

CHAPTER II.

THE GENERATIONS OF THE TANAIM.

FIRST GENERATION.

The principal Tanaim of the first generation, which lasted about seventy years, from 10 to 80, Ch. Era, [3](#) are: (1) The School of Shamai and the School of Hillel; (2) Akabia ben Mahalalel; (3) Rabban Gamaliel the Elder; (4) Rabbi Chanina, Chief of the Priests; (5) R. Simon ben Gamaliel; (6) R. Jochanan ben Zakkai. (Strack adds to this first generation [10-90] the judges), (7) Admon, and (8) Hannan; (9) Nachum the Madaith; (10) Eliezer b. Jacob I; (11) Haninah b. Dosa; (12) Nechunyah b. Hakanah; and (13) Zadock.

Mielziner counts Adman, Hannan and Nachum of Madaith at the end of this paragraph, not numbering them among the first generation, so also he did with some others in the succeeding generations.

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Characteristics and Biographical Sketches.

1. *The School of Shamai and the School of Hillel* were. founded by the disciples of the great teachers whose names they bear. Following the principles of their masters, [1](#) they differed widely in their opinions on many legal questions; the School of Shamai, in general, taking a rigorous, and the School of Hillel a more lenient view of the question. In their frequent controversies the School of Shamai, having been founded already during the lifetime of Hillel, is always mentioned first. Of individual teachers belonging to either of these two schools only a very few are occasionally mentioned by name. Both schools existed during the whole period of the first generation, and the antagonism of their followers extended even to the middle of the subsequent generation.

2. *Akabia ben Mahalalel*. Of this teacher who flourished shortly after Hillel only a few opinions and traditions are recorded. According to what is related of him in Mishna Eduyoth, V., 6, 7, he was a noble character with unyielding principles.

3. *Rabban Gamaliel the Elder*. He was a son of R. Simon, and grandson of Hillel, whom he succeeded in the office of Nasi. Many important ordinances (•••• {Hebrew *TQNW*}) of the Rabbinical law are ascribed to him. He died eighteen years before the destruction of Jerusalem. The epithet "the Elder" generally added to his name, is to distinguish him from his grandson Gamaliel of Jabne, who flourished in the following generation.

4. *Rabbi Chanina, Chief of the Priests*, or the proxy of the high-priest. He, as well as "the court of Priests," is incidentally mentioned in the Mishna in connection with laws concerning the

sacrifices and the Temple service.

5. *R. Simon ben Gamaliel*. He was the son and successor of Rabban Gamaliel the Elder, and was executed by the Romans in the time of the destruction of Jerusalem. Belonging to the School of Hillel, his individual opinions in questions of law are but rarely recorded in the Mishna. He must not be

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confounded with his grandson who had the same name and belonged to the fourth generation of Tanaim.

6. *R. Jochanan b. Zakkai*. This distinguished teacher was one of the youngest disciples of Hillel, occupied a high position already before the destruction of Jerusalem, and afterwards became the founder and head of the celebrated academy of Jabne (Jamnia).

SECOND GENERATION.

This generation lasted about forty years, from 80 to 120. The principal Tanaim belonging to it are:

(1) Rabban Gamaliel II., (of Jabne); (2) Rabbi Zadok., (3) R. Dosa (b. Harchinas); (4) R. Eliezer b. Jacob; 1 (5) R. Eliezer (b. Hyrkanos); (6) R. Joshua (b. Chanania); (7) R. Elazar b. Azaria; (8) Elasar b. Arach; 2 (9) R. Juda b. Bathyra. (According to Strack), (10) Papias; (11) Alazar b. Zadock; (12) Samuel the Little; (13) Nachum of Gimzu; (14) Ben Paturi; (15) Jose the Priest; (16) Elazar of Modium.

We refrain from giving the sketches of those who were added by Strack and others, as they would take up too much space. The reader who is interested in them can easily find them in the reference books pointed out by Strack, who gives to each of them the sources in the German language from which he draws.

Characteristics and Biographical Sketches.

1. *Rabban Gamaliel II*. He was a grandson of Gamaliel the Elder; after the death of R. Johanan b. Zakkai he became president of the academy of Jabne, and like his ancestors, he bore the title Nasi (Prince); with the Romans, Patriarch, In order to distinguish him from his grandfather, he received the surname *Gamaliel of Jabne*, or the Second.

2. R. Zadok. Of him it is related that he, in anticipation of the destruction of the Temple, fasted for forty successive

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years. He then removed to Jabne where he as well as his son, R. Eliezar b. Zadok, belonged to the distinguished teachers.

3. *R. Dosa b. Harchinas* belonged to the school of Hillel, and removed with R. Jochanan b. Zakkai from Jerusalem to Jabne, where he reached a very old age. He stood in such high esteem that his most distinguished colleagues appealed to his opinion in doubtful cases.

4. *R. Eliezer b. Jacob* was head of a school, and in possession of traditions concerning the structure and interior arrangements of the Temple. He is also mentioned with commendation as to his method of instruction, which was "concise and clear." There was also another Tana by a similar name who flourished in the fourth generation.

5. *R. Eliezer b. Hyrkanos*, in the Mishna called simply R. Eliezer, was one of the most distinguished disciples of R. Jochanan b. Zakkai, who characterized him as "the lime-cemented cistern that does not lose a drop." He was a faithful conservator of handed-down decisions and opposed to their slightest modification and to any new deductions to be made therefrom. His school was in Lydda, in South Judea. Though formerly a disciple of the Hillelites, he inclined to the views of the Shamaites and consequently came in conflict with his colleagues. Being persistent in his opinion, and conforming to it even in practice, he was excommunicated by his own brother-in-law, the patriarch Gamaliel II.

6. *R. Joshua b. Chanania*, in general called simply R. Joshua, was likewise one of the favored disciples of R. Jochanan b. Zakkai. Shortly before the destruction of the Temple he left Jerusalem with his teacher, after whose death he founded a separate school in *Bekiin*. As member of the Sanhedrin in Jabne, he participated conspicuously in its deliberations and debates. His discussions were mostly with *R. Eliezer*, to whose unyielding conservatism he formed a striking contrast, as he represented the more rational and conciliatory element of that generation, and combined with great learning the amiable virtues of gentleness, modesty and placability which characterized the Hillelites. As he, on several occasions, was humiliated by the Nasi Gamaliel II., with whom he differed on some questions, the members of the Sanhedrin resented this insult of their esteemed colleague by deposing the offender from his

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dignity and electing another president. It was only through the interference of the appeased R. Joshua that R. Gamaliel, who apologized for his conduct, was again restored to his office.

7. *R. Elazar b. Azaria* descended from a noble family whose pedigree was traced up to Ezra the Scribe. Already while a young man, he enjoyed such a reputation for his great learning that he was made president of the academy at Jabne in place of the deposed R. Gamaliel. When the latter was reinstated, R. Elazar was appointed as vice-president. His controversies were mostly with R. Joshua, R. Tarphon, R. Ishmael and R. Akiba. On account of the noble virtues which he combined with his great learning he was compared to "a vessel filled with aromatic spices," and R. Joshua said of him: "a generation having a man like R. Elazar b. Azaria, is not orphaned."

8. *Elazar b. Arach*, of whom it is said (Aboth, p. 61), "If all the wise of Israel were in a scale of the balance and Eliezer b. Hyrkanos with them, and Elazar b. Arach in the other scale, he would outweigh them all."

9. *R. Juda b. Bathyra* had a school in *Nisibis* (in Assyria), already at the time when the Temple of Jerusalem was still in existence. He was probably a descendant of the family Bene Bathyra,

who were leaders of the Sanhedrin under King Herod, and who resigned that office in favor of Hillel. Several other Tanaim had the same family name, as R. Joshua b. Bathyra, R. Simon b. Bathyra and one called simply Ben Bathyra.

THIRD GENERATION.

Several Teachers of the third generation, which lasted from the year 120 till about 139 (130-160, Strack), flourished already in the preceding one. The principal teachers are:

(1) R. Tarphon; (2) R. Ishmael; (3) R. Aqiba; (4) R. Jochanan b. Nuri; (5) R. Jose the Galilean; (6) R. Simon b. Nanos; (7) R. Juda b. Baba; (8) R. Jochanan b. Broka. Strack counts all the above-mentioned in the second generation, with the addition of, (9) Papus b. Jehuda; (10) Elazar b. Chasma; (11) Jose of Damascus; (12) Hananya b. Trodyan; (13) Jos b. Kisma; (14) Elazar b. Parta; (15) Simeon b. Azai; (16) Simeon b. Zoma; (17) Elisha b. Abuyah; (18) Chaninah b. Gamaliel; (19) Chaninah b. Antigonus; (20) Elazar of Bartutha;

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[paragraph continues] (21) Simeon of Taimon; (22) Chananiah, the son of Jechosua's brother; (23) Jehuda b. Buthyra; (24) Matyah b. Cheris; 1 (25) Chittkah; (26) Simeon the Shakmone; (27) Chananiah b. Chakniel.

Characteristics and Biographical Sketches.

1. *R. Tarphon*, or Tryphon, of Lydda. He is said to have been inclined to the views of the School of Shamai. On account of his great learning he was called "the teacher of Israel"; besides, he was praised for his great charitable works. His legal discussions were mostly with his colleague R. Akiba.

2. *R. Ishmael* (b. Elisha) was probably a grandson of the high-priest Ishmael b. Elisha who was condemned to death by Titus, together with the patriarch Simon b. Gamaliel I. When still a boy, he was made a captive and brought to Rome, where R. Joshua who happened to come there on a mission, redeemed him at a high ransom and brought him back to Palestine. R. Nechunia b. Hakana is mentioned as one of his principal teachers. When grown to manhood, he became a member of the Sanhedrin and was highly revered by his colleagues. He is named among those who emigrated with the Sanhedrin from *Jabne* to *Usha*. His residence was in South Judea in a place called Kephaz. His academical controversies were mostly with R. Akiba, to whose artificial methods of interpreting the law he was strongly opposed, on the principle that the Torah, being composed in the usual language of man, must be interpreted in a plain and rational way. As guiding rules of interpretation he accepted only the seven logical rules which had been laid down by Hillel, which he, however, by some modifications and subdivisions, enlarged to thirteen. A separate school which he founded was continued after his death by his disciples and was known by the name of "Be R. Ishmael." Of the book *Mechilta* which is ascribed to R. Ishmael.

3. *R. Aqiba* (b. Joseph) was the most prominent among the Tanaim. He is said to have descended from a proselyte family, and to have been altogether illiterate up to the age of his manhood.

Filled with the desire to acquire the knowledge

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of the law, he entered a school and attended the lectures of the distinguished teachers of that time, especially of R. Eliezer b. Hyrkanos, R. Joshua b. Chanania, and of Nachum of Gimzu. Subsequently he founded a school in B'ne Brak, near Jabne, and became a member of the Sanhedrin in the last-mentioned city. Through his keen intellect, his vast learning and his energetic activity he wielded a great influence in developing and diffusing the traditional law. He arranged the accumulated material of that law in a proper system and methodical order, and enriched its substance with many valuable deductions of his own. His methodical arrangement and division of that material was completed by his disciple R. Meir, and later on became the groundwork of the Mishna compiled by R. Jehuda Hanasi. Besides, he introduced a new method of interpreting the Scriptures, which enabled him to find a biblical basis for almost every provision of the oral law. This ingenious method was admired by his contemporaries, and notwithstanding the opposition of some of his colleagues, generally adopted in addition to the thirteen hermeneutic rules of R. I Ishmael. R. Akiba's legal opinions are very frequently recorded in all parts of the Mishna and in the kindred works. His academical discussions are mostly with his former teachers, R. Eliezer, R. Joshua, and with his colleagues, R. Tarphon, R. Jochanan b. Nuri, R. Jose the Galilean and others.

R. Akiba died a martyr to religion and patriotism. Having been a stout supporter of the cause of Bar Cochba, he was cruelly executed by the Romans for publicly teaching the Law, contrary to the edict of the emperor Hadrian. (See Aboth, p. 2 8.)

4. *R. Jochanan b. Nuri* was a colleague of R. Akiba, with whom he frequently differed on questions of the law. In his youth he seems to have been a disciple of R. Gamaliel II., for whose memory he always retained a warm veneration. He presided over a college in Beth Shearim, a place near Sepphoris in Galilee.

5. *R. Jose the Galilean* was a very distinguished teacher. Of his youth and education nothing is known. At his first appearance in the Sanhedrin of Jabne, he participated in a debate with R. Tarphon and With R. Akiba, and displayed such great learning and sagacity that he attracted general

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attention. From this debate his reputation as a teacher was established. He was an authority especially in the laws concerning the sacrifices and the Temple service. His discussions were mostly with R. Akiba, R. Tarphon, and R. Elazar b. Azariah. Of his domestic life it is related that he had the bad fortune of having an ill-tempered wife, who treated him so meanly that he was compelled to divorce her, but learning that she in her second marriage lived in great misery, he generously provided her and her husband with all the necessaries of life. One of his sons, R. Eleazar b. R. Jose the Galilean, became a distinguished teacher in the following generation and established the thirty-two hermeneutic rules of the Hagada.

6. *R. Simon b. Nanos*, also called simply Ben Nanos, was a great authority especially in the civil law, so that R. Ishmael recommended to all law students to attend the lectures of this profound

teacher. His legal controversies were mostly with R. Ishmael and R. Akiba.

7. *R. Judah b. Baba*, who on account of his piety was called the Chasid, is noteworthy not only as a distinguished teacher, but also as a martyr to Judaism. Contrary to the Hadrianic edict which, under extreme penalty, prohibited the ordination of teachers, he ordained seven 1 disciples of R. Akiba as Rabbis, and for this act was stabbed to death by the Roman soldiers.

8. *R. Jochanan b. Broka* was an authority especially in the civil law. Also his son R. Ishmael was a distinguished teacher who flourished in the following generation.

FOURTH GENERATION.

This generation extended from the death of R. Akiba to the death of the patriarch R. Simon b. Gamaliel II, from the year 139 to about 165. Almost all leading teachers of this generation belong to the latter disciples of R. Akiba.

(1) R. Meir; (2) R. Jehuda (ben Ilai); (3) R. Jose (ben Chalafta); (4) R. Simon (b. Jochai); (5) R. Elazar (b. Shamua); (6) R. Jochanan the Sandelar; (7) R. Elazar b. Jacob; (8) R. Nehemia; (9) R. Joshua b. Korcha; (10) R. Simon b. Gamaliel. Strack counts all of them in the third generation, and adds, (11) Elazar b. Jose the Galilean; (12)

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Ishmael b. Jochanan b. Beroka; (13) Abba Schaul; (14) Chananiah b. Akiba; (15) Chananiah b. Akashya; (16) Jose b. Akabyah; (17) Issi b. Jehuda; (18) Nehuraye; (19) Abba Jos b. Dusthai.

Characteristics and Biographical Sketches.

1. *R. Meir*, the most prominent among the numerous disciples of R. Akiba, was a native of Asia Minor and gained a subsistence as a skilful copyist of sacred Scripture. At first, he entered the academy of R. Akiba, but finding himself not sufficiently prepared to grasp the lectures of this great teacher, he attended, for some time, the school of R. Ishmael, where he acquired an extensive knowledge of the law. Returning then to R. Akiba and becoming his constant and favored disciple, he developed great dialectical powers, R. Akiba soon recognized his worth and preferred him to other disciples by ordaining him at an early date. This ordination was later renewed by R. Judah b. Baba. On account of the Hadrianic persecutions, R. Meir had to flee from Judea, but after the repeal of those edicts, he returned and joined his colleagues in reëstablishing the Sanhedrin in the city of Usha, in Galilee. His academy was in Emmaus, near Tiberias, and for a time also in Ardiscus, near Damascus, where a large circle of disciples gathered around him. Under the patriarch R. Simon b. Gamaliel II., he occupied the dignity of a *Chacham* (advising Sage), in which office he was charged with the duty of preparing the subjects to be discussed in the Sanhedrin. A conflict which arose between him and the patriarch seems to have induced him to leave Palestine and return to his native country, Asia Minor, where he died. R. Meir's legal opinions are mentioned almost in every Masechta of the Mishna and Boraitha. His greatest merit was that he continued the labors of R. Akiba in arranging the rich material of the oral law according to subjects, and in this way prepared the great Mishna compilation of R. Judah Hanasi. Besides being one of the most distinguished teachers of the law, he was also a very popular lecturer (Hagadist), who used to illustrate his lectures by

interesting fables and parables. Of his domestic life it is known that he was married to Beruria, the learned daughter of the

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celebrated teacher and martyr R. Chananiah b. Teradyon. The pious resignation which he and his noble wife exhibited at the sudden death of their two promising sons has been immortalized by a popular legend in the Midrash.

2. *R. Jehuda b. Ilai* is generally called in the Mishna simply R. Jehuda. After having received instruction in the law from his father, who had been a disciple of R. Eliezer b. Hyrkanos, he attended the lectures of R. Tarphon, and became then one of the distinguished disciples of R. Akiba. On account of his great eloquence he is called, "The first among the speakers." Also his piety, modesty and prudence are highly praised. He gained a modest subsistence by a mechanical trade, in accordance with his favored maxims: "Labor honors man," and "He who does not teach his son a trade, teaches him, as it were, robbery." Having been one of the seven disciples who after the death of R. Akiba were ordained by R. Juda b. Baba contrary to the Hadrianic edict, he had to flee. After three years he returned with his colleagues to Usha and became one of the prominent members of the resuscitated Sanhedrin. The patriarch R. Simon ben Gamaliel honored him greatly, and appointed him as one of his advisers. As expounder of the law he was a great authority, and is very often quoted in all parts of the Mishna and Boraitha. His legal opinions generally prevail, when differing from those of his colleagues R. Meir and R. Simon. To him is also ascribed the authorship of the essential part of the Siphra. The Hagada of the Talmud records many of his beautiful sayings, which characterize him not only as a noble-hearted teacher, but also as a sound and clearheaded interpreter of Scriptures. He, for instance, denied the literal meaning of the resurrection of the dead bones spoken of in Ezekiel, ch. XXXVII., but declared it to be merely a poetical figure for Israel's rejuvenation. (Sanhedrin, p. 278.)

R. Jehuda had two learned sons who flourished as teachers in the following generation.

3. *R. Jose b. Chalafta*, in the Mishna called simply R. Jose, was from *Sepphoris*, where already his learned father had established a school. Though by trade a tanner, he became one of the most distinguished teachers of his time. He was a disciple of R. Akiba and of R. Tarphon. Like his colleagues he was ordained by R. Juda b. Baba, and on this account had

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to flee to the south of Palestine, whence he later on returned with them to Usha. For having kept silent when in his presence R. Simon made a slighting remark against the Roman government, he was banished to Asia Minor. When permitted to return, he settled in his native city, *Sepphoris*, where he died at an advanced age. Besides being a great authority in the law, whose opinions prevail against those of his colleagues R. Meir, R. Jehuda and R. Simon, he was an historian to whom the authorship of the chronological book *Seder Olam* is ascribed.

4. *R. Simon b. Jochai* from Galilee, in the Mishna called simply R. Simon, was likewise one of the most distinguished disciples of R. Akiba, whose lectures he attended during thirteen years. "Be satisfied that I and thy creator know thy powers," were the words with which this teacher

comforted him, when he felt somewhat slighted on account of a certain preference given to his younger colleague R. Meir. He shared the fate of his colleagues in being compelled to flee after ordination. Afterwards, he joined them at the new seat of the Sanhedrin in Usha. On a certain occasion he gave vent to his bitter feeling against the Romans, which was reported to the Roman governor, who condemned him to death. He, however, escaped this fate by concealing himself in a cave, where he is said to have remained for several years, together with his son, engaged in the study of the law, and subsisting on the fruit of the carob-trees which abounded there in the neighborhood. In the meantime political affairs had taken a favorable turn, so that he had no longer to fear any persecution; he left his hiding place and reopened his academy at *Tekoa*, in Galilee, where a circle of disciples gathered around him. He survived all his colleagues, and in his old age was delegated to Rome, where he succeeded in obtaining from the emperor (Marcus Aurelius) the repeal of some edicts against the Jewish religion.

In the interpretation of the law, R. Simon departed from the method of his teacher R. Akiba, as he inclined to the view of R. Ishmael that "the Torah speaks the common language of man," and consequently regarded logical reasoning as the proper starting point for legal deductions, instead of pleonastic words, syllables and letters. In accordance with this sound principle, he tried to investigate the evident motive of different biblical laws, and to make conclusions therefrom for their

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proper application. In regard to treating and arranging the oral law, however, he followed the method of R. Akiba in subsuming various provisions under guiding rules and principles. R. Simon is regarded as the author of the *Siphre*, though that work in its present shape shows many additions by the hands of later authorities. [1](#)

5. *R. Elazar b. Shamua*, in the Mishna simply R. Elazar, was among those of R. Akiba's disciples who in consequence of the Hadrian edicts went to the South, whence he went to Nisibis. He does not, however, appear to have joined his colleagues when they gathered again at Usha. He is regarded as a great authority in the law. The place of his academy is not known, but it is stated that his school was always overcrowded by disciples eager to hear his learned lectures. Among his disciples was also the later patriarch R. Jehuda. On a journey, he visited his former colleague R. Meir at Ardiscos, in Asia Minor, and with him had discussions on important questions of the law, which are recorded in the Mishna and Boraita.

6. *R. Jochanan the Sandelar* had this surname probably from his trade in sandals. Born in Alexandria in Egypt, he came to Palestine to attend the lectures of R. Akiba, and was so faithful a disciple that he visited this teacher even in prison, in order to receive instruction from him. His legal opinions are occasionally recorded in the Mishna as well as in the Tosephta and Boraita.

7. *R. Elazar (or Eliezer) b. Jacob* was a disciple of R. Akiba and later a member of the Sanhedrin in Usha. This teacher must not be confounded with a former teacher by that name who flourished in the second generation.

8. *R. Nechemia* belonged to the last disciples of R. Akiba and was an authority especially in the sacrificial law, and in laws concerning levitical purification. His controversies are mostly with R. Juda b. Ilai. He is said to have compiled a Mishna collection which was embodied in the

Tosephta.

9. *R. Joshua b. Korcha* is supposed by some to have been a son of R. Akiba, who, on one occasion, is called by such a surname

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(meaning the bald head); but this supposition is very improbable, for it would be strange that the son of so illustrious a man should not rather have been called by his father's proper name, and that he should never have alluded to his celebrated parent or to any of his teachings. [1](#)

R. Joshua b. K. belonged to the authorities of this generation, though only a few of his opinions are recorded in the Mishna.

10. *R. Simon b. Gamaliel* was the son and successor of the patriarch Gamaliel II. of Jabne. In his youth, he witnessed the fall of Bethar, and escaped the threatened arrest by flight. After the death of the emperor Hadrian, he returned to Jabne where he, in connection with some teachers, reopened an academy, and assumed the hereditary dignity of a patriarch. As the returning disciples of R. Akiba, who were the leading teachers of that generation, preferred Usha as the seat of the new Sanhedrin, R. Simon was obliged to transfer his academy to that city, and appointed R. Nathan as Ab Beth-din (vice-president), and R. Meir as Chacham (advising sage, or speaker). Both of these officers had to retire however, when found planning his deposal on account of some marks of distinction introduced in order to raise the patriarchal dignity. He did not enjoy the privilege of his predecessors to be titled Rabban (our teacher), but like the other teachers, he was simply called Rabbi (my teacher), [2](#) probably because many of his contemporaries were superior to him in learning. Still, his legal opinions, which are frequently quoted in the Mishna and Boraitha, give evidence that he was a man of considerable learning and of sound and clear judgment as well as of noble principles. He introduced several legal provisions for the protection of the rights of women and slaves, and for the general welfare of the community. All his opinions expressed in the Mishna, with the exception of only three cases, are regarded by later teachers as authoritative (Halakha). His discussions recorded in the Mishna and Boraitha are mostly

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held with his celebrated son, R. Jehuda Hanasi. R. Simon b. Gamaliel appears to have been acquainted also with the Greek language and sciences.

Apart from the great circle of teachers mentioned above, the disciples of R. Ishmael b. Elisha formed a school in the extreme South of Judea (Darom), where they continued the methods of their teacher. Of this separate school, called *Debe R. Ishmael*, only two members are mentioned by name: *R. Josiah* and *R. Jonathan*.

FIFTH GENERATION.

This generation extends from the death of R. Simon b. Gamaliel II., to the death of R. Jehuda Hanasi (from 165 to about 200).

The following are the most prominent teachers of this generation:

(1) R. Nathan (the Babylonian); (2) Symmachos; (3) R. Jehuda, Hanasi (the Patriarch), called simply Rabbi; (4) R. Jose b. Juda; (5) R. Elazar b. Simon; (6) R. Simon b. Elazar. Strack places these in the fourth generation and adds (7) Dustayi b. Janai; (8) Simeon b. Jehuda, of the village Akum; (9) Achia b. Joashai; (10) Jacob; (11) Itzhok; (12) Eliezar b. Simeon b. Johai; (13) Pinchas b. Jaier; (14) Ischmael b. Jos; (15) Menachem b. Jos (b. Chialaphta); (16) Jehudah b. Lakish; (17) Elazar Charkaper; (18) Abba Elazar b. Gamla; (19) Simon b. Jos b. Lecunia; (20) Simon b. Menascha; (21) Jehudah b. Tamah.

The junior sages of the fifth generation Strack quotes thus: (1) Hyye Rabbi (the Great); (2) Eliezer b. Kappara; (3) Simeon b. 'Halaftha; (4) Lewi b. Sissi; (5) Simai.

Both Mielziner and Strack do not count Simon Shezurri, one of the great Tanaim. who belongs to the third generation, and who is mentioned in the Mishna several times, and of whom it is said (Menachoth, 30 b), "Everywhere the name of Simeon Shezurri is mentioned, the Halakha prevails in accordance with him." We would also count Wradimus b. R. Jose though according to some he was identical with Menachem, and who was one of the greatest Tanaim in the time of Rabbi. (See I. H. Weiss, p. 06.) [See Appendix No. I.] His father,

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R. Jose, quotes him as the author of a Halakha (Tosephta, Baba Metzia).

Characteristics and Biographical Sketches.

1. *R. Nathan* was the son of one of the exilarchs in Babylon, and probably received his education in his native country. For some unknown reasons he emigrated to Judea, and on account of his great learning he was appointed by the patriarch, R. Simon b. Gamaliel, to the dignity of Ab-Beth-din (chief justice or vice-president), in the Sanhedrin of Usha. He had to retire from this office because of his and R. Meir's dissension with the patriarch, but was soon reinstated and became reconciled with the Synhedrial president, who held him in high esteem. Also the succeeding patriarch, R. Jehuda, with whom he had many discussions on questions of the law, speaks of him; with great respect. R. Nathan was not only an authority in the rabbinical law, especially in jurisprudence, but appears also to have been well versed in mathematics, astronomy and other sciences. To him is ascribed the authorship of Aboth, de R. Nathan, which is a kind of Tosephta to Pirke Aboth.

2. *Symmachos* was a prominent disciple of R. Meir and, distinguished for his great dialectical powers. After the death of his teacher, he as well as other disciples of R. Meir were excluded from the academy of R. Jehuda Hanasi, as they were charged with indulging in sophistical disputations in order to display their dialectical sagacity, instead of seeking after truth. Nevertheless the Mishna as well as the Tosephta makes mention of the opinions of Symmachos. His renown lay in the rabbinical jurisprudence, in which he laid down certain principles often referred to in the Talmud.

3. *R. Jehuda (Juda) Hanasi*, by way of eminence simply called Rabbi, was a son of the patriarch

R. Simon b. Gamaliel II., and is said to have been born on the same day when R. Akiba was executed. His principal teachers were R. Simon b. Jochai and R. Elazar b. Shamua, under whose guidance his intellectual capacity and splendid talents early developed. Besides his immense knowledge of the whole range of the traditional law, he had a liberal education in secular branches and was especially acquainted with the Greek language, which he

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preferred to the Syriac, the popular language of Palestine at that time. After the death of his father he succeeded him in the dignity of patriarch, and became the chief authority, eclipsing all other teachers of that generation. Though blessed with great riches, he preferred to live in a simple style and applied his wealth to the maintenance of his numerous pupils and to charitable works. The seat of his academy was first at Beth-Shearim, afterward at Sepphoris, and also at Tiberias. Among his most distinguished disciples were: R. Chiya; (Simon) bar Kappara; Levi bar Sissi; R. Abba Areca, later called Rab; Mar Samuel, and many others. He is said to have been in a friendly relation with one of the Roman emperors, either Marcus Aurelius, or more probably, Lucius Verus Antoninus. By virtue of his authority R. Jehuda abolished several customs and ceremonies which, though sanctified by age, had become impracticable through the change of times and circumstances. His most meritorious work, by which he erected for himself a monument of enduring fame, was the completion of the Mishna compilation which henceforth became the authoritative code of the traditional law and superseded all similar compilations made by former teachers.

4. *R. Jose ben Juda* (b. Ilai) belonged to the great teachers of that generation and was a friend of R. Jehuda Hanasi. His legal opinions are frequently recorded in the Mishna as well as in the Tosephta.

5. *R. Elazar b. Simon* (b. Jochai) was a disciple of R. Simon b. Gamaliel and of R. Joshua b. Korcha. Although an authority in the rabbinical law to whom even the patriarch sometimes yielded, he incurred the severest censure of his colleagues for having, on a certain occasion, lent his assistance to the Romans in prosecuting some Jewish freebooters.

6. *R. Simon b. Elazar* (probably E. b. Shamua), was a disciple of R. Meir, whose opinions he often quotes. He established several important principles, especially in the civil law.

SIXTH GENERATION.

To this generation belong the younger contemporaries and disciples of R. Juda Hanasi. They are not mentioned in the Mishna, but in the Tosephta and Boraitha, and are therefore

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termed semi-Tanaim, who form a connecting link between the period of Tanaim and that of the Amoraim. Their names are:

(1) Plimo; (2) Ise b. Juda; (3) R. Elazar b. Jose; (4) R. Ishmael bar Jose; (5) R. Juda b. Lakish; (6) R. Chiya; (7) R. Acha; (8) R. Abba (Areca).

There is no sixth generation according to Strack, and all who are mentioned here he includes in the fifth generation. We have to remark that all the eight mentioned above by Mielziner, as they formed the last generation of the Tanaim, are also named Amoraim; and therefore we find stated in many places in the Talmud where one of the above-mentioned is in conflict with a Mishna or a Boraitha: "He is a Tana, and has the right to differ with the authorities of the Mishna or the Boraitha."

The most prominent among these semi-Tanaim were R. Chiya and R. Abba (Areca).

1. *R. Chiya* (bar Abba) the elder, which epithet is to distinguish him from a later Amora by the same name, was a Babylonian who came at an already advanced age to Palestine, where he became the most distinguished disciple and friend of R. Jehuda Hanasi. He and his disciple R. Oshaya (or Hoshaya) are regarded as the principal authors or compilers of the Tosephta.

2. *R. Abba* (Areca) a nephew of R. Chiya, was likewise a Babylonian, and a disciple of R. Jehuda Hanasi, after whose death he returned to his native country, where, under the historical name of Rab, he became the principal Amora. (See the following chapter.)

Of other distinguished teachers flourishing in this generation and in the beginning of the period of the Amoraim, we have to mention especially *R. Janai* (the elder), and *R. Jonathan* (the elder). The former lived in Sepphoris and was one of the teachers of R. Jochanan bar Naphacha, the greatest among the Palestinian Amoraim.

Footnotes

[6:1](#) We do not understand very well what the learned Doctor Mielziner means by the word *prominent*, as it seems that the Tanaim whom he omitted were not less prominent than those whom he mentioned. On the contrary, some of them were even more prominent. We are sorry that our work was delayed until after the departure of the learned doctor, who was our friend and whose loss we greatly lament, so that we cannot ask him the reason as we always meant to do. (See our remarks further on.)

[6:2](#) Fuller characteristics of the lives and teachings of the principal Tanaim are given in the following works:

Graetz, "History of the Jews," Vol. IV.

Z. Frankel, "Darke Hamishna."

I. H. Weiss, "Zur Geschichte der juedischen Tradition," Vols. I. and II.

Jacob Bruell, "Mebo Hamishna," Vol. I.

J. Hamburger, "Real Encyclopaedie," Vol. II. "Die Talmudischen Artikel." M. Braunschweiger, "Die Lehrer der Mishnah."

H. Strack, "Einleitung in den Talmud."

N. Perferkowitz, Talmud, Part I.

[6:3](#) This comparatively great length of the first generation is easily explained by the circumstance that it refers to the duration of the prevailing Schools of Shamaï and Hillel, and not, as in the subsequent generations, to that of the activity of a single leading teacher.

[7:1](#) Shamaï and Hillel themselves differ in three questions only. (See Eduyoth, p. 5.) Their schools, however, differ in 316 Halakhas.

[8:1](#) Strack counts him and Zadok among the first generation.

[8:2](#) We have added him as his omission by Mielziner can be attributed only to forgetfulness as his preceding sages were also disciples of R. Johanan b. Zakkai, and for the same reason we have added Papus, who was a contemporary of R. Aqiba and of whom the Talmud speaks highly.

[11:1](#) 22, 23 and 24 were out of Palestine.

[13:1](#) We are aware only of six mentioned in vol. i., p. 11.

[17:1](#) The Cabbalists ascribe to him the compiling of the Zohar, which was revealed by Moses d' Leon. The Talmud also speaks of him as the one to whom miracles occurred frequently.

[118:1](#) That R. Akiba had a son by the name of R. Joshua is stated in a Boraitha; but the identity of this son with R. Joshua b. Korcha is conclusively disproved by the Tosaphist Rabenu Tam in his remarks on Sabbath 150a, and B. Bathra 113a.

[118:2](#) There are, however, some passages in the Mishna and Gemara in which he is called Rabban.

[Next: Chapter III: The Amoraim or Expounders of the Mishna](#)