With the Maccabean victory, the high-priesthood and whatever political power the Gerousia possessed (this was not much, since the real political power was in the hands of the Diadochs; Judea was just a vassal province) was taken over by the Hasmoneans. Subsequently a body (later) called Sanhedrin was entrusted with leadership in religious and civil matters. It is probable that this Sanhedrin is not a newly created institution but an already existing soferic or Hasidean school, last headed by Jose ben Joezer and Jose ben Johanan, which now was recognized as an official institution. If this is so, as we believe it is, then it is safe to assume that Jose ben Joezer and Jose ben Johanan were the last Eshkoloth and at the same time the first Zug, the first pair of official leaders of the Sanhedrin.

S. Krauss and others suggest that the word Eshkoloth represents the Hebrew plural of the Greek skole, “school.” If so, “the Eshkoloth ceased” would probably mean that the two pristine soferic or Hasidean schools headed by Jose ben Joezer and Jose ben Johanan respectively ceased to exist. They were unified and established as one official body. The heads of the two previous schools were nominated president and vice-president (Nasi and Av Beth Din) of this new body.

THE ZUGOTH

Zugoth as a term designates the heads of the official Sanhedrin known to have existed during the Hasmonean and Herodian periods. The terminus a quo of the Zugoth is controversial. While I. H. Weiss points out that King Joshafat already appointed Zugoth, who continued from then on, though with interruptions, others, among them Zunz, believe that the Zugoth commenced at the time of John Hyrcanus (135–105 BCE).

The first opinion cannot be substantiated if Zugoth is to be used in its technical sense, i.e., if Zugoth refers to the leaders of the official Sanhedrin.
The fact that the third Zug, Simon ben Shetaḥ and Judah ben Tabbai, officiated under the reign of Alexander Jannaeus (105-78 B.C.E.) militates against late dating of the first Zug. The first pair, therefore, must have functioned much earlier.

Since the establishment of the official Sanhedrin was a consequence of the Hasmonean victory, it was, in all probability, organized during the early Hasmonean period. The sources allow no exact dating. Bacher following Graetz, and in accord with Z. Frankel, believes that Jose ben Joezer of Zeredah died as one of the sixty Ḥasidim who were murdered after backing Alkimos for the high-priesthood (about 160 B.C.E.). A weakness of this view is that it would afford to the second Zug an unusually long period, about fifty years. Yet we must consider that there was an interim period between the second and third Zug, due to political unrest. Such interim periods occurred several times.

In this connection we shall examine several sources. The Zugoth are twice enumerated in the Mishnah. Avoth, Chapter I names them without using the term Zugoth (cf. ARN, ed. Schechter, pp. 27 ff.). They are listed among the transmitters of the Torah, constituting the link between an anonymous group of sages and the descendants of Hillel. Who constitutes this anonymous group?

As stated above, the Eshkoloth were the precursors of the Zugoth. It stands to reason, therefore, that the Eshkoloth are the constituents of this anonymous group. If so, the question of why they were not mentioned explicitly has to be raised. Perhaps it is because they possessed no official standing.

The other Mishnaic reference to the five Zugoth is in Hag. II.2:

Jose ben Joezer says: One may not perform the semikhah; Jose ben Johanan says: He may. Joshua ben Peraḥyah says: He may not; Nittai the Arbelite says: He may. Judah ben Tabbai says: He may...
not; Simon ben Shetaḥ says: He may; Shemaiah says: He may; Avalion says: He may not. Hillel and Menahem did not differ. Menahem left and Shammai entered. Shammai says: He may not perform the semikhah; Hillel says: He may. The first ones [of each pair] were Presidents, and the second ones were Fathers of the Court.

This passage includes two important pieces of information: 1) The person mentioned first in each Zug is the Nasi, the second the Av Beth Din; 2) The Nasi and his Av Beth Din differed in matters of semikhah. The only exception was the Zug of Hillel and Menahem; but when Menahem left, his successor, Shammai, again differed with the Nasi.

The first bit of information is unequivocal and leaves no doubt as to the official standing of the Zugoth. They were the official heads of the Beth Din, or the “Sanhedrin,” the central body entrusted with the conduct of religious and civil matters. Josephus’ omission of a description of the institution of the Zugoth and the Sanhedrin they headed is a clear indication that they possessed no political power.

The meaning of the second piece of information, i.e. "lay," and "not to lay" (the hands on . . .), is controversial.

Tosefta Hag. II.8 states:

They never disagreed, except in the matter of the semikhah. There are five Zugoth. Three of the first Zugoth who said not to perform the semikhah were Nesi’im, the second ones Heads of the Beth Din. These are the words of R. Meir. But the sages say Simon ben Shetaḥ was Nasi and Judah ben Tabbai Av Beth Din.

Subsequently (no. 9, p. 235), R. Jose states that originally there were no disagreements in Israel. This is explained as meaning that all the problems had been worked out within a Beth Din of twenty-three
members; or if this were not possible, the final decision was made by the Great Beth Din, which was located in the Chamber of Hewn Stone. If a tradition existed in the matter, it was communicated to them (the enquirers); otherwise, the decision was rendered by vote. However, this state of affairs changed and disputes multiplied when there was an increase in the number of Shammai’s and Hillel’s disciples who did not study properly.

Of particular interest is the following passage (Tosefta, ibid. 11,10):

“About what semikhah do they differ? Beth Shammai say one must not perform the semikhah on a holiday. He should lay [hands] upon the peace offerings he is to sacrifice [on the holiday] the day before. Beth Hillel, however, say one may bring peace and whole offerings [on the holiday] and lay his hands upon them.”

A long discussion follows in which both Beth Shammai and Beth Hillel try to justify their respective views. In ll:11 (p. 236), an incident is related in which Hillel himself acted in accordance with the view defended by Beth Hillel. This proves that Hillel himself understood the semikhah controversy as referring to the laying of the hands upon the sacrificial animal.43

The context of the Mishnah (ibid. 3) also shows that this is the real meaning of semikhah in Mishnah 2 and parallels. Both Talmudim understand it similarly. In B. Ḥag. 16b, R. Johanan understands semikhah as described above and is not contradicted, and so does P. T. ibid. 77d; II,2 (cf. also Beẓah 20a).

Since the sources clearly indicate in context that the semikhah of the Zugoth has reference to laying the hands upon certain sacrifices (on a holiday), why have modern scholars suggested so many, more or less fancy, explanations?44

Since the Beth Din Ha-Gadol decided all the other issues, among them a number of far more important matters, why did they not decide also the semikhah controversy? To answer this puzzling ques-
tion, the scholars try to interpret this *semikhah* as being something of paramount importance.\(^{45}\)

This premise is certainly correct. Yet, the importance of a matter is not necessarily inherent. A matter may become very important in a certain setting. Sometimes, an originally insignificant matter may become a shibboleth, dividing people and keeping them apart.

In other instances, the implications of an unimportant matter may be quite weighty. According to Z. Frankel this is the case in our instance. Frankel understands our *semikhah* as does the Talmud. In his opinion, the importance of the matter is that by prohibiting sacrifices without the *semikhah*, i.e., without the owner's (dedicator's) laying hands upon it, people from remote areas could not send sacrificial animals to the Temple. To prevent this, the members of the Sanhedrin refrained from deciding the issue. He makes reference to *Bezah* 20 where, according to one opinion, the real issue is whether certain sacrifices require *semikhah* or not. Further, he points out that various kinds of donations and sacrifices were sent to Jerusalem from far away during the time of the Second Temple and cites Philo's pronouncement that he himself went to Jerusalem in order to pray and sacrifice there.\(^{46}\)

While this explanation seems quite plausible at first glance, it has a weakness that cannot be overlooked. If no decision was made *in favor* of compulsory *semikhah* because of reasons stated, a decision *against* such a requirement was certainly possible. This is all the more so since the first three members of the *Zugoth*, who were opposed to the *semikhah*, were the heads of the Sanhedrin and certainly would have prevailed in case of a vote. A further weakness of Frankel's theory is that it would ascribe stringency in this case to Hillel and Beth Hillel. If this were true, the Talmud would not have failed to point out this fact, as it does in all the other instances in which Beth Hillel hold a strict point of view compared with Beth Shammai.

The crucial importance of the matter is shown by the Shammaites' threatening Hillel with lynching when Hillel acted in accordance with his view on the *semikhah*, because this threat indicates that the *semikhah* question was the obvious shibboleth of the two principal Pharisaic factions, which could not be decided by a vote. A vote in
this matter probably would have resulted in a withdrawal of the losing faction from the Great Sanhedrin. It is possible that when the two Pharisaic groups joined in the establishment of the Great Sanhedrin, they agreed not to force the issue of the semikhah which they considered to be the sine qua non of their respective factions.

Why the semikhah issue became the dividing issue of the two main Pharisaic groups is a matter of conjecture. It may have been the main issue or even the issue which caused the early Pharisees to split into two groups. Of course, at its beginning it must have been a significant issue in order to lead to such grave consequences. The significance of the issue may lie in the following.

If we take a close look at the implications of this controversy, we see that it resembles some of the controversies between the Sadducees and Pharisees. The controversial semikhah was to be performed by the owner (dedicator of the animal), usually a layman. The performance of the sacrificial cult was a prerogative of the kohanim, the priests. They were commanded to do the work constituting the sacrificial process even on the Sabbath and holidays, including acts that were otherwise prohibited. Allowing a layman to perform an act like the semikhah, which is an initial part of the sacrificial process, on a holiday (otherwise prohibited because of Shevuth, a low degree of prohibition), means that he is granted a privilege in an area in which the priests alone enjoyed privileges. This was certainly not to the liking of the priests. It is a fact that the member of the first Zug to oppose this semikhah was Jose ben Joezer, a priest himself (S. Mishnah lfag. II,7), though his opponent Jose ben Johanan was also a priest.

Yet, even if it is true that the semikhah controversy originated in an atmosphere of tension between priests and laymen, it was not kept on this level. The later opponents of our semikhah were also non-priests. What probably happened was that the matter developed into the principal dividing issue of two Pharisaic groups, while the original reason of the dispute had been forgotten. The conservative group opposed the semikhah on holidays believing this to be in line with true conservatism; the liberal and more progressive group permitted it considering it to be the true liberal point of view.\(^\text{47}\)

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PHARISAIC–EARLY TANNAITIC PERIOD

Among additional problems presented by the Zugoth is the chronological difficulty that the span of the five Zugoth comprises more than 160 years (ca. 160 BCE to between 10 and 20 CE). This would lead us to the highly unlikely conclusion that a Zug officiated, on the average, more than thirty years; yet, we have to keep in mind that the rule of the five Pharisaic Zugoth was repeatedly interrupted by Sadducees whom the Rabbinic-Pharisaic tradition does not care to mention. Other breaks in the line of Pharisaic Zugoth may have been caused by Gabinius’ measure of decentralization and the establishment of five Sanhedrins plus Herod’s massacre of the sages who participated in his trial.

The theory that the Mishnah only mentions the most distinguished Zugoth, who disagreed on the semikhah issue, is not tenable. Had other Zugoth existed, too, their names would have been transmitted also in connection with their sayings, views, actions, etc. It would be quite absurd to suppress their names and activities just because they did not disagree on the semikhah issue.

More puzzling is the fact that we find no overlapping of members of the Zugoth. It appears as if Nasi and his Av Beth Din began and terminated their respective offices simultaneously. An obvious exception is the last Zug, in which Menahem was replaced by Shamai during Hillel’s presidency. It is natural that after an interim period, when Pharisees regained their power, Nasi and Av Beth Din were installed in their offices simultaneously. But when this was not the case, we face a riddle. The same problem exists with regard to the death or retirement of Nasi or Av Beth Din. When a Nasi or an Av Beth Din died (or retired), did the surviving member of the Zug retire to make room for a new Zug; or did he continue in his office with the next Nasi or Av Beth Din? The sources are silent on this matter.

The degree of authority vested in the Nasi and the Av Beth Din varied throughout the period. This matter will be discussed later. Let us now turn to the activities of the Zugoth.
JOSE BEN JOEZER OF ZEREDA,
JOSE BEN JOHANAN OF JERUSALEM

Jose ben Joezer was the Nasi, while Jose ben Johanan was the Av Beth Din (Mishnah Hag. II,2). Jose ben Joezer is designated as the hashid shel mishnah (ibid. 7). This may mean “the most pious among the priests,” but hasid may also imply that he belonged to the Hasidim, occasionally a synonym for Pharisees. Above we referred to the view that he was martyred among the sixty Hasidim about 160 BCE. His statement in regard to the (unquestionably “Pharisaic”) sages speaks clearly for his attachment to the Pharisees, “Let thy house be a meeting place for the sages and sit amid the dust of their feet and drink in their words with thirst” (Avot 1.4).

In the field of the Halakhah, the following views are transmitted in the name of Jose ben Joezer (M. Eduy. VIII,4; B. Pes. 16a; B. Ned. 19a; B. A. Z. 37b):

“Jose ben Joezer of Zereda testified that the Avil-locust is clean; and that the liquid [that flows] in the shambles [in the Temple] is not susceptible to uncleanness; and that he that touches a corpse becomes unclean; and they called him ‘Jose the Permitter.’”

While the first two statements are clear, the last one is quite obscure and subject to interpretations. Of the reasons suggested in B. A. Z. 37b Frankel, for example, adopts the view that leniency in this case is that only the person touching the corpse becomes unclean, but he does not transmit this defilement to others. I. H. Weiss accepts the reason that the leniency is that only the person who certainly touched the corpse becomes unclean; but in case of a doubt, the person remains clean. He considers this a ruling necessitated by the Maccabean war which was raging at the time.

There are more conjectures about the matter; but it is not necessary to repeat them here, since they are not superior to the two cited. No matter what conjecture we accept, the fact remains that Jose expressed a lenient view in the matter.

Except for the semikhah issue and these three cases, all halakhic
decrees of their time are transmitted in the names of both Jose ben Joezer and Jose ben Johanan.

In B. Shab. 15a (and parallels) Jose ben Joezer and Jose ben Johanan decreed (יִצְרָה) uncleanliness over the lands of the (non-Jewish) peoples and over the vessels of glass.

The reasons for these ordinances are not given. I. H. Weiss believes that Jose ben Joezer and Jose ben Johanan decreed defilement over foreign lands in order to discourage people from emigrating from Palestine because of wars and unrest. As to the glass vessels, Weiss believes that they were declared unclean after it was learned that glass has some qualities similar to that of clay.54 L. Ginzberg, while concurring with Weiss in the first case assumes (as does Tchernowitz) in the second instance that there were economic reasons. Import of glass—a very expensive luxury item at the time—was economically unsound.55 Tchernowitz tries to prove that eretz ha-amim does not designate foreign countries, but places in Palestine with a total or almost total gentile population.56 The purpose of the ordinance was to boycott the foreign gentiles and to prevent Jews from living among them and learning their ways. After the Hasmonean victory, this gezerah lost its meaning and was therefore discontinued. Yet, eighty years before the fall of the Temple, during Herod’s rule, conditions changed for the worse; and the gezerah concerning the land of the gentiles was revived. It was reinstituted in regard to gentile settlements within Palestine and subsequently extended to foreign countries in order to curtail emigration, which increased close to the time of the destruction of the Temple.

Whatever the true reason was, the significance of the matter is that the decrees were issued not by the Sanhedrin nor by its head (as was the case at a later period), but jointly by the two leading officers of the Sanhedrin. As soon as times changed, the ordinances lost their binding strength without a formal declaration.

As to Jose ben Joezer’s further activities, only two are transmitted. In B. A. Z. 37b, R. Juda (ben Ilai) relates that Jose ben Joezer sank posts in the ground in order to mark the borderline between private and public domain. The Talmud understands this (ibid.) in relation to his lenient view in the matter of defilement by a corpse.
B. B. B. 133b records that he donated his property to the Sanctuary, thus disinheriting his unworthy son.

As to Jose ben Johanan, no halakhic view of his own has been transmitted apart from his stand on the *semikhah* issue. *Avoth* I,5 gives his saying concerning human relations and morals, “Let thy house be opened wide and let the poor be the members of your household and talk not much with women.”

The first *Zug* differs from the subsequent *Zugoth* inasmuch as it is designated as the end of the *Eshkoloth*.

**ZUG 2**

**JOSHUA BEN PERAHYAH, NITTAI THE ARBELITE**

Only one halakhic opinion is transmitted in the name of Joshua ben Perahyah.

In Tos. *Makhshirin* III,4, Joshua ben Perahyah says, “Wheat that comes from Alexandria is unclean because of their [the Egyptians’] vessels [water-drawing device]. The sages said, “If so, let them be unclean for Joshua ben Perahyah but clean for all Israel.”

Frankel attempts to explain the basis of this controversy as halakhic. While the formal reason may well have been a halakhic one, it is quite possible that Joshua ben Perahyah has an economic consideration in mind: curtailment of imports from Egypt.

It is doubtful whether the sages opposing Joshua ben Perahyah were his contemporaries. The sages could have been of a later epoch. It is not unusual that opinions uttered in different epochs are given next to one another and appear at first glance as a dispute of contemporaries. Tchernowitz, assuming that the sages here were contemporaries of Joshua, advances another economic reason: An embargo on Egyptian imports of produce would result in high prices in Palestine and the poor would suffer. I. H. Weiss presents the interesting conjecture that declaring Egyptian wheat unclean would render the meal sacrifices of the Onias Temple improper and
unacceptable. Joshua's decision was, therefore, directed against the Onias Temple. If this were the case, the objection of the sages declaring Alexandria wheat clean for all Israel would not be understandable.

We note the saying of Joshua ben Perahyah in *Avoth* I,6, “Provide thyself with a teacher and get thee a fellow [disciple]; and when thou judgest any man, incline the balance in his favor.” This shows the great importance he ascribes to disciplined, systematic study. It also points to his love of mankind and his belief in man.

In B. *Men.* 109b, a Baraita relates a statement by Joshua ben Perahyah in which he says that when he was first asked to accept his high office, he objected strongly. Now, however, he would vehemently object to any attempt to depose him. He compares his predicament to that of King Saul who first fled when the high honor of kingship was to be bestowed upon him. Yet, after he had become king, he sought to kill David in defense of his high office.

The authenticity of Joshua ben Perahyah’s authorship of this statement is questionable. In P. *Pes.* VI,1; 33a, the matter is transmitted in the name of Rabbi Joshua ben Kabsav.61

Except for the *semikhah* controversy, we do not find an halakhic view uttered by Nittai the Arbelite.

A statement of warning is transmitted in his name in *Avoth* I,7: “Keep thee far from an evil neighbor and consort not with the wicked; and lose not belief in retribution.”

This statement is interpreted as having reference to political conditions of the time. Frankel62 proposes that Nittai uttered his warning after John Hyrcanus joined the Sadducees and turned against his former friends the Pharisees.

**ZUG 3**

**JUDAH BEN TABBAI,**

**SIMON BEN SHETAH**

According to Mishnah *Hag.* II,2, Judah ben Tabbaï was the Nasi, while Simon ben Shetah was *Av Beth Din. Avoth* I,8 men-
tions Judah ben Tabbai before Simon ben Shetah, indicating the same view. Other sources, however, claim that Simon ben Shetah was the Nasi, while Judah ben Tabbai was Av Beth Din. In B. Hag. 16b, a Baraita records a controversy about the matter.

P. Hag. II, 2; 77d cites incidents supporting both views. However none of these incidents has the weight of evidence. More significant is Qid. 66a, where it is stated that after the massacre of the sages by John Hyrcanus, the world was desolate until Simon ben Shetah came and reestablished the Torah (Pharisaic tradition) to its pristine state.

This means that he played the leading role, if not the exclusive one, in reestablishing the Pharisaic domination of the Sanhedrin and consequently of religious and civil life. It is hardly imaginable that this great deed could have been performed by the man second in rank. The fact, assuming it is a fact, that Simon ben Shetah was the brother-in-law of King Alexander Jannaeus certainly contributed to his leading role among the Pharisees. Nonetheless, the sources crediting the leadership to Judah ben Tabbai cannot be brushed aside lightly. It is quite possible that there was a change in leadership (as was the case later with Hillel and Shammai). Sources allow no safe inference as to any reason for a change. The marriage of Salome (Simon's sister) to the King may have resulted in Simon's advancement to the presidency. It is also possible that the Av Beth Din succeeded his colleague as Nasi after the latter's death or retirement. Moreover there are other conjectures, which we cannot discuss here.

What were the halakhic activities of this Zug?

The Talmud ascribes the institution of the kethuvah to Simon ben Shetah (B. Shab. 16b). This claim in Shabbath is inaccurate. Other passages in both Babylonian and Palestinian Talmudim show that the Kethubah was an older institution; Simon ben Shetah merely strengthened it by the Taqqanah, ordering that the property of the husband serve as security for the kethuvah. This Taqqanah represents a most important step toward improving the situation of the Jewish woman and is expressed in every kethuvah document to date.

Another Taqqanah ascribed to Simon ben Shetah is the defilement of metal vessels (B. Shab. 16b; P. Ket. end of chapter VIII; 32c).
This *Taqqanah* is ascribed to both Judah ben Tabbai and Simon ben Shetah.

Since a *Taqqanah* was, as a rule, issued by either the Nasi or jointly by Nasi and *Av Beth Din*, Simon ben Shetah was Nasi when he proclaimed the *Taqqanah* concerning the defilement of vessels, if B. *Shab.* 16b gives the accurate record. Should the P. Talmud report be accurate, no safe conclusion may be drawn.

The sources attest to Simon ben Shetah’s participation in several cases involving capital punishment.

Regarding the controversy about the false witnesses, a bone of contention between the Pharisees and Sadducees, we may first of all cite a particular incident in which according to the majority of the sources (Tos. *Sanh.* VI,6; B. *Hag.* 16b; B. *Mak.* 5b; P. *Sanh.* VI,3; 23b), Judah ben Tabbai had sentenced a false witness, ordered his execution and was subsequently reprimanded by Simon ben Shetah. The law requires, the latter said, that both witnesses be found false, while in this case only one witness had been convicted of falsehood. However in another source (*Mekhilta Mishpatim*, Chapter 20, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, p. 327), Simon ben Shetah was the sentencing judge and Judah ben Tabbai was the man who reprimanded his colleague.

This incident is interpreted by some scholars as the cause of Judah ben Tabbai’s descent to the vice-presidency and Simon ben Shetah’s ascent to the presidency. Had this been the case, one or the other of the several versions of the incident certainly would have mentioned this important fact explicitly as in the case of Hillel. What this case clearly reveals is that only one member of the *Zug* was present at the trial and that he was held responsible by the other member of the *Zug*.

Since the duties of the Nasi went far beyond that of the heading of a court, and he could not, therefore, be regularly present at trials, the sentencing judge in this case may have been the *Av Beth Din*. While most sources give Judah ben Tabbai as the head of the sentencing court, which he may have headed as the *Av Beth Din*, other incidents indicate that the office of the Nasi was unquestionably in the hands of Simon ben Shetah. The importance of this case lies in the fact that Pharisaic courts of the time had original jurisdiction in legal matters, even when capital punishment was involved.
The Talmud relates an enigmatic case in which Simon ben Shetaḥ ordered the hanging in Ashkelon of eighty women sentenced for witchcraft. The historicity of this incident as transmitted is questionable. First of all, it is doubtful whether Ashkelon was a Jewish city at that time. Further, hanging was never a Jewish method of execution, and according to Jewish Law only one capital case may be tried in one day, not even two. (The assumption in our case is that the women hanged in one day had also been tried together.) Many attempts—more or less vague conjectures—have been made to resolve the difficulties. However the significance of the incident appears to be the following.

This was a most important and exceptional case involving many persons (eighty may be an inflated number) and it concerned the violation of an important precept of the Torah. The supreme authority in this case was Simon ben Shetaḥ, obviously Nasi at that time.

Another incident of capital punishment concerns the son of Simon ben Shetaḥ. P. Sanh. XI,3; 23b relates that false witnesses testified against Simon ben Shetaḥ’s son, resulting in a death sentence. The motive behind the false testimony is believed to be revenge on the part of the executed witches’ relatives. Although the witnesses confessed prior to the execution that they had lied, and Simon wanted to revoke the sentence, his son insisted that the sentence be carried out for the following reason. He said, “Father, if you want victory [or salvation] to come through you, make me a threshold [or target],” i.e., a martyr. The meaning of these words is obscure. “Victory” may refer to the struggle between Sadducees and Pharisees or simply to the strengthening of the accepted judicial procedure which, under the given circumstances, would not allow a reversal of the sentence.

Simon ben Shetaḥ’s strict adherence to the accepted judicial procedure is also reflected in an incident related in P. Sanh. IV,9; 22b; and B. Sanh. 37b (a Baraita). (Mekhilta, loc. cit. gives Judah ben Tabbai in place of Simon ben Shetaḥ.) The Baraita in B. Sanh. 37b relates, “R. Simon ben Shetaḥ said: May I never see comfort if I did not see a man pursuing his fellow into a ruin, and when I ran after him and saw him, sword in hand with blood dripping from it,
and the murdered man writhing, I exclaimed to him: Wicked man, who slew this man? It is either you or I! But what can I do, since thy blood [life] does not rest in my hands, for it is written in the Torah, *At the mouth of two witnesses, etc., shall he that is to die be put to death*. May He Who knows one's thoughts exact vengeance from him who slew his fellow! It is related that before they moved from the place a serpent came and bit him [the murderer] so that he died."

The quotation that two witnesses were required does not mean that here in our case the obvious murderer could not be brought before the courts because there was only one witness but that circumstantial evidence cannot be admitted (cf. *Tosafot* ibid.). The context in the Talmud requires this interpretation since the incident is cited to illustrate the statement of the M. *Sanh.* IV,5, "How did they admonish the witnesses in capital cases? They brought them in and admonished them [saying] 'Perchance ye will say what is but supposition.'" This interpretation finds further support in the fact that Simon ben Shetah did not witness the actual crime, merely the circumstances before and after the murder.70

The Talmud (B. *Sanh.* 19ab) relates an incident in which Simon ben Shetaḥ plays an eminent role. This incident so greatly resembles the account of Herod’s trial conducted by the Sanhedrin under Sameas-Shemaiah as found in Josephus, that we probably have the very same case under discussion in both passages. We shall discuss this below.

A Mishnah and its parallel versions71 report that Simon ben Shetaḥ did not like Ḥoni’s method of asking God for rain and would have excommunicated him, were it not that Ḥoni was a special favorite before God. This unusual incident reveals that the Nasi—Simon was obviously Nasi at this time—had the power to excommunicate sages and may have used this power in other cases. It also shows that he considered tempting God to be a sin.

We have an interesting account in *Megillath Ta’anith* describing the significance of the 28th of Tebeth. On this day, the Sadducean Sanhedrin was replaced by a Pharisaic one. This was accomplished through the halakhic excellence of Simon be Shetaḥ, the only non-Sadducean member of the Sadducean Sanhedrin.72
The historicity of the reason given by Megillath Ta'anith—Simon's halakhic superiority over the Sadducees—is questionable. The more probable reason for the changeover was the influence Simon possessed at court after King Alexander Janneus had married Simon’s sister Salome Alexandra. The presence of both Alexander Janneus and Salome Alexandra at the session in which the changeover reportedly took place supports this suggestion.

Except for the case of the false witness, nothing of Judah ben Tabbai’s halakhic activities has been transmitted. This may be taken as a further indication that he was Nasi, for only a short period, if at all. His saying in Avot 1,8 shows his deep interest in a thorough and equitable judicial procedure, “Make not thyself like them that would influence the judges [or: Make not thyself like the chief justice]; and when the suitors stand before thee, let them be as wicked men; and when they have departed from before thee, let them be in thy eyes as innocent, so soon as they have accepted the judgment.”

ZUG 4

SHEMAIAH AND AVTALION

Talmudic tradition holds that both, Shemaiah and Avtalion, were proselytes (cf. B. Yoma 71a; B. Git. 57b), but the historicity of this tradition is questionable. More probable is the suggestion that they lived in Alexandria, where they had studied with Judah ben Tabbai, who fled there because of John Hyrcanus’ persecutions of the Pharisees.

The great prestige that Shemaiah and Avtalion enjoyed is demonstrated in the following account (Yoma 71b, a Baraitha): “It once happened that when a high priest left the Sanctuary, all the people followed him. However when they saw Shemaiah and Avtalion, they left the high priest and followed Shemaiah and Avtalion.”

In this incident, Shemaiah and Avtalion are called בני ממלך, an expression usually meaning gentiles, and one considered by Weiss and others as evidence that they came from gentile stock. More
plausible, however, is the suggestion that these words, used in a
derogatory sense, point to the fact that they came from Alexandria,
or that they were only laymen. The incident also clearly shows the
rivalry between high priests and Pharisaic leaders. Who the high
priest was is a matter of speculation.\textsuperscript{77}

The Talmud indicates that Shemaiah and Avtalion were not
merely (Pharisaic) leaders but also heads of the Sanhedrin. In B.  
\textit{Pes.} 70b a Baraita relates that Judah ben Dortai said if Elijah were
to come and reproach Israel because they did not sacrifice the \textit{Hagigah}
(a private sacrifice) on Sabbath, the answer would be that Shemaiah
and Avtalion, great sages and great interpreters (or: preachers) did
not tell Israel that the \textit{Hagigah} took precedence over the Sabbath.

This means that the decision of Shemaiah and Avtalion was con­sidered authoritative in the matter, which would not have been the
case if they had spoken as private individuals. They obviously spoke
in the name of the Great Sanhedrin and as its heads.

A number of halakhic activities are traced to Shemaiah and Avta­
lion in the sources.

\textit{M. 'Eduy.} V.6 and \textit{Sifre}, Num. 7 relate an incident informing us
that Shemaiah and Avtalion administered the bitter water (arranged
a \textit{Soṭah} Procedure) to Karkemith, a freed bondwoman. This was
done according to \textit{M. Soṭah} I.5, at the Eastern Gate of the Temple.
Since the execution of the \textit{Soṭah} process was a priestly function, and
Shemaiah and Avtalion were not priests as far as we know, they
were undoubtedly the authorities who ordered the process which
then was performed by the priests.\textsuperscript{78}

In \textit{M. 'Eduy.} I.3, Hillel says, "One \textit{hin} of drawn water renders the
immersion-pool unfit. [We speak of \textit{hin}] only because a man must
use the manner of speaking of his teacher."\textsuperscript{79} And Shammai says,
"Nine \textit{qavs}," and the sages say, "It is not according to the opinion
of either; but when two weavers came from the Dung Gate in Jeru­
salem and testified in the name of Shemaiah and Avtalion that three
\textit{logs} of drawn water rendered the immersion-pool unfit, the sages
confirmed their opinion."\textsuperscript{80}

This case is quite significant for the history of the \textit{Halakhah}. It
shows that the last \textit{Zug}, Hillel and Shammai, had no scruples about
differing with their teachers. It also shows that in establishing the
Halakhah, if justified by certain conditions, later sages gave preference to the view of the older Zug rather than to that of the younger one.\(^8\)

According to a tradition of R. Jose in B. Yev. 67a, the sages also accepted an halakhic view of Shemaiah and Avtalion involving Terumah, heave offering, in the event a priest died and left his widow pregnant.\(^8\)

B. Bezah 25a relates testimony (in a Baraita) as to an halakhic view of Shemaiah and Avtalion in order to refute another opinion in regard to the circumstances under which catching and eating non-domesticated animals and birds on a holiday might be permitted.

As to Shemaiah’s activities, the most controversial is his trial of Herod. It possesses not only halakhic but historical significance as well. Josephus gives two accounts of the incident. The older account is that given in War.\(^8\) Here he tells us that “malicious persons at court informed Hyrcanus that without oral or written instructions from Hyrcanus, Herod, in violation of Jewish Law, had put all this large number of people to death. If he is not king but still a commoner, he ought to appear in court and answer for his conduct to his king and to his country’s law, which do not permit anyone to be put to death without trial. . . . Hyrcanus summoned Herod to trial. Herod . . . went with a strong escort . . . Sextus Caesar (47–46 B.C.E.) . . . sent express orders to Hyrcanus to clear Herod . . . Hyrcanus, being inclined to take that course on other grounds, for he loved Herod, acquitted him.”

The report in Antiquities\(^8\) is somewhat different. Here Josephus informs us that Herod killed Ezekias and many of his men without trying them before a synedrion, etc.: When Herod stood in the Synedrion with his troops, he overawed them all; and no one of those who had denounced him before his arrival dared to accuse him thereafter; instead, there was silence and doubt about what was to be done. While they were in this state, someone named Samaias, an upright man and for that reason superior to fear, arose and said

“. . . but it is not Herod whom I should blame for this or for putting his own interests above the law, but you and the king, for giving him such great license. Be assured, however, that God is great, and this man, whom you now wish to release for Hyrcanus’
sake, will one day punish you and the king as well.” And he was not mistaken in either part of his prediction. For when Herod assumed royal power, he killed Hyrcanus and all the other members of the Synedrion with the exception of Samaias; him he held in the greatest honor, both because of his uprightness and because when the city was later besieged by Herod and Sossius, he advised the people to admit Herod . . . (5) Now when Hyrcanus saw that the members of the Synhedrion were bent on putting Herod to death, he postponed the trial to another day, and secretly sent to Herod, advising him to flee from the city, for in that way, he said, he might escape danger . . . they begged him to remember his acquittal. . . .

The two versions of the incident show several differences, some of them contradictory. For example, in *War* Herod was acquitted by Hyrcanus indicating that he headed the court of trial. In *Ant.* however, Hyrcanus did not acquit Herod but instead, Hyrcanus “postponed the trial” which may mean that he requested the Sanhedrin to postpone the trial or only the decision. The same account, however, later speaks of an acquittal. The number of incongruities grows larger, if we consider the talmudic account.

B. *Sanh.* 19ab:

... an incident which happened with a slave of King Jannai, who killed a man. Simon ben Shetah said to the Sages: “Set your eyes upon him and let us judge him.” So they sent the king word, saying: “Your slave has killed a man.” Thereupon he sent him to them. But they again sent him a message: “Thou too must come here, for the Torah says, *If warning has been given to its owners,* meaning that the owner of the ox must come and stand by his ox.” The king accordingly came and sat down. Then Simon ben Shetah said: “Stand on thy feet, King Jannai, and let the witnesses testify against thee; yet it is not before us that thou standest, but before Him Who spoke and the world came into being, as it is written, *Then both the men between whom the controversy is, shall stand.*” “I shall not act in accordance with what thou sayest, but in accordance with what thy colleagues say,” he answered. Simon turned to the right and to the left, but they all looked down at the ground. Then said Simon ben Shetah to them: “Are ye wrapped in thoughts? Let the Master of thoughts come and call you to account!” Instantly Gabriel came and smote them to the ground, and they died.
This version is so different from the Josephus passage that many scholars believe that Josephus and the Talmud refer to two unrelated incidents. The Talmud has Simon ben Shetaḥ instead of Samaias and the name of the King is Jannai, not Hyrcanus. Herod’s name is substituted by “Jannai’s servant” or “slave” in the Talmud.

The similarities, on the other hand, are so striking that it would be almost a miracle if history had repeated itself to such an extent. In the Talmud, the servant of a Hasmonean king killed someone. In Josephus, Herod, an officer of the Hasmonean king, Hyrcanus, killed people. In the Talmud, the accusers of the murderer, with the exception of the head of the Sanhedrin, refused to speak up at the trial. This is the same as in Josephus. In the Talmud the head of the Sanhedrin rebukes the cowards who failed to speak up at the trial. Josephus gives the same account. According to the Talmud, the cowards were punished by death. Josephus concurs again.

Except for some details in the Talmud which bear the earmark of later aggadic and halakhic amplifications, the main difference between Josephus and the Talmud lies in the names. All the other historical details are basically the same.

Assuming that both the Talmud and Josephus refer to the same event, how can the divergence in names be explained? It is a fact that the Talmud uses “Jannai” for Hasmonean kings other than Alexander Jannaeus. This explains the usage of Jannai in our passage instead of Hyrcanus II. Why the Talmud does this is a problem by itself. Let us only point to the fact that Caesar’s name later became the title “Emperor,” an analogy to a certain extent.

Still another problem is why the Talmud gives Simon ben Shetaḥ for Samaias. It is possible that a learned transmitter of the incident, knowing that Simon ben Shetaḥ was a contemporary of Alexander Jannaeus, changed “Samaias” to Simon ben Shetaḥ.85 It is also possible that the similarity of the sounds in Samaias and Simon led to the error. Omission of Herod’s name constitutes no real problem, since names are often omitted. Although it is unimportant whether there was a motive behind the omission of the name, there are two possibilities that could account for it following the verse, “The name of the wicked shall rot [Prov. 10:7],” or, regard for the Roman rulers with whom Herod was a favorite.
The last problem requiring a solution in the discussion of the several personalities involved in the incident is the identification of Samaias. Was it Shemaiah or Shammai? According to the talmudic dating, Hillel became Nasi 100 years before the destruction of the Temple, i.e. 30 B.C.E. While this date is probably not accurate, there is no reason to doubt that it approximates the actual date. Shammai became *Av Beth Din* at a later date, since he was preceded by Menahem, Hillel’s *Av Beth Din*. Herod’s trial took place while Sextus Caesar officiated in Syria (47 or 46 B.C.E.). Since Shammai became *Av Beth Din* about 25-20 B.C.E., he could not have headed the Sanhedrin, or the *Beth Din Ha-Gadol*, even as its *Av Beth Din* in 47 or 46 B.C.E. The fact that Shammai holds a principle which was applied in this trial, i.e., that the instigator of a crime is also responsible, does not make him the originator of this principle, and does not make Shammai out of Samaias. In this case, decisive weight rests with the chronology which excludes Shammai’s presidency at the trial, pointing to Shemaiah as the president at that time.

Other incongruities in need of a clarification are the contradictory accounts about the outcome of the trial. All sources agree that the criminal was not punished or even sentenced. In *War*, Josephus says that Herod was acquitted while he claims in *Ant.* that the trial was adjourned until the next day by royal request, thus giving Herod an opportunity to flee. The Talmud, on the other hand, merely says that no member of the Sanhedrin dared to speak up at the trial, whereupon Simon ben Shetab rebuked them. The implication here is that there was no condemnation. It leaves the question open as to whether an acquittal or an adjournment took place. Since the accusation was not substantiated at the trial, an acquittal would normally be in order. The circumstances, however, were unusual, permitting no safe conclusion as to the action of the court, if any. The probability is that the suit ended in an acquittal. This is also suggested by the fact that Josephus’ second account, claiming that the trial ended with an adjournment, makes reference to an acquittal shortly afterwards.

In the history of the Halakhah, the incident is significant because it demonstrates that the (Pharisaic) Sanhedrin possessed the right to try capital cases and made use of this right. According to the
Talmud (loc. cit.), it even had the power to call the king before the court. The failure of the trial resulted, according to the Talmud, in a ruling by the sages that a king may not function as a judge, nor can he be subject to a court trial (B. Sanh. ibid.). The statement of the Amora Rav Joseph (ibid.) that the above ruling applies only to the kings of Israel, but not to the kings of Judah is an opinion without any basis in reality or in older sources.

In M. Avoth I,10, Shemaiah gives the following advice, “Love Labor and Hate Mastery and Seek not acquaintance with the Ruling Power.” The last clause may reflect a sentiment arising from his experiences at Herod’s trial.

In M. Avoth I,11 Avtalion says, “Ye sages, give heed to your words lest you incur the penalty of exile and ye be exiled to a place of evil waters; and the disciples that come after you drink [of them] and die; and the name of Heaven be profaned.” It is quite probable that Avtalion had a specific incident in mind when he made this utterance. The usage of symbolic language, “water” for teaching, “drink” for study, is not uncommon in talmudic literature.

Before discussing the fifth Zug, Hillel and Shammai, we should like to point to some significant halakhic activities of leaders or institutions of the Hasmonaean period, the period of the first four Zugoth, which are not related to the Zugoth.

**HIGH PRIEST JOHANAN**

M. Ma'aser Sheni V,15 = M. Soṭah IX,10 relates the following about Johanan the High Priest, believed to be identical with John Hyrcanus I (ruled 135–104 B.C.E.):

וַיֵּהוָה כָּחֵן נַעֲלוּ הַעֲבָרִים הַדְּרוֹיִם. אַחַת חוֹזָל אַתָּה הַמְּמֶרְדֵּמִים
וֹאַתָּה הַחַמִּיפְּים. וֹעָזֵד יָנוּל הָה פָּסִים מִכְּחַ בִּירְשָׁלִים. רוֹטָם אֵין אָדָם
פָּרֵיט לֵאלוֹל עַל הָרְמָאִים.

Johanan the High Priest did away with the avowal concerning the Tithe. He also put an end to the “Awakeners” and the “Stunners.” Until his days, the hammer used to smite in Jerusalem. And in his days, none needed to inquire concerning demai-product.
The language of the Mishnah here is not only brief, but also obscure and enigmatic. The first ordinance is, in fact, the abrogation of a law of the Torah. It is justified, according to talmudic sources, because of the laxity in the observance of the laws about tithes and other prescribed offerings. According to a talmudic view Ezra ordained that, contrary to the law of the Torah (Num. 18:21) the priests and not the Levites should receive the first tithe because the latter did not want to return in his day from Babylonia to Jerusalem. Since the Levites did not receive the tithe the givers of the tithe could not say "I gave it to the Levite" (Deut. 26:13).

Johanan's second ordinance is of a theological nature. He abrogated the daily recital of Ps. 44:23, "Awake, why sleepest Thou, O Lord," performed by the Levites on their stage. Johanan considered a daily recital of this verse improper because taken literally (as people might do) it means that God sleeps whereas Ps. 121:4 clearly states "Behold, He that keepeth Israel doth neither slumber nor sleep."

Johanan's third ordinance, abolishing the "Stunners," is understood as a prohibition of inflicting a stupefying injury to a sacrificial animal before slaughtering it. Tos. Soṭah XIII, 10 and B. Soṭah 48a explain this as follows: "Stunners are those who hit the calf between its horns as they do in [the cult of] idol worship. Johanan the High Priest said to them: "How long will you feed the altar terefoth" (or neveloth; cf. talmudic versions ad loc.).

The unequivocal meaning of Johanan's words is that he abolished the practice of stunning because this would result in an injury causing terefoth. The words "as they do in the cult of idol worship" is not Johanan's statement and quite obviously represents a later stratum. The parallel versions in P. Soṭah IX, 11; 24a, and the one in P. Ma'aser Sheni V (end); 56d do not have the statement that this was a custom in the cult of idolatry.

Johanan's fourth ordinance is taken to mean that he prohibited certain metal work during the intermediate days of the festivals.

The reason for the last statement concerning Johanan in our Mishnah that "in his days, none needed to inquire concerning demei-produce," is understood as being rooted in his ordinance that only Terumath Ma'aser and second tithe have to be separated from the
demai before it could be eaten. P. T. ad loc. V,5; 56d explains that the inquiry was not needed because he set up zugoth, which means here "pairs [of supervisors]" and not the Zugoth who were the leading officers of the Sanhedrin. 91

With one exception, all these ordinances concern the Temple cult or dues to be given to the priests or Levites. The meaning of the one exception (smiting of the hammer in Jerusalem) is obscure, and its talmudic explanation is but a conjecture. 92

The ordinances of Johanan the High Priest show that in his time matters relevant to the Temple, priests and Levites were within the jurisdiction of the high priest, not the Zugoth or Sanhedrin, though it is possible that they cooperated with him. The Talmud (loc. cit.) does not judge all of his activities favorably.

According to Josephus, John Hyrcanus possessed kingship, high-priesthood, and prophecy. 93

COURT OF THE HASMONEANS

B. A. Z. 36b records an ordinance issued by the Court of the Hasmoneans prohibiting sexual relations with gentiles.

At the time when the religious and civil leadership of the Jewish people was in the hands of the Nasi in conjunction with the Av Beth Din and the Sanhedrin or Beth Din Ha-Gadol, the ordinances were proclaimed, as a rule, in the name of the Nasi. The case in B. A. Z. 36b is an exception as were the instances of Johanan the High Priest. The reason why the Hasmonean Court issued ordinances is unknown. It may reflect an early state of affairs when the Hasmoneans retained for themselves the right of issuing whatever ordinances they wished to make. It is also possible that the ordinance was issued at a time when there was no Nasi to take care of the matter, 94 or that the Court of the Hasmoneans was a body that followed in the footsteps of Ezra and endeavored to strengthen Jewish family life. We must not forget that the nature and real character of our ordinance is very controversial. 95
THE EARLY ḤASIDIM

The "Early Ḥasidim" of the talmudic (tannaitic) literature cannot be dated. The fact, however, that they are called "early" in tannaitic literature makes it plausible that they were contemporaneous with the Zugoth. No Halakhoth are transmitted in their names, only acts of pious conduct. M. Ber. V.1 reads: "The Early Ḥasidim (pious men of old) used to wait an hour before reciting the Tefillah, that they might direct their heart toward God."

Tosefta Ned. 1.1 relates that the Early Ḥasidim pledged nazirdom in order to be required to bring a sacrifice since God would not allow them to sin even by error (which would obligate them to bring a sin offering; see B. T. ibid. 10a).

B. Niddah 38a (a Baraita) relates that the Early Ḥasidim would have relations with their wives only on Wednesdays, lest they profane the Sabbath at the time of childbirth! They believed that this habit would prevent birth on a Sabbath; therefore there would be no need to transgress the Sabbath for the sake of childbirth.

B. B. Q. 30a (Baraita) relates that the Early Ḥasidim used to hide (bury) their thorns and glass three handbreadths deep in their fields so they would not impede the plow. This instance reflects the punctilious character of their practice.

These Early Ḥasidim cannot be identified with the Essenes since the latter displayed a negative attitude toward sacrifices, while the Early Ḥasidim were eager to bring sacrifice, as we have seen.96 No names of individuals in this group have been transmitted. Frankel believes97 that Ḥoni Ha-Meaggel98 was one of them and that halakhic views transmitted in the name of Prophet Ḥaggai (Ḥaggai ha-Navi) are actually Ḥoni's views, Ḥoni's name having been changed by mistake to Ḥaggai (חגai) and the designation "prophet" having been added later. We do not have to accept this emendation in order to suggest that Halakhoth transmitted in the name of the prophet Ḥaggai are from an early period, probably not later than the period of the Zugoth, though certainly not from Ḥaggai. We shall now cite examples of this kind of Halakham.

In B. Yev. 16a, "Prophet Ḥaggai sat and related three matters: The
co-wife of a man’s daughter is prohibited for him [to marry], Ammon and Moab [the Jews living in their lands] tithe the Tithe for the Poor in the seventh year, and proselytes may be admitted from the Kurds and Palmyrians [i.e., we do not consider them as Jewish bastards, thus disqualifying them]."

In B. Qid. 43a, "Shammai the elder related in the name of Ḥaggai the Prophet that those sending a person [in order to commit a sin] are guilty as it is written ‘You killed him with the sword of the Ammonites’ [II Sam. 12:9]."

The last passage is particularly significant because it shows that Halakhoth ascribed to Ḥaggai are older than Shammai. Its author cites a biblical verse to substantiate the Halakhah, a rare occurrence before Hillel and Shammai.

This passage also shows that the opinion that the instigator of a crime is responsible does not originate with Shammai, but is much older. This fact weakens the view that Shammai headed the court which tried Herod (and made the king responsible, too), simply because he makes the instigator of a crime responsible.

In Tos. Kelim B. B. 11,3 (591-592) R. Eleazar ben Zadok relates: "In the house of my father there were two wooden blocks. One was unclean; the other was clean. I asked my father, ‘Why is the one unclean and the other clean?’ He answered, ‘The one which is carved [i.e., has a hollow space] is unclean; the other which is not carved, is clean and on this one Prophet Ḥaggai sat.’” The historicity of this incident may be questioned; but even if it is true, its halakhic importance is slight.

**BENE BATHYRA**

The identity and character of leadership of the Bene Bathyra are quite obscure. The confusion starts with the name, which is given as Bene Bathyra (B. Pes. 66a; B. B. M. 85a) as “Ziqne Bathyra” (P. Pes. VI,1; 33a. P. Kil. IX,4; 33b. P. Ket. XII,3; 35a) and as “Deveth Bathyra” (Ber. Rabbah, Chapter 33). Even more obscure is their role as leaders. Rashi, on the Pesahim passage, ex-
plains that they were *Nesi'im*. The fact that they are not enumerated among the *Zugoth* militates against this explanation. On the other hand, Judah Ha-Nasi, who was certainly well acquainted with the history of the Patriarchate, considered them *Nesi'im* though only by implication. *Ber. Rabbah*, Chapter 33,3 relates: “Our Master [Judah Ha-Nasi] was very humble and said ‘Whatever a person tells me, I shall do, except that which those of the House of Bathya did to my ancestor [Hillel],’” i.e., they relinquished their high office (*Gedullah*) in favor of Hillel. *Gedullah* here clearly refers to a leadership, such as Hillel held subsequent to the discussion in *B. Pes. 66a* (and parallels). Here we have the clear-cut statement that “they appointed him [Hillel] as their Nasi.” Yet, the Bene Bathya could not have been *Nesi'im* of the same rank as other *Nesi'im*, since their names are consistently omitted from the chains of the leading transmitters of the Torah, which include the *Nesi'im*. The most plausible answer to this difficulty is that the Bene Bathya were only interim leaders, acting presidents, holding office in the Sanhedrin that was established after Herod massacred the members of the Sanhedrin that had tried him.99 Judah Ha-Nasi’s comparison dooms the conjecture that the Bene Bathya were heads of the Sabbath committee of the Temple.100 Besides, we have no record of the existence of such a committee. Whatever the official standing of the Bene Bathya may have been, we know even less about their activities, since they left no evidence of achievement.101

**ZUG 5: HILLEL AND SHAMMAI,**
**BETH HILLEL AND BETH SHAMMAI***

As time went on, Pharisaic Judaism became progressively diversified, some of its groups developing certain theological ideas, and others emphasizing (or de-emphasizing) other aspects of religious life, and life in general.102 One of