## Judaism When Christianity Began

A Survey of Belief and Practice

. .

Jacob Neusner

Westminster John Knox Press LOUISVILLE • LONDON

.

66 L

## Contents

| 1 | Introduction   | 1  |
|---|--|----|
|   | What Do We Mean by "Judaism"?                            | 1  |
|   | Recognizing Diversity in Judaism (among Other Religions) | 4  |
|   | Judaism When Christianity Began                          | 6  |
|   | The World of Judaism: The Human Dimension                | 10 |
| 2 | Revelation and Scripture: The Oral Torah                 | 15 |
|   | How Is God Self-Revealed in the Torah?                   | 15 |
|   | Meeting God in Torah-Study                               | 18 |
|   | The Role of Reason in Revelation                         | 20 |
|   | Torah versus Christ                                      | 22 |
| 3 | God: "In our image, after our likeness"                  | 29 |
|   | What the Torah Tells about God                           | 29 |
|   | The Characterization of God                              | 30 |
|   | God as Premise, Presence, Person, and Personality        | 33 |
|   | God as Premise and Presence                              | 35 |
|   | God in Person  | 36 |
|   | God's Personality  | 38 |
|   | The Divinity of God: God as Wholly Other                 | 43 |
| 4 | The Holy and the Unclean: Sanctification and Pollution   | 45 |
|   | Defining Sanctification                                  | 45 |
|   | Holy versus Profane and Unclean                          | 48 |
|   | Purity Viewed Whole                                      | 50 |
|   | The Role of the Human Being in the Process               |    |
|   | of Purity and Uncleanness                                | 53 |
| 5 | E-11 and Determ  |    |
| 2 | Exile and Return   | 55 |
|   | Exile from Eden/The Recovery of Paradise:                |    |
|   | The Paradigm of Judaism                                  | 55 |
|   | The Invention of the Paradigm of Exile and Return        | 59 |
|   | The Persistence of the Paradigm                          | 63 |
| 6 | Return to Eden: The Sabbath and Sacred Time              | 67 |
|   | Restoring Eden on the Seventh Day: the Sabbath           | 67 |
|   | Sabbath for the Land of Israel: Shebi'it, the            |    |
|   | Halakhah of the Seventh Year                             | 68 |

|    | Sabbath for the People of Israel: Shabbat-Erubin, the            |     |
|----|--|-----|
|    | Halakhah of the Israelite Household on the Seventh Day           | 72  |
|    | Six Days of Work and the Sabbath of Repose                       | 76  |
| 7  | The Story Judaism Tells  | 79  |
|    | The Judaic Myth  | 79  |
|    | Turning a Story into a Pattern                                   | 81  |
|    | The Presence of the Past, the Pastness of the Present            | 83  |
|    | The Story of Israel in Paradigmatic Form                         | 84  |
|    | Israel's History Taken Over into Israel's Life of Sanctification | 88  |
| 8  | The Community of Israel  | 91  |
|    | What Is an "Israel" in a Judaic Religious System?                | 91  |
|    | "Israel" in the Mishnah  | 93  |
|    | "Israel" in the Talmud of the Land of Israel                     | 94  |
|    | The Metaphor of the Family: "Israel's Children"                  | 96  |
|    | The Importance of "Israel" in Rabbinic Judaism                   | 100 |
| 9  | The Chain of Tradition: The Oral Torah                           | 103 |
|    | The Oral Torah   | 103 |
|    | The Contents of the Oral Torah                                   | 104 |
|    | The Priority of the Oral Torah                                   | 107 |
|    | The Disciple of the Sage as a Living Torah                       | 112 |
|    | The Final Account of the Oral Torah                              | 114 |
|    | What did Rabbinic sages mean by the Oral Torah?                  | 114 |
|    | What are the components of the myth?                             | 115 |
|    | In what contexts did it serve?                                   | 115 |
|    | What consequences did invoking the myth produce?                 | 116 |
| 10 | Miracles in Nature: Illness and Healing                          | 119 |
|    | Miracles: Rain Making  | 119 |
|    | What Compels Divine Favor?                                       | 122 |
|    | Sickness: Its Causes and Its Cure                                | 126 |
|    | What Accounts for Illness and Suffering?                         | 130 |
|    | The Resolution of the Matter in the Resurrection of the Dead     | 132 |
| 11 | Sacred Space: The Land and Pilgrimage                            | 135 |
|    | Why Is the Land of Israel Different from All Other               |     |
|    | Lands? Why Is Jerusalem Different from All Other Cities?         | 135 |
|    | Pilgrimage: The Particular Occasion                              | 139 |
|    | Pilgrims and Their Offerings                                     | 141 |
|    | Entering the State of Cleanness on the Pilgrim Festivals         | 143 |
|    | Sharing a Meal with God  | 144 |
|    |  |     |

| 12                          | Sacrifice, Repentance, and Atonement                         | 147 |
|-----------------------------|--|-----|
|                             | Sacrifice in the Context of Atonement:                       |     |
|                             | Corporate Israel and the Daily Whole Offering                | 147 |
|                             | Sacrifice and the Atonement of Individuals' Inadvertent Sins | 151 |
|                             | Repentance   | 153 |
|                             | Atonement  | 156 |
|                             | Sacrifice, Repentance, Atonement                             | 160 |
| 13                          | Death and Afterlife  | 163 |
|                             | Death  | 163 |
|                             | Afterlife: Resurrection                                      | 165 |
|                             | "All Israel Has a Portion in the World to Come"              | 168 |
|                             | The Messiah  | 172 |
| 14                          | The Representation of the Faith:                             |     |
|                             | Art and Symbol in Judaism                                    | 175 |
|                             | The Art of the Synagogues and Symbolic Discourse in Judaism  | 175 |
|                             | Synagogue Iconography: The Distribution over Time            | 176 |
|                             | Integrating Symbolic Discourse in Iconic and Verbal Forms    | 178 |
|                             | Symbols in Verbal Form                                       | 181 |
|                             | Symbolic Discourse in Iconic and in Verbal Form:             |     |
|                             | Convergence or Divergence?                                   | 183 |
|                             | Conclusion: From Scripture to Judaism                        | 185 |
| Not                         | Notes  |     |
| Index of Ancient Sources    |  |     |
| Index of Subjects and Names |  |     |

.