

**GUIDE OF JUDAISM. A  
SYSTEMATIC WORK FOR THE  
STUDY AND INSTRUCTION OF  
THE WHOLE SCOPE OF JUDAISM**

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Guide of Judaism. A systematic work for the study and instruction of the whole scope of Judaism  
by Simon Glazer

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**SIMON GLAZER**

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# GUIDE OF JUDAISM

מורה היהדות

A Systematic Work for the  
Study and Instruction of  
the Whole Scope of Judaism

By

**RABBI SIMON GLAZER**

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*TO MY DEAR WIFE*

*IDA*

*THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED*

*THE AUTHOR*



## P R E F A C E

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When the first rays of emancipation pierced through the Ghetto-horizon, the erstwhile *Hofjuden* were seized with fear lest the Oriental character of Judaism be the barrier to complete political and social equality. Accordingly, a new force was set in motion, and—the era of the Jewish apologist was inaugurated. At the dawn of the nineteenth century Apologism was already an established institution with chief headquarters in the Central European Jewries. In a measure its doctrine solved some part of the Jewish problems. Some among the early apologists had a belief that by a kind of auto-hypnotism erstwhile Ghetto-dwellers could become Indo-Europeans of Mosaic persuasion. A certain number of the descendants of that generation can now be traced at the head of various anti-Semitic groups.

The *Mashkil* whose type of code was, "Be a Jew at home, and a man abroad," was a cross-breed of an apologist and an assimilator, the axiom itself, however, being a semi-official sanction to the unlawful union.

The movement of Reform followed in the wake of the great unrest in the semi-liberated Jewries. It was wise in its day to select subjects from the synagogue, or, rather, from the *Beth-ha-Midrash*, and not from the ultra-radical groups which were on the increase in Southern Europe as a reaction of *Hasidism*. By such good care during its experimental stages, Reform was enabled to mould a nucleus of great fertility when it began a propoganda among the pioneers of the New World.

The Reform-builders aimed high. They started out on a crusade against the *shell*, and on a life-saving mission for the *kernel* simultane-



ously. They advertised their intentions as heading towards an era of prophetic Judaism, therewith affirming that the diaspora was not a curse but a blessing. They outlined their plan with the thoroughness akin to most modern efficiency methods. By process of elimination the Talmud and *Paskim* disappeared entirely from their midst. Having left no *locus penitentiae* behind them, they could not be alarmed lest some future zealot will restore any discarded part within the limits of their sanctum. Then the battle cry: "*Chapeau bas!*"

One could not expect of them a return to Karaitism, but that they would succeed to organize a Torah-less Judaism was even beyond their own expectation. For, what they really have, and which they can point at as the *kernel*, is reduced to the minister's *Drashah*, the mourner's *Kadish*, and the philanthropist's scientific *Zedakah*.

The *coup de soleil* proved too dazzling for the eyes of other elements in the European Jewries. They appeared, on occasions, in the ultra-radical propoganda, particularly on this side of the Atlantic. But they went neither to the synagog nor to the home. Like unto themselves their propoganda was of a floating character. The whole mass of *Hephkerut* was but a single cataract of irresponsibility. Having had no home, no priests nor no high-priests, their brave wives, and still braver children, boys and girls born among the free, are bringing them back to Judaism.

But the *vis vitae* of Judaism in the New World, its renaissance and its progress is possible only in this generation of patriotism and consciousness of self. The bricks of the great edifice of European Jewishness are being carried across the Atlantic. One Jewish centre was always built upon the ruins of another. Such is our history and its philosophy.

The problems confronting Israel to-day are: How shall, or, rather, how can Judaism be perpetuated in the face of Western civilization? Is Judaism really in danger because of its Oriental origin?

Eliminating Reform as a factor in solving these problems, the question arises: What alternative have the spiritual leaders in Israel to offer to the growing generation which is both free and cultured?

## PREFACE

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Judaism, since the last quarter of the eighteenth century, continued to develop among the great masses of European Jewries along three distinct lines: the Mendelssohnian school, the Israel Baal-Shem school, and the Elijah Gaon school. Frankfurt, Warsaw and Wilna fairly illustrate the characteristics of the intentions of the founders of those schools. Will it be possible, or, facing conditions as they are, is it desirable to perpetuate the divisions and create a *Hassidic* Chicago, an *Ashkenazic* Philadelphia, or a *Pilpulistic* New York?

By means of observation during two decades among various types of communities, and alongside Reform colleagues and radical agitators, it is my firm conviction that the problems of Judaism in the New World can, and will be solved by only one means—by means of EDUCATION.

And, as an *avant propos* I dedicate this work to American Israel, to the growing and grown generation.

SIMON GLAZER.

Chief Rabbi United Synagogues

Montreal, New Moon, Adar 5677 (Feb. 22, 1917).

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