

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
WRITINGS OF THE
SANHEDRIN AND
TALMUDS OF THE JEWS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649744923

Archaeological Writings of the Sanhedrin and Talmuds of the Jews by Rev. W. D. Mahan

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REV. W. D. MAHAN

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ARCHÆOLOGICAL WRITINGS
OF THE
SANHEDRIN
AND
TALMUDS OF THE JEWS,

*TAKEN FROM THE ANCIENT PARCHMENTS AND
SCROLLS AT CONSTANTINOPLE AND
THE VATICAN AT ROME,*

BRING THE RECORD

MADE BY THE ENEMIES OF JESUS OF NAZARETH IN HIS DAY.

THE MOST INTERESTING HISTORY EVER READ BY MAN.

BY REV. W. D. MAHAN,
OF MOONVILLE, MO.,

Author of *Acta Pilati*, and *Hebrew History of Baptism*, who is extensively
known to the Ministry in the West.

PUBLISHED FOR THE AUTHOR,
By Perrin & Smith, Book and Job Printers, 310 Olive Street, St. Louis.
1884.

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TO THE READER.

BELIEVING that no event, of as much importance as the death of Jesus of Nazareth was to the world, could have transpired without some record being made of it by his enemies in their courts, legislations and histories, I commenced investigating the subject. After many years of study, and after consulting various histories and corresponding with many scholars, I secured the assistance of two learned men—Drs. McIntosh and Twyman—and went to the Vatican at Rome, and then to the Jewish Talmuds at Constantinople, incurring a risk of my life as well as expending a good deal of money. As a result, I have compiled the following book, which will be found one of the most strange and interesting works ever read. It may appear fragmentary, but the reader will remember that it is the record of men made nearly two thousand years ago.

W. D. MAHAN, Booneville, Mo.

July 1st, 1884.

CHAPTER I.

A SHORT SKETCH OF THE TALMUDS.

THE Hebrew word, *lamod*, signifies "to teach," and, to "teach by example." This word, example, is always understood. To teach—this is what is meant by tradition. It means that the child learns from its father. From this word we get the word talmud. We also have the word, *shanoh*, which means "to learn," and *gamor*, which means, "having learned, or having ceased to learn." The talmuds are written on parchment or papyrus. The scroll is about 20 inches wide, and rolled around a windlass. From these talmuds there have been many books written by the Jewish Rabbis.

The most important is the *Mishna*. Its name indicates what it is—the Law. It contains the laws of all nations, or a part of the laws of the various nations of the earth, such as the Jewish Sanhedrin thought were compatible with the laws of God. Its principal teachings are what we would call the moral law of God—that is to say, anything

is right if God says it is right, and this is the only reason why it is right. This work has been the great reference book for the Jewish Rabbis in all ages. It was translated and compiled by Hillel, and is a very useful book for good scholars.

The next in point of value is the *Tosephta*. This word in the Hebrew means "treatment," and contains mainly the ritual of the temple service. It is a very extensive work, and is really a regulator of human life, having the dealings of husband and wife, parent and child, master and pupil; in fact, it enters into all the details of life with such thoughtfulness and in such a beautiful style that it would be exceedingly interesting to the young. It certainly contains the finest system of morals in the world.

Then comes the *Mechilta*, which means "government," in the Hebrew language. This book tells of the organization of the Sanhedrin and its powers—both the greater and the lesser; the greater to be composed of seventy and the lesser of twenty-four. These two legislative bodies had control of the whole of the Jewish commonwealth. Although they exercised great power, their power was not absolute. There was another court that held the highest authority of the nation. That was the court of elders and priests. This court consisted

of twelve men, and its chairman was the high priest. It decided all appeals, and could not be appealed from. This is the court that tried Jesus of Nazareth; and although it was a court of appeals, capital crimes were tried by no court but this.

I will give the form of a trial of a criminal in this court, as it is given in *Mechilta*. At the time that Jesus was tried by this court, the Jewish government had lost its executive power. This was one of the conceded points in the capitulation by Augustus Cæsar. So at this time the Roman Emperor's consent had to be obtained, though he had to use the Jewish soldiers; for the Romans had only one hundred soldiers at Jerusalem. They were all the time engaged in war, and needed all their soldiers at home. When a criminal was brought before this court of the high priests, they went through a preliminary trial, in order, if possible, to bring him to an acknowledgment. If they could not, he was sentenced, and then sent to the Roman authority, or governor, for his approval. He was then sent back to the high priest, and from there to the Sanhedrin, with the charges written out and the names of the witnesses by which these things had been proven. If they approved the decision of the high priest, the prisoner was sent

back to the high priest for his final trial. This court of twelve men was required by the Jewish law to fast and pray one whole day before the trial commenced, then they were required to bring the urim and thummim out of the holy place where they were kept, and to place them before the high priest. He was closely veiled, so that no one could see him, thus representing God doing his work. Then there was what was called the *lactees*, consisting of two men, one of whom stood at the door of the court with a red flag in his hand and the other sat on a white horse some distance on the road that led to the place of execution. Each one of these men continually cried the name of the criminal, his crime, who were the witnesses, and called upon any person who knew any thing in his favor to come forward and testify. After the testimony was taken the eleven men cast lots or voted, and their decision was shown to the high priest. As he was too holy to act of himself, but only as the mouth-piece of God, he went up to a basin or a ewer, as it is called by them, and washed his hands in token of the innocency of the court, thus testifying that the criminal's own action had brought condemnation on himself. As soon as the soldiers saw this, they took the man to the place of execution, and there stoned him till he was dead. Not