon Gruenler, *New Approaches to Jesus and the Gospels* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker House, 1982), 42.
50. Refer to my book, *The Pharisees and the Teacher of Nazareth* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1974).
51. *Tosefta Peah* 4, 10; *Palestinian Talmud Peah* 8, 7; and *Babylonian Talmud Kethuboth* 67b.
52. *Leviticus Rabba* 34, 3.
53. Refer to the teaching of the *hasid* Pinchas ben Yair, quoted above, (cited n. 26).
54. *Babylonian Talmud Gittin* 55b, 56a.
55. R. Yochanan describes his act euphemistically as an act of "meekness," i.e. an act of arrogance.
56. *Babylonian Talmud Baba Mesi'a* 30b.
57. See his commentary to Leviticus 19:2 and refer to A. Lichtenstein, "Does Jewish Tradition Recognize an Ethic Independent of Halakhah?" in *Modern Jewish Ethics*, Marvin Fox, ed., (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1975).



58. Refer to I. Epstein, *Judaism* (London: Cox & Wyman, 1959).
59. See the criticism of Eugene B. Borowitz, *Exploring Jewish Ethics* (Detroit: Wayne University Press, 1990), ch. 15, who fails to understand this point.
60. *Sepher Shofetim, Hilkhoth Melakhim*, ch. 11, uncensored text. See I. Twersky's *Introduction to the Code of Maimonides* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), 452.

### Suggestions For Further Readings

#### Rabbinic Works:

- Bahya ibn Pakuda. *Hobhath Halevavoth* (Duties of the Heart). A classic account of the ethical philosophy of the Rabbinic tradition that blends *halakhah* and *haggadah*.
- Kordevero, Moses. *Tomer Devorah* (Palm of Deborah). A study of Jewish ethics from the perspective of mysticism and the Rabbinic tradition.
- Luzzatto, Moshe H. *Mesillath Yesarim* (Path of the Upright); *Derek Hashem* (The Way of God). A manual of ethical religious discipline from the vantage point of Pinchas ben Yair's way to spiritual experience.
- Maimonides. *Hilkhoth De'oth* (Laws on Human Dispositions) of *Mishneh Torah*, *Shemonah Perakim* (Eight Chapters of Introduction to *Mishnah Avoth*). Halakhic and philosophical account of ethics by the great master of the rabbinic tradition of the Middle Ages.
- Nahmanides. *Commentary to the Torah*, Leviticus, ch. 19. Halakhic and mystical account of the ethical way by the Spanish master of rabbinic tradition of the Middle Ages.

#### Scholarly Works:

- Agus, Jacob B. *The Vision and the Way*, New York: Frederick Ungar, 1966. A systematic interpretation of Jewish ethics in their philosophical development.
- Belkin, Samuel. *In His Image*. London: Abelard-Schuman, 1960. The philosophy and practices of traditional Judaism as expressed in rabbinic law.
- Borowitz, E.B. *Exploring Jewish Ethics*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1990. Reform Judaism's critical account of ethics as the autonomous Jewish self—living in covenant.
- Finkel, Asher. *The Pharisees and the Teacher of Nazareth*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1974. A study of Pharisaic teachings of both the Hillelite and Shammaite schools, before the Roman destruction of the Temple, and the teachings of Jesus within the context of variegated Judaism at that time.
- Fox, Marvin, ed. *Modern Jewish Ethics: Theory and Practice*. Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1975. A collection of essays on practical problems of the modern Jew in the State of Israel or in the Diaspora.
- Jacobs, Louis. *The Book of Jewish Values*. Hartford, CT: Hartmore House, 1969. An account of eleven principal values in Judaism that shape Jewish thought and practice.

- Lamm, Norman. *The Good Society: Jewish Ethics in Action*. New York: Viking Press, 1974. Selected accounts and explanations from classical and modern Jewish writings on the individual, family, and society.
- Lichtenstein, A. "Does Jewish Tradition Recognize an Ethic Independent of Halakhah?" In *Modern Jewish Ethics*. Ed. Marvin Fox and cited above. An especially valuable study of medieval rabbinic sources on the ethical and the halakhic (legal) aspects of Jewish practice.
- Neher, Andre. "Ethics." In the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*. Jerusalem: Keter, 1965. A brief review of the historical development of Jewish ethics, from biblical to modern times.
- Urbach, Efraim E. *Hazal*. Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1969. Translated under the title *The Sages*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987. A classic study of the principal teachings of early Rabbinic Judaism in their historico-theological development.

### NORMAN A. DOCK

Since the Holocaust many scholars have viewed the theme of antireligion in the New Testament. Norman A. Dock analyzes the anti-Jewish polemic of the New Testament and their impact on Christianity and Jews, and suggests ways of combating the teaching of contempt. The author professes to write as an avowed anti-semiticist, to address by offering his own religious and spiritual life, a part of the antireligion he is engaged with of the entire New Testament, and designed to attract the religious faithful and anti-semitic.

I shall begin these "reconsiderations" with a brief description of the teaching of contempt for Jews within the specifically Christian Scriptures that we who are Christians commonly call the "New Testament." I shall include within this description a listing of the three categories of anti-Jewish polemic that I have identified in my book on this subject, *Mature Christianity: The Recognition and Repudiation of the Anti-Jewish Polemic of the New Testament*.<sup>1</sup> I shall conclude with seven factors that have contributed to the development of this anti-Jewish polemic and to its continuance through the centuries. Third, I shall refer briefly to results.

This article is a humble appreciation for James Barr and John Lund, who first identified a denial the Christian teaching of contempt for Jews, and for many others who have followed them in these efforts, to name just a few: Richard Rubenstein, A. Roy Eckardt, Alan Schwartz, Edward Flannery, Samuel Sandmel, Klaus Schenkl, Franklin Littell, Paul Fackenheim, Frederick Rufford Kauter, Eugene Fisher, A. James Rudin, John T. Pabst-Schweizer, Robert A. Evans, Alan Davies, Solomon S. Bernard, Harold Diamond, Trudy Rappaport Hovav, Pauline Sherman, Marc Thiessen, Clement Thoma, Jack Werber, Daniel Hartman, and Paul M. van Buren. To all of them, and to many others, I am indebted for what I say in these "reconsiderations."