

Bookmark File PDF Jesus In  
The Talmud

# *Jesus In The Talmud*

How the rabbis of the Talmud  
transformed Jewish law into  
a way of thinking and  
talking about everything

*Page 1/179*

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Typically translated as "Jewish law," halakhah is not an easy match for what is usually thought of as law. This is because the rabbinic legal system has rarely wielded the political power to enforce its rules,

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nor has it ever been the law of any state. Even more idiosyncratically, the talmudic rabbis claim the study of halakhah is a holy endeavor that brings a person closer to God—a claim no country makes of its law.

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Chaim Saiman traces how generations of rabbis have used concepts forged in talmudic disputation to do the work that other societies assign not only to philosophy, political theory, theology, and ethics

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but also to art, drama, and literature. Guiding readers across two millennia of richly illuminating perspectives, this panoramic book shows how halakhah is not just "law" but an entire way of thinking, being, and

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knowing.

Excerpt from Jesus in the  
Talmud: His Personality, His  
Disciples, and His Sayings  
The importance of the  
utterances in the Tal mud  
concerning Jesus must not be  
misunderstood and still less

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must they be over-estimated.  
We therefore call the  
reader's attention to the  
fact that they are not based  
on contemporary evidence  
and thus possess no  
historical value. They are  
the expression of a non-

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christian spirit mostly hostile and sometimes positively offensive. In extenuation of the Talmud we must say, first, that the animosity between Jew and Gentile is deep and mutual. When the Gentile blames the



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Jew for wrong thinking, the Jew may equally blame the Gentile for wrong doing, for the Jew has had to suffer persecution of the cruelest kind. Further we must bear in mind that the Tal mud is not one book with a

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consistent tendency, but a collection of innumerable writings, essays, anecdotes, and what not. Side by side with noble and deep thoughts we find worthless gossip. On account of the latter we must not forget the former

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and therewith depreciate the entire Talmud. For these reasons we wish the reader to use the present pamphlet with discretion and to bear in mind the conditions existing in the age in which these utterances concerning

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Jesus were written. The author has collected and collated them for serious study of the facts in the case. They are material for the scholar and must not in any sense be considered as popular reading. About the

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of such historical works.  
F.E. Peters, a scholar  
without peer in the  
comparative study of  
Judaism, Christianity, and  
Islam, revisits his  
pioneering work. Peters has  
rethought and thoroughly



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rewritten his classic *The Children of Abraham* for a new generation of readers—at a time when the understanding of these three religious traditions has taken on a new and critical urgency. He began writing

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about all three faiths in the 1970s, long before it was fashionable to treat Islam in the context of Judaism and Christianity, or to align all three for a family portrait. In this updated edition, he lays out

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the similarities and differences of the three religious siblings with great clarity and succinctness and with that same remarkable objectivity that is the hallmark of all the author's work. Peters

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traces the three faiths from the sixth century B.C., when the Jews returned to Palestine from exile in Babylonia, to the time in the Middle Ages when they approached their present form. He points out that all

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three faith groups, whom the Muslims themselves refer to as "People of the Book," share much common ground. Most notably, each embraces the practice of worshipping a God who intervenes in history on behalf of His

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people. The book's text is direct and accessible with thorough and nuanced discussions of each of the three religions. Footnotes provide the reader with expert guidance into the highly complex issues that

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lie between every line of  
this stunning edition of *The  
Children of Abraham*.

Complete with a new preface  
by the author, this  
Princeton Classics edition  
presents this landmark study  
to a new generation of

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readers .

The Jewish Gospels

The Trial of Jesus

Feminine Images of God from  
the Bible to the Early  
Kabbalah

Elijah Zvi Soloveitchik's  
Commentary to the Gospels



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Jesus Man of Many Names

Jesus the Pharisee

**During his life Jesus did not view himself as divine, nor did his disciples. In THE CHANGING FACES OF JESUS the great scholar Vermes works back through successively earlier**

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**accounts of the life of Christ to finally reveal the true, historical figure of Jesus hidden beneath the Gospels: a Palestinian charismatic convinced he had an essential role to play in bringing about the kingdom of God. For almost two thousand years,**

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**various images of Jesus accompanied Jewish thought and imagination: a flesh-and-blood Jew, a demon, a spoiled student, an idol, a brother, a (failed) Messiah, a nationalist rebel, a Greek god in Jewish garb, and more. This volume charts for the**

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**first time the different ways that Jesus has been represented and understood in Jewish culture and thought. Chapters from many of the leading scholars in the field cover the topic from a variety of disciplinary perspectives - Talmud, Midrash, Rabbinics,**

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**Kabbalah, Jewish Magic,  
Messianism, Hagiography,  
Modern Jewish Literature,  
Thought, Philosophy, and Art - to  
address the ways in which  
representations of Jesus  
contribute to and change Jewish  
self-understanding throughout**

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**the last two millennia. Beginning with the question of how we know that Jesus was a Jew, the book then moves through meticulous analyses of Jewish and Christian scripture and literature to provide a rounded and comprehensive analysis of**

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**Jesus in Jewish Culture. This multidisciplinary study will be of great interest not only to students of Jewish history and philosophy, but also to scholars of religious studies, Christianity, intellectual history, literature and cultural studies.**

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**In late antiquity, as Christianity emerged from Judaism, it was not only the new religion that was being influenced by the old. The rise and revolutionary challenge of Christianity also had a profound influence on rabbinic Judaism, which was itself just**



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**emerging and, like Christianity, trying to shape its own identity. In The Jewish Jesus, Peter Schäfer reveals the crucial ways in which various Jewish heresies, including Christianity, affected the development of rabbinic Judaism. He even shows that**

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**some of the ideas that the rabbis appropriated from Christianity were actually reappropriated Jewish ideas. The result is a demonstration of the deep mutual influence between the sister religions, one that calls into question hard and fast**

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**distinctions between orthodoxy and heresy, and even Judaism and Christianity, during the first centuries CE.**

**Jesus Christ in the Talmud and  
Commentary on the Gospels from  
the Talmud and the Hebraica  
Mirror of His Beauty**

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**Jesus in the Talmud His  
Personality, His Disciples, and  
His Sayings  
Judaism, Christianity, Islam  
How Judaism and Christianity  
Shaped Each Other  
The Ultimate Victory of the God  
of Life**

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The Hebrew Scriptures contain many hundreds of laws both religious and civil. They concern the Temple (in Exodus), the priesthood (in Leviticus), the Temple offerings and other rites (in Numbers), and the social order of Israel (in

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Deuteronomy). These may rightly be called the written law (Torah). The oral law is the extension of these precepts to cover all of life and its contingencies. The oral law (or Mishnah) was written down by rabbinic sages about 200 C.E. With

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the Talmud, Jewish sages systematized the laws in Scripture together with those of the oral tradition. While the Mishnah records rules governing the conduct of the holy life of Israel, the Talmud concerns itself with the details of the

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Mishnah. Israel's oral law found its definitive expression in the Talmud. The Talmud of Babylonia (a.k.a., the Bavli, or Babylonian Talmud), is a sustained commentary on the written and oral law of Israel. Compiled between 500-600 C.E., it offers a



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magnificent record of how Jewish scholars preserved a humane and enduring civilization. Representing the primary document of rabbinic Judaism, it throws considerable light on the New Testament as well. This monumental American translation

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was completed a decade ago--but was extraordinarily expensive and difficult to find--and features translations by Jacob Neusner, Tzvee Zahavy, Alan Avery-Peck, B. Barry Levy, Peter Haas, and Martin S. Jaffee, with commentary and new

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introductions by Jacob Neusner.  
Excerpt from The Talmud: What It  
Is and What It Knows About Jesus  
and His Followers It is a saying of  
Monsieur Rénan that "in the history  
of the origins of Christianity, the  
Talmud has hitherto been far too

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much neglected." His idea is that the New Testament can only be understood by the light of the Talmud, while the present work will prove that many things in the Talmud can only be understood by the light of the New Testament and

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the history of the Church. To do this we have divided the matter into two parts. The first tries to show what the Talmud is, by giving a succinct history of the development of Jewish traditionalism, which culminated in the Talmud, "that wonderful

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monument of human industry,  
human wisdom, and human folly,"  
as Milman calls it; and in order to  
dispel erroneous views concerning  
the Talmud, we have arrayed the  
opinions of such scholars as Milman,  
Farrar, Geikie, Schaff, Delitzsch and

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others, whom no one will accuse of partiality. As a connecting link we have inserted those passages of the Talmud which treat of the Messiah, because we believe that their contents were more or less influenced by Christian thought, and

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that they do not express the views of the Jews concerning the Messiah before and at the Christian era.

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intentionally left to preserve the state of such historical works.

In this text, Hyam Maccoby controversially suggests that Jesus was not only friendly to the Pharisees, but was actually a member of their group. He aims to

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throw new light on the relationship between Jesus and John the Baptist, exploring the political aspect of their movements and their adherence to the Torah. He looks at evidence from the rabbinic sources to show a strong affinity between Jesus and the

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Pharisees and discusses previously misunderstood or ignored stories about Jesus found in the Talmud. The book rehabilitates the Pharisees and uses the New Testament to show that there is continuity between Pharisaism and rabbinism. It should

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prove influential in the strategy to combat anti-Semitism.

Jesus Christ in the Talmud,  
Midrash, Zohar and the Liturgy of  
the Synagogue

Jesus in Islam, Christianity and the  
Jewish Talmud

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Judeophobia

Jewish History, Jewish Religion

The Weight of Three Thousand  
Years

Resurrection and the Restoration of  
Israel

Jesus as represented in the

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Talmud is a subject which must interest the Christian student. For what can be of profounder interest than to learn what the Jews have said concerning Jesus and Christianity. We naturally look to the Jewish historian Josephus, who described and



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witnessed the downfall of the Jewish commonwealth. But we are disappointed. True that in his "Antiquities" (XVIII, 3, 3) Josephus has reference to Christ, but scholars are now generally agreed<sup>1</sup> that this passage is a later interpolation. Leaving then

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aside Josephus, we must turn to that encyclopaedia of "Jewish wisdom and unwisdom" which is known as the Talmud.

Why did the Jews reject Jesus?

Was he really the son of God?

Were the Jews culpable in his

death? These ancient questions

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have been debated for almost two thousand years, most recently with the release of Mel Gibson's explosive *The Passion of the Christ*. The controversy was never merely academic. The legal status and security of Jews—often their very lives—depended on the

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answer. In WHY THE JEWS  
REJECTED JESUS, David  
Klinghoffer reveals that the Jews  
since ancient times accepted not  
only the historical existence of  
Jesus but the role of certain Jews  
in bringing about his crucifixion  
and death. But he also argues

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that they had every reason to be skeptical of claims for his divinity. For one thing, Palestine under Roman occupation had numerous charismatic would-be messiahs, so Jesus would not have been unique, nor was his following the largest of its kind.

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For another, the biblical prophecies about the coming of the Messiah were never fulfilled by Jesus, including an ingathering of exiles, the rise of a Davidic king who would defeat Israel's enemies, the building of a new Temple, and recognition of

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God by the gentiles. Above all, the Jews understood their biblically commanded way of life, from which Jesus's followers sought to "free" them, as precious, immutable, and eternal. Jews have long been blamed for Jesus's death and stigmatized for

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rejecting him. But Jesus lived and died a relatively obscure figure at the margins of Jewish society. Indeed, it is difficult to argue that “the Jews” of his day rejected Jesus at all, since most Jews had never heard of him. The figure they really rejected, often



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violently, was Paul, who convinced the Jerusalem church led by Jesus's brother to jettison the observance of Jewish law. Paul thus founded a new religion. If not for him, Christianity would likely have remained a Jewish movement, and the course of

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history itself would have been changed. Had the Jews accepted Jesus, Klinghoffer speculates, Christianity would not have conquered Europe, and there would be no Western civilization as we know it. WHY THE JEWS REJECTED JESUS tells the story

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of this long, acrimonious, and occasionally deadly debate between Christians and Jews. It is thoroughly engaging, lucidly written, and in many ways highly original. Though written from a Jewish point of view, it is also profoundly respectful of Christian

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sensibilities. Coming at a time when Christians and Jews are in some ways moving closer than ever before, this thoughtful and provocative book represents a genuine effort to heal the ancient rift between these two great faith traditions.

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If you were to ask ten people, Who started Christianity? you might hear ten voices giving the same quick response: Jesus. But those ten people would be wrong. Jesus wasn't a Christian. Jesus lived and died as a Jew. Understanding the Jewishness of

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Jesus is the secret to knowing him better and understanding his message in the twenty-first century. Walking through Jesus' life from birth to death, Rabbi Evan Moffic serves as a tour guide to give Christians a new way to look at familiar teachings

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and practices that are rooted in the Jewish faith and can illuminate our lives today. Moffic gives fresh insight on how Jesus' contemporaries understood him, explores how Jesus' Jewishness shaped him, offers a new perspective on the Lord's Prayer,

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and provides renewed appreciation for Jesus' miracles. In encountering his Jewish heritage, you will see Jesus differently, gain a better understanding of his message, and enrich your own faith. A Translation and Commentary



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Representation and Thought  
The Jewish Teachers of Jesus,  
James, and Jude  
Attitudes Toward the Jews in the  
Ancient World  
Halakhah  
Illustrated from Talmud and  
Roman Law

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"Magisterial. . . . A learned, brilliant and enjoyable study."—Géza Vermès, Times Literary Supplement In this exciting book, Paula Fredriksen explains the

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variety of New Testament  
images of Jesus by  
exploring the ways that  
the new Christian  
communities interpreted  
his mission and message  
in light of the delay of

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the Kingdom he had preached. This edition includes an introduction reviews the most recent scholarship on Jesus and its implications for both history and

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theology. "Brilliant and lucidly written, full of original and fascinating insights."—Reginald H. Fuller, Journal of the American Academy of Religion "This is a

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first-rate work of a  
first-rate  
historian."—James D.  
Tabor, Journal of  
Religion "Fredriksen  
confronts her  
documents—principally

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the writings of the New Testament—as an archaeologist would an especially rich complex site. With great care she distinguishes the literary images from

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historical fact. As she does so, she explains the images of Jesus in terms of the strategies and purposes of the writers Paul, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and



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John."—Thomas D'Evelyn,  
Christian Science  
Monitor

Jews have sometimes been  
reluctant to claim Jesus  
as one of their own;  
Christians have often

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been reluctant to acknowledge the degree to which Jesus' message and mission were at home amidst, and shaped by, the Judaism(s) of the Second Temple Period. In

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The Jewish Teachers of  
Jesus, James, and Jude  
David deSilva introduces  
readers to the ancient  
Jewish writings known as  
the Apocrypha and  
Pseudepigrapha and

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examines their formative impact on the teachings and mission of Jesus and his half-brothers, James and Jude. Knowledge of this literature, deSilva argues, helps to bridge

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the perceived gap  
between Jesus and  
Judaism when Judaism is  
understood only in terms  
of the Hebrew Bible (or  
' 'Old Testament' '), and  
not as a living, growing

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body of faith and practice. Where our understanding of early Judaism is limited to the religion reflected in the Hebrew Bible, Jesus will appear more

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as an outsider speaking  
'against' Judaism and  
introducing more that is  
novel. Where our  
understanding of early  
Judaism is also informed  
by the Apocrypha and

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Pseudepigrapha, we will see Jesus and his half-brothers speaking and interacting more fully within Judaism. By engaging critical issues in this comparative



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study, deSilva produces a portrait of Jesus that is fully at home in Roman Judea and Galilee, and perhaps an explanation for why these extra-biblical

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Jewish texts continued  
to be preserved in  
Christian circles.

'Shahak subjects the  
whole history of  
Orthodoxy ... to a  
hilarious and scrupulous

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critique.' --Christopher  
Hitchens, The Nation  
Jesus Christ in the  
Talmud, Midrash, Zohar,  
and the Liturgy of the  
Synagogue  
His Personality, His

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Synagogue The attractive subject of Heir*

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*Laible's recently published essay ("Jesus Christus im Thalmud") leads me to think that the passages on which he bases his work, and the comments which he makes upon them, cannot be without interest for the English reader, even though the conclusions which he reaches may not*

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*on all occasions appear entitled to equally full assent. On my suggesting this to Dr Hermann L. Strack of Berlin (at whose suggestion, as will be seen from the preface to the German edition, Herr Laible undertook the task) I received permission to make use of a large*

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*number of spare printed copies of the original texts (numbers I - xxiv; pages 5 - 19) which had been edited by Dr Gustaf H. Dalman of Leipzig. In order to secure in each case the best available (unexpurgated) text, the following editions were used by him: 1. Palestinian*



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*Talmud, Venice, 1523 - 4. 2.*

*Babylonian Talmud, Venice. B'rakhoth,  
Shabbath, Sota, Gittin, Sanhedrin,  
'Aboda zara, 1520; Chagigah, 1521;  
Soph'rim, 1522; Aboth, 1526; 'Erubin,  
Kallah, J'bamoth, 1528. Variants in the  
MSS. used by Rabbinovicz (Dikduke*

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*Soph'rim, or Variarum Lectiones in  
Mischnam et in Talmud Babylonicum,  
Munich, 1867 - 1886) are indicated  
thus: M = the Munich, O = the Oxford,  
Fl = the Florence, K = the Karlsruhe MS.  
For the treatises not dealt with by  
Rabbinovicz, 'En Ja'akob, venice, 1546,*

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Zuckerman, Pasewalk, 1880. About  
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*replicated in our edition. We do, however, repair the vast majority of imperfections successfully; any imperfections that remain are intentionally left to preserve the state of such historical works.*

*Including Hebrew texts, translated by*

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*Gustav Dalman and translated into English from the German by A W Streane. Gustaf Hermann Dalman (9 June 1855 - 19 August 1941) was a German Lutheran theologian and orientalist. He did extensive field work in Palestine before the First World War,*

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*collecting inscriptions, poetry, and proverbs. He also collected physical articles illustrating the life of the indigenous farmers and herders of the country, including rock and plant samples, house and farm tools, small archaeological finds, and ceramics. He*

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*pioneered the study of biblical and early post-biblical Aramaic, publishing an authoritative grammar (1894) and dictionary (1901), as well as other works. His collection of 15,000 historic photographs and 5,000 books, including rare 16th century prints, and maps*



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*formed the basis of the Gustaf Dalman  
Institute at Ernst Moritz Arndt  
Universität, Greifswald, which  
commemorates and continues his work.  
Dalman served as one of the early  
directors of the Deutsche Evangelische  
Institut für Altertumswissenschaft des*

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*heiligen Landes zu Jerusalem (German Evangelical Institute for Ancient Studies of the Holy Land in Jerusalem). Many famous antique texts are misunderstood and many others have been completely dismissed, all because the literary style in which they were*

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*written is unfamiliar today. So argues Mary Douglas in this controversial study of ring composition, a technique which places the meaning of a text in the middle, framed by a beginning and ending in parallel. To read a ring composition in the modern linear fashion*

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*is to misinterpret it, Douglas contends, and today's scholars must reevaluate important antique texts from around the world. Found in the Bible and in writings from as far a field as Egypt, China, Indonesia, Greece, and Russia, ring composition is too widespread to*

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*have come from a single source. Does it perhaps derive from the way the brain works? What is its function in social contexts? The author examines ring composition, its principles and functions, in a cross-cultural way. She focuses on ring composition in Homer's Iliad, the*

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*Bible's book of Numbers, and, for a challenging modern example, Laurence Sterne's Tristram Shandy, developing a persuasive argument for reconstruing famous books and rereading neglected ones.*

*The Jewish Jesus*

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*Fathers of the World*

*Jesus in the Talmud*

*Essays in Rabbinic and Patristic  
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Testament*

*What Every Christian Needs to Know*

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*About the Jewishness of Jesus*

*Jesus, Son of Mary was  
from a line of Israelite  
Prophets sent to the  
Jews to proclaim the  
message of monotheism  
and to purify and*



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*confirm the law of  
Moses. The Jewish  
religious leaders  
rejected Jesus after he  
challenged their  
authority and rebuked  
them for their*

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*iniquities and excesses.  
The factions who  
believed in Jesus--known  
later as "Christians"--e  
xaggerated his status,  
deified him and  
worshipped him alongside*

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*Allāh. The Jews in turn used the misguidance and excesses of the Christians to vilify the person and character of Jesus who is free and innocent of the excesses*

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*of the Christians and  
the unfounded claims of  
the Jews. The conflict  
between the Jews and  
Christians played out  
over the centuries and  
can be observed in the*

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*anti-Christian polemics  
in Talmudic literature  
and the anti-Jewish  
sentiment that Christian  
Europe retained into the  
20th century. The Qur'ān  
and the Prophetic*

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*traditions make clear  
the correct position  
regarding Jesus to both  
of these groups--the  
"People of the Book"  
(ahl al-kitāb)--in their  
disputes with each*

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*other: One failed to act  
by the truth when it  
came to them and  
rejected the message of  
Jesus, and the other  
acted upon ignorance--in  
opposition to authentic*

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*revealed knowledge--and  
fell into exaggeration  
by worshipping Jesus  
alongside Allāh.*

*This book is an  
important and  
provocative study of the*



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*thought of the Pharisees  
in the time of Jesus and  
marks the first attempt  
by a rabbinic writer to  
demonstrate that Jesus  
of Nazareth consistently  
upheld the views of the*

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*rabbis of the School of Hillel, and that all his criticism was directed at the School of Shammai and their followers. After the School of Shammai disappeared from*

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*the Jewish scene  
following the  
destruction of the  
Jerusalem Temple in the  
first century, Judaism  
developed according to  
the teachings of Bet*

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*Hillel. This alone  
increases the common  
grounds for dialogue  
between Jews and  
Christians. Some  
important findings of  
this book include the*

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*following: The Pharisees  
of Bet Shammai  
controlled Jewish life  
and thought during the  
first century; the  
School of Shammai denied  
salvation to the*

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*Gentiles; the Shammaite  
Pharisees and priests  
considered Jesus a  
danger to the Jewish  
people; the Jerusalem  
Temple was destroyed  
because of Bet Shammai's*

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*hatred of the Gentile world; the prophet Elijah condemned Jesus' crucifixion. These new insights will help achieve a new understanding of the*

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*seemingly anti-Jewish passages contained in the Christian scriptures, and make possible improved relations between Christians and Jews. It*



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*is acclaimed by scholars  
of both faiths.*

*“The Talmud Unmasked” is  
an 1892 work by Justinas  
Pranaitus. Generally  
regarded as anti-  
Semitic, it is a*

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*collection of quotes  
from the Talmud and  
Zohar that the author  
claims illustrate that  
Judaism promotes hatred  
towards non-Jews to the  
point of promoting*

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*murder. Contents include: "Justinas Pranaitis", "Jesus Christ in the Talmud", "The Christians", "Christians Must Be Avoided", and*

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*“Christians Must Be  
Exterminated”. Justinas  
Bonaventura Pranaitis  
(1861 – 1917) was a  
Lithuanian Catholic  
priest who worked as  
Master of Theology and*

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*Professor of Hebrew at  
the Imperial  
Ecclesiastical Academy  
of the Roman Catholic  
Church in Saint  
Petersburg, Russia. Many  
vintage books such as*

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Most Influential Rabbi*



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*in History*

*The Turning Point in  
Western History*

Born in Slutzk, Russia, in 1805,  
Elijah Zvi Soloveitchik is a largely  
forgotten member of the  
prestigious Soloveitchik rabbinic

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dynasty. Before Hayyim Soloveitchik developed the standard Brisker method of Talmudic study, or Joseph Dov Soloveitchik helped to found American Modern Orthodox Judaism, Elijah Soloveitchik wrote

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Qol Qore, a rabbinic commentary on the Gospels of Matthew and Mark. Qol Qore drew on classic rabbinic literature, and particularly on the works of Moses Maimonides, to argue for the compatibility of Christianity with

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Judaism. To this day, it remains the only rabbinic work to embrace the compatibility of Orthodox Judaism and the Christian Bible. In The Bible, the Talmud, and the New Testament, Shaul Magid presents the first-ever English

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translation of Qol Qore. In his contextualizing introduction, Magid explains that Qol Qore offers a window onto the turbulent historical context of nineteenth-century European Jewry. With violent anti-Semitic activity on the

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rise in Europe, Elijah Soloveitchik was unique in believing that the roots of anti-Semitism were theological, based on a misunderstanding of the New Testament by both Jews and Christians. His hope was that the

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Qol Qore, written in Hebrew and translated into French, German, and Polish, would reach Jewish and Christian audiences alike, urging each to consider the validity of the other's religious principles. In an era characterized

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by fractious debates between Jewish communities, Elijah Soloveitchik represents a voice that called for radical unity amongst Jews and Christians alike.

Scattered throughout the Talmud,  
*Page 144/179*



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the founding document of rabbinic Judaism in late antiquity, can be found quite a few references to Jesus--and they're not flattering. In this lucid, richly detailed, and accessible book, Peter Schäfer examines how the rabbis of the

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Talmud read, understood, and used the New Testament Jesus narrative to assert, ultimately, Judaism's superiority over Christianity. The Talmudic stories make fun of Jesus' birth from a virgin, fervently contest his claim

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to be the Messiah and Son of God, and maintain that he was rightfully executed as a blasphemer and idolater. They subvert the Christian idea of Jesus' resurrection and insist he got the punishment he deserved

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in hell--and that a similar fate awaits his followers. Schäfer contends that these stories betray a remarkable familiarity with the Gospels--especially Matthew and John--and represent a deliberate and sophisticated anti-Christian

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polemic that parodies the New Testament narratives. He carefully distinguishes between Babylonian and Palestinian sources, arguing that the rabbis' proud and self-confident countermessage to that of the

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evangelists was possible only in the unique historical setting of Persian Babylonia, in a Jewish community that lived in relative freedom. The same could not be said of Roman and Byzantine Palestine, where the Christians

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aggressively consolidated their political power and the Jews therefore suffered. A departure from past scholarship, which has played down the stories as unreliable distortions of the historical Jesus, Jesus in the

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Talmud posits a much more deliberate agenda behind these narratives.

In this beautifully realized study, Peter Schäfer investigates the origins of a female manifestation of God in Jewish mysticism. The



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search itself is a fascinating exploration of the idea of a feminine divinity. And Schäfer's surprising but persuasive conclusions yield deeper understanding of the complex but frequently intimate relationship

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between Christianity and Judaism--and of the development of religious concepts more generally. Toward the end of the twelfth century, a small book titled the Bahir (Light) appeared in Provence. The first document of

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Judaism's emerging kabbalistic movement, it introduced a completely new view of God, one that included a divine potency that was essentially female. This female divinity was portrayed both as a mediator between Jews and

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God and as part of the Godhead itself. Examining Judaic history from the biblical Wisdom tradition to the Middle Ages, Schäfer finds some precedents for the Kabbalah's feminine divinity. But he cannot account for her forceful

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appearance in twelfth-century southern France without reference to the immediate Christian environment, particularly the flourishing veneration of the Virgin Mary. Indeed, twelfth-century Jews and Christians were

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simultaneously rediscovering the feminine as an aspect of the Godhead after having abandoned it in favor of either an abstract, disembodied God or an exclusively male one. In proposing that the medieval cult

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of Mary--rather than eastern  
Gnosticism--is the appropriate  
framework for understanding the  
feminine elements in Jewish  
mysticism, *Mirror of His Beauty*  
represents a sea change in  
Kabbalah and Jewish-Christian

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cultural studies. It shifts our attention from the Byzantine East to the Latin Christian West. And in contrast to histories that treat the development of Judaism and Christianity in isolation, it leads us to a fuller understanding of Jews



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and Christians living in proximity,  
aware of each other.

An Enquiry Into the Talmud Jesus  
Stories, the Toldoth Jeschu, and  
Some Curious Statements of  
Epiphanius, Being a Contribution  
to the Study of Christian Origins

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The Babylonian Talmud  
A Day in Capernaum  
What It Is and What It Knows  
About Jesus and His Followers  
What Earliest Christianity Learned  
from the Apocrypha and  
Pseudepigrapha

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A Fresh Understanding, from the Dawn of Time to the End of Days  
*Taking a fresh look at what the Greeks and Romans thought about Jews and Judaism, Peter Schafer locates the origin of anti-Semitism in the ancient world. Judeophobia*

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*firmly establishes Hellenistic Egypt as the generating source of anti-Semitism, with roots extending back into Egypt's pre-Hellenistic history. A pattern of ingrained hostility toward an alien culture emerges when Schafer*

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*surveys an illuminating spectrum of comments on Jews and their religion in Greek and Roman writings, focusing on the topics that most interested the pagan classical world: the exodus or, as it was widely interpreted,*

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*expulsion from Egypt; the nature of the Jewish god; food restrictions, in particular abstinence from pork; laws relating to the sabbath; the practice of circumcision; and Jewish proselytism. He then*

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*probes key incidents, two fierce outbursts of hostility in Egypt: the destruction of a Jewish temple in Elephantine in 410 B.C.E. and the riots in Alexandria in 38 C.E. Asking what fueled these attacks on Jewish communities, the author*

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*discovers deep-seated ethnic resentments. It was from Egypt that hatred of Jews, based on allegations of impiety, xenophobia, and misanthropy, was transported first to Syria-Palestine and then to Rome, where it*



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*acquired a new element: fear of this small but distinctive community. To the hatred and fear, ingredients of Christian theology were soon added--a mix all too familiar in Western history. "[A] fascinating recasting of the*

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*story of Jesus.” —Elliot Wolfson,  
New York University In July 2008,  
a front-page story in the New York  
Times reported on the discovery  
of an ancient Hebrew tablet,  
dating from before the birth of  
Jesus, which predicted a Messiah*

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*who would rise from the dead after three days. Commenting on this startling discovery at the time, noted Talmud scholar Daniel Boyarin argued that “some Christians will find it shocking—a challenge to the uniqueness of*

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*their theology.” Guiding us through a rich tapestry of new discoveries and ancient scriptures, The Jewish Gospels makes the powerful case that our conventional understandings of Jesus and of the origins of*

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*Christianity are wrong. In Boyarin's scrupulously illustrated account, the coming of the Messiah was fully imagined in the ancient Jewish texts. Jesus, moreover, was embraced by many Jews as this person, and his core*

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*teachings were not at all a break from Jewish beliefs and teachings. Jesus and his followers, Boyarin shows, were simply Jewish. What came to be known as Christianity came much later, as religious and political leaders sought to impose*

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*a new religious orthodoxy that was not present at the time of Jesus's life. In the vein of Elaine Pagels's The Gnostic Gospels, here is a brilliant new work that will break open some of our culture's most cherished*

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*"Raises profound questions . . . This provocative book will change the way we think of the Gospels in their Jewish context." —John J.*



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*Midrash*

*Jesus among the Jews*