

The Standard Jewish Encyclopedia



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the purpose of human life with all its trials, but finds no spiritual support in either faith or intellect, and at times even adopts a bluntly hedonistic outlook. His motto is "vanity of vanities, all is vanity." The last few verses of the book are optimistic in outlook, and are regarded by some scholars as a later addition. E. includes counsel on human conduct, based on the assumption that all is preordained, and that man should reconcile himself to oppression and injustice. This doctrine is so contrary to the spirit of biblical thought that the rabbis endeavored to suppress the book, but the ascription of its authorship to "Kohelet, son of David" (identified with Solomon) secured its inclusion in the canon. Modern scholars regard the name Kohelet as pseudonymous and ascribe the composition of the book to the Second Temple Period (3rd cent. BCE?). The prose is uniform, precise, and lucid, the language bearing the closest resemblance to mishnaic Hebrew found in the Bible, while the style is that of the WISDOM literature. The Scroll of E. is read in the synagogue during the Feast of Tabernacles.

ECCLESIASTES RABBAH (Heb. *Kohelet Rabbah*): Midrash written on the Book of Ecclesiastes; part of the collection known as MIDRASH RABBAH. It utilizes various older Midrashim. Generally dated as post-talmudic.

ECCLESIASTICUS see BEN SIRA

ÉCLAIREURS ISRAËLITES see SCOUTS

ÉCOLE RABBINIQUE DE FRANCE see SEMINAIRE ISRAËLITE

ECUADOR: Jews have lived in E. only in the 20th cent. Immigration increased during the Nazi Period, most of the newcomers settling in Quito. Since 1945, however, many have left the country for economic reasons. The Jews of Quito (numbering 1,000) are organized in the Asociación de Beneficencia Israelita, and those of Guayaquil (150) in the Centro Israelita (1959). A newspaper *Informaciones* (in German and Spanish) appears in Quito. Jewish pop. (1965): 1,200.

EDELS, SAMUEL ELIEZER (known as the *Maharsha*; 1555—1831): Polish talmudist, called after his mother-in-law Edel who founded a yeshivah for him in Posen. He was subsequently rabbi in Chelm, Lublin, and Ostrog. His main work *Hiddushe Halakhot* ("Halakhic Novellae") became a classic and was incorporated in most editions of the Talmud.

EDEN, GARDEN OF (Heb. *Gan Eden*): Original abode of Adam and Eve (Gen. 2-3). It was watered by a river which divided into four streams, the Pishon, Gihon, Tigris, and Euphrates. Adam and Eve were eventually excluded from the garden for their disobedience. Ezekiel (28:11-19; 31:8-9, 16-18) locates E. on a mountain consecrated to God and describes the expulsion of a cherub

from it. In later Jewish literature, E. is the abode of the righteous after death.

EDER, MONTAGU DAVID (1866—1936): British psychologist and Zionist leader. He was a follower of Freud and one of the founders of the British Psychoanalysts' Association. He was active in Jewish affairs and joined the Jewish Territorial Organization in 1905. After 1917, he supported Zionism and in 1918-21, was in Palestine with the first Zionist Commission. E. was a member of the Zionist Executive in London and Jerusalem 1921-3 and 1927-8.

EDESSA (now Urfa): City in Asiatic Turkey, where Jews have lived since Second Temple times. They suffered massacre in Trajan's time (116 CE) and under Julian (363). In the 19th cent., a third of the population was Jewish, but their numbers dwindled, especially after World War I. Few are now left. Emigrants from E. living in Jerusalem have their own synagogue.

EDIDIN, BEN M. (1899—1948): US educator. He was author of several textbooks on Jewish and Zionist education and was prominent in Jewish educational activities in New York.

EDINBURGH: Capital of SCOTLAND. Individual Jews appeared in E. from the 17th cent. but no community existed until the close of the 18th. The main Jewish immigration to Scotland after 1881 was attracted to Glasgow, but E. has a well-organized, unified community, with charitable, educational, and social institutions. Jewish pop. (1964): 1,700.

EDINGER, LUDWIG (1855—1918): German neurologist; professor at Frankfort Univ. from 1914. His researches led to advances in the knowledge of brain-anatomy.

EDMAN, IRWIN (1896—1954): US philosopher; professor of philosophy at Columbia Univ. from 1935. He wrote many books and articles on philosophy, esthetics, literature, and education.

EDMONTON: Canadian city. The first Jews went there in the last decade of the 19th cent. The first congregation (Orthodox) was founded in 1906, and its Beth Israel synagogue built in 1911. A Reform congregation was established subsequently. Jewish pop. (1964): 2,500.

EDOM (IDUMEA): Country in SE Palestine, also called Mount SEIR. Its terrain was mountainous and easily fortified and its land was fertile. E. lay S of the Dead Sea and bordered on the Red Sea at Elath and Ezion Geber. The Edomites were of Semitic origin, traditionally descendants of Esau, and lived by hunting. They dispossessed the Horite inhabitants of Seir and organized themselves along tribal lines headed by a chieftain (called *aloooph*), later consolidating into a monarchy. The Edomites were traditional enemies of the Israelites; they fought Saul and were defeated by David who

partly annexed their land. The Edomites regained their independence during the reign of Jehoram, but wars between the two states were frequent. In the 8th cent. BCE, the Edomites became vassals of Assyria. At the time of the destruction of the First Temple, they plundered and looted in association with the Babylonians, and, being driven out from Seir by the Nabateans, occupied S Judah during or after the period of the Exile. The Edomites were conquered by John Hyrcanus who forcibly converted them to Judaism, and from then on they constituted a part of the Jewish people, Herod being one of their descendants. During Titus' siege of Jerusalem, they marched in to reinforce the extreme elements, killing all they suspected of peace tendencies. Thereafter, they ceased to figure in Jewish history. The name in the Talmud is a synonym for an oppressive government, especially Rome: in the Middle Ages, it was applied to Christian Europe.

EDREI: Ancient city of Transjordan in the Bashan region; today Deraa (Syria). Formerly the capital of Og (Num. 21:33), it was later in the territory of the tribe of Manasseh (Josh. 13:31). A Jewish community survived there until the 14th cent.

EDUCATION: The constant reiteration in the Pentateuch of the duty to teach the Divine precepts to the people, and especially to the young, must have stimulated some sort of religious e. among the Hebrews at a very early period. Even in the age of the Judges, a young man, casually encountered, was able to write (Judg. 8:14). The Lachish letters illustrate relatively widespread literacy at the end of the period of the First Temple. Religious e. at this time was apparently conducted by levites sometimes dispatched expressly from Jerusalem (II Chr. 7:7ff). The religious revival under Ezra centered on the regular reading of and instruction in the Torah which inevitably entailed the extension of organized e. According to tradition, local schools were first organized systematically in ancient Palestine by Simeon ben Shetaḥ (1st cent. BCE), while elementary e. was instituted for boys of six or seven by the high priest Joshua ben Gamla (c. 64-5 CE). Before the fall of the Jewish state, the pagan philosopher Seneca stated that the Jews were the only people who knew the reasons for their religious observances, while Josephus observed that "our principal care is to educate our children well." A comprehensive system of e., open to all, was fundamental to the organization of Jewish life in the Talmudic Period when the rabbis maintained that the entire world was "poised on the breath of schoolchildren." The patriarch Judah I sent a commission throughout Palestine to ensure that there should be teachers of the Bible and of the Oral Law in every place. There was opposition

to female e., but some women were nevertheless well versed even in advanced Jewish learning. The elementary school was termed the *Bet ha-Sepher* to distinguish it from the advanced school, the *BET HA-MIDRASH*, which was generally in immediate proximity to the synagogue. No teacher was supposed to instruct a class of more than 25 pupils. Apart from the instruction in the *Bet ha-Midrash*, there was something approximating to universal adult e. in the Sabbath discourses in the synagogue, besides sermonic instruction. This system was the basis of subsequent Jewish educational organization. In the Middle Ages and Ghetto Periods, there was universal and generally free Jewish e., and an illiterate male was seldom encountered in the medieval community. In the small local communities characteristic of this period, elementary e. was generally in the hands either of the father or of a professional elementary teacher who might at the same time be one of the communal functionaries or a scribe or copyist. Advanced instruction in Talmud would be volunteered as a meritorious deed by learned householders. Adults would continue throughout their lives to participate in study-groups, almost as their sole diversion. For business purposes, some elementary mathematical instruction was obviously a necessity. In larger communities, e. was more formally and elaborately organized. A full account has survived of the educational reform introduced for the Castilian communities by a synod which met at Valladolid in 1432. In this period, the essential aspect of the duty of the rabbi — especially in Central and E Europe — was to maintain and conduct a *YESHIVAH*, those who studied in it being supported at public expense. Though only the Talmud and Jewish lore were taught, the wide ramifications of purely Jewish study contained many of the elements of general e. In Renaissance Italy, the scope of Jewish e. widened to include versification, philosophy, the rudiments at least of the vernacular, and even Latin. Elementary e. in the Italian communities was often conducted by women and more advanced e. by private tutors. It was then that Jews began to enter universities for general e., particularly in medicine. In 1366, the Sicilian Jewish communities attempted to establish a university of their own, while in 1583, David Provenzale of Mantua planned an institution for providing, in a Jewish atmosphere, preparatory training before entering the universities. The educational system of the Italian Jewish communities in the Ghetto Period was well organized, a special society (*heura*) having charge of the Talmud Torah (as the elementary institution was henceforth generally called). Feminine e. also began to make headway at about this time, a Talmud Torah for girls being reportedly established in Rome in the 15th cent. The combination

Note: This article is from *The Standard Jewish Encyclopedia*, 1966, pg. 592, 593. It reveals that the Edomites "became part of the Jewish people". Since the true tribe of Israelite Judah living in Judea became Christians, the only people who retained the name "Jew" after Christ's crucifixion and resurrection were the Edomites. This is the uncanny fulfillment of the prophecy in Isaiah 65:15 about the Edomite Jews who invented Red Communism: "And ye shall leave your name (Jews) for a curse unto my chosen: for Yahweh God shall slay thee (destroy Communism) and call His chosen by another name (Christians)." Note too, how the Edomites turn things around in the Talmud and call others "the Edomites".