

sealed the covenant with  
[A. V. 23]). 4. A Levite of  
[I. xi. 15; I Chron. ix. 14].

M. SEL.

#### See PERIODICALS.

1. Chief of a family the  
hundred and twenty-three  
captivity with Zerubbabel  
[vii. 22]. Seven of them  
en, whom they had to put  
um was among those who  
1 Nehemiah (Neh. x. 18).  
stood on the left side of  
Law to the people (Neh.

M. SEL.

#### ASSIDEANS (חסידים);

"): Religious party which  
important rôle in political  
of the Maccabean wars, al-  
quite some time previous.  
three times in the books  
acc. ii. 41 it is related that  
he war, after a number of  
of the desert had allowed  
the Sabbath without offer-  
hias and his followers de-  
bath in case of necessity.

Hasidæans joined them,  
such as were volun-  
" In the second passage  
hat Alcimus succeeded in  
he newly elected king of  
gh priest instead of Judas  
it is said (verses 12-14):  
unto Alcimus and Bac-  
to require justice. Now  
were the first among the  
ght peace of them: For,  
fist of the seed of Aaron  
h this army, and he will  
rong." They were mis-  
ver, since Alcimus later  
y of them to be put to  
ssage, on the other hand  
cribes the political situ-  
etrius as follows: "Those  
Assideans, whose captain  
sh war, and are seditious,  
n be in peace" (II Macc.

occurs frequently in the  
he pious," "saints" (xxx.  
xxvii. 28). In Talmudic  
pear as martyrs to their  
selfish and long-suffering  
"saints of former times"  
; as those who compose  
hour before prayer (Ber.  
ior at the Feast of Taber-  
wing of water (Suk. v. 4).  
out with Joshua Katnuta,  
belonged (Sotah ix. 15;  
Benedictions God's bless-  
em immediately after the

Zaddikim ("al ha-Zaddikim we'al ha-Hasidim"),  
and in later times they appear in general as the ideal  
representatives of Judaism, so that "Hasid" has  
come to be a title of respect (Num. R. §§ 14, 227a,  
"Jacob be-Hasid"; comp. Tem. 15b; Ta'an. 8a).

From these sources have been developed the opin-  
ions, generally prevalent among scholars, that the  
Hasidæans were strongly religious ascetics who held  
strictly to the Law and loved quiet,

**Party of** and who founded a society or sect  
**the** that exercised considerable power and  
**Rebellion.** authority among the people; and that  
they were finally drawn into rebellion

by Antiochus, who began the war against the Syr-  
ians and carried it to a triumphant conclusion. The  
Hasidæans thus became the chief impelling force in  
the Jewish struggle for independence (II Macc.  
xiv. 6).

Concerning the political rôle of the Hasidæans in  
this war, Wellhausen has endeavored to prove that  
it was almost insignificant ("Die Pharisäer und die  
Sadducæer," Greifswald, 1874). According to him  
they formed an independent association existing  
apart from the doctors of the Law (comp. I Macc. vii.  
12), which attached itself to the Maccabees after  
the latter had won their first success (I Macc. ii.  
42), but which seized the first opportunity to make  
peace with Alcimus and thus left the Maccabees in  
the lurch. The contradictory passage in II Macca-  
bees, according to which the Hasidæans were the chief  
force throughout the war, Wellhausen regards as a  
violently interjected protest against the true repre-  
sentation of them as found in I Maccabees. Several  
modern scholars (Schürer, Kautzsch, and others)  
have agreed to this view, which had already been  
adopted in part by Ewald ("Gesch. des Volkes  
Israel," iv. 401). But even if the justice of this  
view were admitted, the origin and tenets of the  
Hasidæans would be no less obscure than before.  
Grätz ("Gesch." ii. 273) supposes them to have de-  
veloped out of the Nazarenes. After

**Different** the Maccabean victories, according  
**Views.** to Grätz, they retired into obscurity,  
being plainly dissatisfied with Judas  
Maccabeus, and appeared later as the order of the  
Essenes—a theory which is supported by the simi-  
larity in meaning between 'Essaioi or 'Essaioi (= Syr-  
iac stat. absol. חסיד, stat. emphat. חסיד, "pious")  
and "Hasidim" ("pious"), and which has as many ad-  
vocates (Hitzig, "Gesch. des Volkes Israel"; Lucius,  
"Die Therapeuten") as opponents (Herzfeld, "Gesch.  
des Volkes Israel," and others). Others think that  
the Pharisees were developed from the Hasidim  
(Schürer, "Gesch." ii. 404; Moritz Friedländer,  
"Gesch. der Jüdischen Apologetik," pp. 316 *et seq.*,  
464 *et seq.*).

Since scholars have until recently started with the  
erroneous hypothesis that Hellenism "took root only  
in the upper classes of society, the main body of the  
[Jewish] nation being wholly untouched by it"  
(Wellhausen, "Israelitische und Jüdische Gesch." p.  
240), and that consequently the majority of the peo-  
ple at that time were "pious, and observers of the  
Law," it would be necessary, in order to account for  
the Hasidæans, to remove them from their "pious"  
surroundings and make of them a sect or society

of "extra-pious," although the sources mentioned do  
not justify such a view. The συναγωγή 'Asidaiwv of  
the books of the Maccabees, upon which so much  
emphasis is laid, corresponds, as has already long  
been known, to the קהל חסידים of the Psalms, which  
means neither "sect" nor "society," but only "con-  
gregation," with no idea of party. The piety attrib-  
uted to Hasidim in the Talmudic sources is not  
in any way abnormal or suggestive of sect (Leh-  
mann, in "R. E. J." xxx. 182 *et seq.*). The supposi-  
tion that they were a sect closely associated with  
the scribes, and related to them, rests only on the  
fact that the two classes are mentioned together in  
I Macc. vii. 12, 13; the genuineness of verse 13, how-  
ever, has been questioned by Hitzig ("Gesch. des  
Volkes Israel," p. 417).

Since Moritz Friedländer's investigations (espe-  
cially in "Der Antichrist," Göttingen, 1901) have  
shown the great extent to which the

**Their** Jews in Palestine and in the countries  
**Position.** of the Diaspora fell away from ortho-  
dox Judaism, even in the third cen-  
tury B.C., the Hasidæans appear simply to have been  
those "pious" ones who remained true to the cus-  
toms of their fathers. They lost ground, however,  
from day to day, as their prayer shows: "Help,  
Lord; for the Hasid ceaseth" (כי נמר חסיד) Ps.  
xii. 2 [A. V. 1]). They were animated by a profound  
hatred for the foreign, Hellenic spirit, and for those  
of their Jewish brethren who were filled with it.

In the Maccabean wars they came to an accounting  
with both. They seem by no means to have been  
peace-loving hermits or ascetics. Their sentiments  
and attitude are probably to be seen in Ps. cxlix.:  
"Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise in  
the assembly of Hasidim. . . . The Hasidim exult  
in glory: they sing for joy upon their beds. They  
have the high praises of God in their mouth, and  
a two-edged sword in their hand; to execute venge-  
ance upon the nations, and punishments upon the  
peoples; to bind their kings with chains, and their  
nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them  
the promised judgment" (Hebr.). This agrees with  
II Maccabees, according to which the Hasidæans  
under Judas Maccabeus "continually stirred up war  
and rebellion, and would not let the country be at  
peace" (see ESSENES).

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Jost, *Gesch. des Judenthums und Seiner  
Sekten*, i. 190; Herzfeld, *Gesch. des Volkes Israel*, ii. 357,  
384, 395; Hämbrüer, *R. B. T.* ii. 132; Ersch and Gruber,  
*Encyc.* section iii., part 32, p. 18; Grätz, *Gesch.* ii. 240-374;  
iii. 2, 7, 83, 99; Schürer, *Gesch.* i. 190, 203, 217; ii. 404; Well-  
hausen, *Israelitische und Jüdische Gesch.* pp. 240, 277; Moritz  
Friedländer, *Die Gesch. der Jüdischen Apologetik*, pp. 437  
*et seq.*

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**HASIDIM, HASIDISM:** Hasidism is a relig-  
ious movement which arose among the Polish Jews  
in the eighteenth century, and which won over  
nearly half of the Jewish masses. In its literal  
meaning the word "Hasidism" is identical with  
"pietism" ("Hasid" = "the pious"), and the Hasid-  
dic teachings resemble the synonymous Protestant  
teachings in so far as they both assign the first place  
in religion not to religious dogma and ritual but to  
the sentiment and the emotion of faith. Presenting  
in its inner motives one of the most peculiar phe-  
nomena of religious psychology in general, Hasidism

should in Jewish history be classed among the most momentous spiritual revolutions that have influenced the social life of the Jews, particularly those of eastern Europe.

There has been apparent from time immemorial a struggle for supremacy between two principles in Judaism: the formalism of dogmatic ritual and the direct religious sentiment. The discipline of the Law was in continual conflict with mystical meditation, which gave considerable latitude to individual inclinations in the domain of religion. Such was the nature of the struggle between Pharisaism and Essenism in ancient times, between Talmudism and the Cabala in the Middle Ages, and between rabbinism and the mystic-Messianic movements from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century.

In Poland, where since the sixteenth century the great bulk of the Jewry had firmly established itself, the struggle between rabbinism and mysticism became particularly acute after the Messianic movement called into being by SHABBETHAI ZEBI. Leanings toward mystical doctrines and sectarianism showed themselves prominently among the Jews of the southwestern or Ukraine provinces of Poland (Volhynia, Podolia, and Galicia); while in the northwestern provinces, in Lithuania, and in White Russia, rabbinical Orthodoxy held undisputed sway. This was due to the pronounced social difference between the northern or Lithuanian Jews and the southern Jews of the Ukraine. In Lithuania the Jewish masses were mainly gathered

**Origin in the Ukraine.** in densely populated towns where rabbinical academic culture (in the yeshibot) was in a flourishing state; while in the Ukraine the Jews were more scattered in villages far removed from intellectual centers, and were frequently steeped in ignorance.

The social decay in the south became more intense after the COSSACKS' UPRISING under Chmielnicki and the turbulent times in Poland (1648-60), which completely ruined the Jewry of the Ukraine, but left comparatively untouched that of Lithuania. The economic and spiritual decline of the South-Russian Jews created a favorable field for mystical movements and religious sectarianism, which spread there from the middle of the seventeenth to the middle of the eighteenth century, and brought about, among other things, the appearance of the Christianizing sect of the Frankists. (See FRANK, JACOB.)

Besides these external influences there were deeply seated causes that produced among the greater portion of the Jewish people a discontent with rabbinism and a gravitation toward mysticism. Rabbinism, which in Poland had become transformed into a system of book-lore and dry religious formalism, satisfied neither the unlearned common people nor the learned men who sought in religion an agreeable source of consolation and of forgetfulness of worldly cares. Although rabbinism itself had adopted some features of the Cabala, it had adapted them to fit into its own religious system: it added to the stern discipline of ritualism the gloomy asceticism of the "practical cabalists" of the East, who saw the essence of earthly existence only in fasting, in penance, in self-torture, and in spiritual sadness. Such a combination of religious practises, suitable for indi-

viduals and hermits, was not suitable to the bulk of the Jews. Hasidism gave a ready response to the burning desire of the common people in its simple, stimulating, and comforting faith. In contradistinction to other sectarian teaching, Hasidism aimed not at dogmatic or ritual reform, but at a deeper psychological one. Its aim was to change not the belief, but the believer. By means of psychological suggestion it created a new type of religious man, a type that placed emotion above reason and rites, and religious exaltation above knowledge.

The founder of Hasidism was a man of the obscure Podolian Jewry, Israel b. Eliezer BA'AL SHEM-TOB (Besht). His personal fame as **The Ba'al Shem.** a healer spread not only among the Jews, but also among the non-Jewish peasants and the Polish nobles. He often cured the Jews by fervent prayer, profound ecstasies, and gesticulations. He also at times successfully prognosticated the future, and revealed secrets. Soon acquiring among the masses the reputation of a miracle-worker, he came to be known as "the kind Ba'al Shem" ("Ba'al Shem-Tob").

Besht was the idol of the common people. Characterized by an extraordinary sincerity and simplicity, he knew how to gain an insight into the spiritual needs of the masses. He taught them that true religion was not Talmudic scholarship, but a sincere love of God combined with warm faith and belief in the efficacy of prayer; that a plain man filled with a sincere belief in God, and whose prayers come from the heart, is more acceptable to God than the rabbi versed in the Law, and who throughout his life is absorbed in the study of the Talmud and in the observance of petty ceremonials. This democratization of Judaism attracted to the teachings of Besht not only the common people, but also the scholars whom the rabbinical scholasticism and ascetic Cabala failed to satisfy.

About 1740 Besht established himself in the Podolian town of Miedzyboz. He gathered about him numerous disciples and followers, whom he initiated into the secrets of his teachings not by systematic exposition, but by means of sayings and parables. These sayings were transmitted orally, and were later written down by his disciples, who developed the disjointed thoughts of their master into a system. Besht himself did not write anything. Being a mystic by nature, he regarded his teachings as a prophetic revelation. Toward the end of his life he witnessed the spread in Podolia of the teachings of the Frankists, which, like Hasidism, were the outcome of popular dissatisfaction with the existing order of religious matters, but led to negative results.

The teachings of Hasidism, as laid down in the sayings of Besht and his first disciples, are founded on two theoretical conceptions: (1) religious pantheism, or the omnipresence of God, and (2) the idea of communion between God and man.

**Fundamental Conceptions.** "Man," says Besht, "must always bear in mind that God is omnipresent and is always with him; that He is, so to speak, the most subtle matter everywhere diffused. . . . Let man realize that when he is looking at material things he is in reality gazing at the image of the Deity which is

present in all things always serve God

The second of which was adopted belief that between world of humanity. It is true not only man, but also that will and mood of of man produces upper spheres. F chief practical pr with God for th source of life and o is achieved through on God, and consu The righteous ma God, even in his v feels His presence. with God is pray- munion complete t ecstatic; and the s his devotions det material dwelling, recourse may be l lent bodily motion cording to Besht, t ment and not in r halakic lore are o useful only when t an exalted religiou of moral instructi the casuistic Talm In the performanc is of more import reason formalism a are injurious.

It is necessary to ful and happy fra

**Com- munion the of a Essence.** spiri

poss the gift of proph righteous man, or the ideal of comm therefore appears The rôle of the za God and ordinary salvation of the sc ings are obtained: in the power of th who has more or spheres."

Zaddikim, whic tem, had a far-reac of Hasidism. Froi Besht, two—the p Jacob Joseph Coh others contributed Meseritz (Mezhire leaders of Hasidism nated what may b Poland and Russi part, spread the H