

## PART ONE

### DIALOGUE WITH TRYPHO

#### POLEMICS AND DIALOGUE

The whole Christian literature relating to differences between Jews and Christians falls under two possible headings. Such writings belong either to the type *Tractatus adversus Judaeos*, or to the type *Dialogos pros Tryphona*. They are either polemics against the Jews, or irenic conversations with them.

The first type has been largely prevalent. When A. Lukyn Williams wrote a history of the theological debate between Christians and Jews,<sup>1</sup> he entitled it *Adversus Judaeos*, and this title was quite justly chosen, for the book was the summing-up of a violent quarrel. Besides, the title "Against the Jews" is in accordance with a long tradition in the Christian Church. Tertullian opened the way with his *Adversus Judaeos*. Another *Adversus Judaeos* has been attributed to Cyprian (but it is a spurious work which comes perhaps from Novatian). Hippolytus wrote \* a *Demonstratio contra Judaeos*. Chrysostom preached homilies "against the Jews." Augustine also wrote a *Tractatus adversus Judaeos*. In comparison with this flood of polemic literature, the peaceful *Dialogue with Trypho* of Justin Martyr looks almost like an anomaly.

Justin's point of view, however, will be adopted and maintained here, and this is the reason why the title of his great work has been reproduced as a heading for this first part of the book. It seems useful that the present book should begin with a retrospect of the intellectual relations between Christianity and Judaism. But it would be fruitless merely to sum up the researches of Canon Lukyn Williams or James Parkes<sup>2</sup> on the Jewish-Christian "conflict." A more positive, more hopeful, standpoint may be taken. While it is impossible to set aside the persecutions and controversies, one can keep them in the background—a sad background, indeed—and place in the foreground the meeting points, the points of coincidence and penetration, of Judaism and Christianity.

Coming back to the title of Justin's book, and to the title of this section, the question is : when and how in history has a real dialogue between Christians and Jews been possible ?

<sup>1</sup> A. Lukyn Williams, *Adversus Judaeos. A Bird's Eye View of Christian Apologiae until the Renaissance*, Cambridge, 1935.

<sup>2</sup> J. Parkes, *The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue*, London, 1934.

The answer to this question may help to solve another question: How can a real dialogue between Jews and Christians become possible in our days?

There is for us, to-day, a special reason to go back to Justin's word and idea of a "dialogue" in regard to Jews and Christians. The reason is that, from the Jewish side, a strong emphasis has recently been laid on the same word and idea. Martin Buber, who is perhaps the greatest inspirer of modern religious Judaism and whose name will often reappear in these pages,<sup>1</sup> has placed the idea of "dialogue" in the very centre of his thought and applied it to Jewish-Christian relations. It may be useful and interesting to enter in some detail into Buber's ideology.

According to Buber, the relation of man to man can take two forms: *das Dialogische* and *das Monologische*, the form of dialogue and the form of monologue. There are three kinds of dialogue: the monologue disguising itself as dialogue, but remaining nevertheless a monologue; the "technical dialogue," the aims of which are purely utilitarian; and the "true dialogue," spoken or silent. In the true dialogue, "each interlocutor takes in earnest one or the other in their metaphysical and empirical being and turns to them with the intention of creating between himself and them a living reciprocity".<sup>2</sup> And again: "The limits of the possibilities of the dialogue element are those of the process of becoming aware . . ."<sup>3</sup>

Buber asks next "whether, between the Church and Israel, there may be a genuine dialogue in which, indeed, the interlocutors do not agree, but understand one another for the sake of the one Being to whom the realities of faith refer."<sup>4</sup> We find often, between Christianity and Judaism, the monologue disguised as a dialogue: such generally are the discussions of the theologians. And often, too, we find the merely technical dialogue in which Christians and Jews may exchange ideas upon matters of knowledge or common social welfare. But the

<sup>1</sup> See on Buber special Note B—Buber's ideas on dialogue are expressed in his book *Zwiesprache*, Berlin, 1934.

<sup>2</sup> "... jeder der Teilnehmer den oder anderen in ihrem Dasein und Sosein wirklich meint und sich ihnen in der Intention zuwendet, dass lebendige Gegenseitigkeit sich zwischen ihm und ihnen stifte." *Zwiesprache*, p. 41.

<sup>3</sup> "Die Möglichkeitsgrenzen des Dialogischen sind die des Innewerdens." *Zwiesprache*, p. 23.

<sup>4</sup> "... ob es zwischen die Kirche" (und Israel) "einen echten Dialog geben kann, in dem man sich wohl nicht miteinander verständigt, aber einander versteht, um des einen Seins willen, das die Glaubenswirklichkeiten meinen." *Zwiesprache*, p. 163.

Jewish and Christian "genuine dialogue" has been a rare and beautiful event. To reopen and further the dialogue initiated by Justin is the common task of Jews and Christians.

These views on the dialogue are not restricted to Buber. Hans Schoeps has written a history of the debates between Jews and Christians during the last century, and he aptly entitled it: "The Jewish Christian Dialogue on Religion in the Nineteenth Century."<sup>1</sup> It is true that Schoeps does not use the word *Zwiesprache* or *Zwiegespräch* which are the exact equivalents of dialogue, but the more general word *Gespräch*, which means conversation or colloquy. The intention and the ultimate meaning are, however, the same. One of the best instances of the dialogue between a Christian and a Jew is afforded by the correspondence of Franz Rosenzweig (1886-1929), a disciple and friend of Buber, with the Christian convert Eugen Rosenstock.<sup>2</sup>

We shall now endeavour to discern some of the most positive and important moments in the history of the dialogue between Jews and Christians.

#### JESUS AND THE PHARISEES

The starting point of the study of relationships between Judaism and Christianity is necessarily the consideration of Jesus' attitude towards Judaism. Such a wide field cannot, of course, be covered here. A few remarks will be sufficient for the purpose of this book.

Modern research has confirmed more and more the truth of Wernle's assertion: "One thing is certain—that Jesus and His Gospel are intelligible from Judaism alone."<sup>3</sup> The attitude of Jesus towards the faith of Israel can be summed up in the *logion* of Matthew v. 17-18: "Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you: till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished." And in the *logion* of John iv. 22: "Salvation is from the Jews."<sup>4</sup>

The highest moment in the relationships between Judaism and Christianity is the dialogue between Jesus and the

<sup>1</sup> *Jüdisch-Christliches Religionsgespräch in 19 Jahrhunderten*, Berlin, 1937.

<sup>2</sup> This correspondence forms a special section, entitled *Judentum und Christentum* in Rosenzweig's *Briefe ausgewählt und herausgegeben von Edith Rosenzweig, unter mitwirkung von Ernst Simon*, Berlin, 1935.

<sup>3</sup> *Beginnings of Christianity*, 1903, vol. I, p. 33.

<sup>4</sup> See T. Walker, *Jesus and Jewish Teaching*, London, 1922; B. Branscomb, *Jesus and the Law of Moses*, London, 1930.

Pharisees. Jesus originally belonged, not to the Pharisaic circles, but rather to the "poor of Israel," whose piety was nurtured by the Psalms, the Prophets and the Apocalyptic literature. Nevertheless it is through his meeting with Pharisaism that Jesus made His own position most clear, and this meeting assumes a quite exceptional importance. Why? In the first place, Pharisaism was the most characteristic manifestation of Palestinian Judaism in the time of Jesus. Secondly, alone of all Jewish parties, Pharisaism survived the destruction of Jerusalem and, representing all that was left alive of Judaism, "shaped the character of Judaism and the life and thought of the Jew for all the future."<sup>1</sup> Thirdly, important as was the teaching given by Jesus to His disciples and to the surrounding crowds, He had to relate His message to the dominant theology of the time and to the atmosphere of Pharisaic dogmatism which the whole of Palestine breathed. Therefore the Pharisees occupy the foreground in the historical setting of the mission of Jesus.

The Christian usually views Pharisaism with not very friendly eyes. He takes too often for granted that hostility and rejection express the whole pharisaic attitude towards Jesus. He knows no more about the Pharisees than the denunciations throughout the Gospels and the traditional commonplaces of the Christian pulpit. Modern scholarship has, however, accomplished a largely justified rehabilitation of the Pharisees or, at least, a fairer presentation of their case. This is chiefly due to the works of R. Travers Herford, who sometimes idealizes Pharisaism and ought to be supplemented by Robertson; one should also mention the admirable studies of Israel Abrahams.<sup>2</sup>

"There has seldom been for Christians the opportunity to know what Pharisaism really meant," writes T. Herford.<sup>3</sup> And he says again: "No one but a Jew . . . can fully realize the spiritual meaning of Pharisaism; but sympathy can show even to a Christian much of that meaning."<sup>4</sup> If we try to approach the Pharisees with something of this sympathy and to read the Gospels with an unprejudiced mind, it will seem fair to note the following points.

<sup>1</sup> Rabbi K. Kohler, *Jewish Encycl.*, art. "Pharisees."

<sup>2</sup> T. Herford, *The Pharisees*, London 1924; *Pharisaism. Its aim and its Method*, London, 1912. A. Robertson, *The Pharisees and Jesus*, London, 1920. I. Abrahams, *Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels*, 2 vols., Cambridge, 1917 and 1924. D. Riddle, *Jesus and the Pharisees: A Study in Christian Tradition*, Chicago, 1928.

<sup>3</sup> *Pharisaism*, p. 331.

<sup>4</sup> *Pharisaism*, p. 3.

Not a few of the Pharisees are represented as being kindly disposed towards the person of Jesus. They treated Him with courtesy, at least in the beginning. They invited Him to dine. They gave Him advice about the hostility of Herod Antipas. It is quite certain that, in the manœuvres which incited Pilate to take action against Jesus, the priests and the Sadducees took a far greater part than the Pharisees.

Many of the Pharisees who, after a certain period of cautious hesitation, took up a position against Jesus, appear—at least most of them—to have done so in good faith, under the delusion that the teaching of Jesus was antinomian.

The rebukes by Jesus of the Pharisees are directed against a hypocritical section of narrow, exclusive and exacting men. What Jesus opposed in such Pharisees was not the fundamental element in Pharisaism, but rather a deviation from and a distortion of Pharisaism itself. "The impression is almost irresistible that the denunciations of the Pharisees occurring in the Gospels are directed primarily against a Shammaite section, and that the incident described in Mark vii. is an episode in the controversy between Jesus and the Shammaites."<sup>1</sup> The Talmud denounces as violently as the Gospels the perversions of Pharisaism.<sup>2</sup>

Some of the Pharisees were actually willing to accept the message of Jesus. A number of them secretly wished Him well. Others championed His cause and said: "These are not the sayings of one possessed with a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?" (John x. 21). Others found after His death the courage to come out in the open on His side. Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathæa then boldly took their stand for Jesus.

It is to be recalled also that Gamaliel, the most eminent Pharisaic member of the Sanhedrin in the time of Jesus, showed a kindly spirit towards the prosecuted apostles, Peter and John, and that some Pharisees espoused the cause of Paul against the Sadducees. C. Turner,<sup>3</sup> commenting on the words of Acts xv. 5 about "certain of the sect of the Pharisees who believed," says: "Though it was inconceivable that a Sadducee should believe without giving up his Sadduceeism, it was not inconceivable that a Pharisee should believe and still be known to be a Pharisee."

<sup>1</sup> G. Box, art. "Pharisees" in Hastings' *Encycl. of Religion and Ethics*, vol. ix, col. 835.

<sup>2</sup> See special note C.

<sup>3</sup> C. Turner, *Catholic and Apostolic*, p. 237.

But we come to a still more important point, which is this : Jesus himself was nearer to genuine Pharisaism than to any other religious school in Israel. He knew that the Pharisees were the *élite* of the nation. His own piety and teaching were often identical with theirs. On the two main questions on which they differed from the Sadducees, *i.e.*, the belief in the future life and their essentially religious, not political, concern, He agreed with the Pharisees.

Such are the remarks which an open-minded consideration of Pharisaism may suggest. To them we should like to add the following observations of Travers Herford :

" If it should appear . . . that the religion of the Torah as held by the Pharisees was a real expression of spiritual experience, the inspiration of holy living and holy dying, is the spiritual power of Christianity in any degree made less ? . . . Why should not the Christian be glad to own that the Jew, even the Pharisee, knew more of the deep things of God than he had supposed, and, after a way which was not the Christian way, yet loved the Lord his God with heart and soul and strength and mind—yes, and his neighbour as himself ? " <sup>1</sup>

Thus the meeting of Jesus with Pharisaism was not a fruitless encounter, but the assimilation by Jesus of what was best in the Judaism of his time and the elevation of this " best " to its utmost. Not only to the scribe who had " answered discreetly," but also to the genuine Pharisaic love of God and man, Jesus addressed the word recorded in Mark xii. 34 : " Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God."

#### PAUL AND JUDAISM

Next in importance to Jesus himself, in the dialogue between Judaism and Christianity, comes the Apostle Paul. Many religious historians of the last century would have considered Paul as an even more important factor in regard to the relationships between the two faiths. It was almost taken for granted, in Jewish as well as in liberal Protestant circles, that the theology of Paul differed widely from the Gospel of Jesus : that Paul fashioned a Christ and a system of belief of his own ; that Pauline Hellenism, from the beginning, came into radical conflict with Judaism ; and that from Paul dates the real parting of the ways between Jews and Christians and the

<sup>1</sup> *Pharisaism*, p. 333.

biased opinion of Judaism and its Law which took possession of the Christian world. These views have been greatly modified under the influence of recent scholarship.<sup>1</sup> It is impossible to enter here into a study of Paulinism ; but we find it necessary to underline and keep in sight a few points.

Paul never ceased to regard himself as a Jew. He called himself a " Hebrew of the Hebrews." He boasted of " our forefathers " and " fathers." He personally submitted to the observances of the Law. To show his Jewish orthodoxy, he took, and caused four other men to take, a vow which involved attendance at the Temple, where he was arrested.

The Christian Church accepted very one-sidedly the Pauline estimate of the Jewish religion. The Church Fathers insisted on the inadequacy of the Law and the forfeiture of the promises, but they seldom referred to the ultimate redemption of Israel on which Paul pinned his deepest faith.

Paul fought for the right of the Gentile Christians not to be bound by the Jewish Law. But he never questioned the legitimacy of Judæo-Christianity or the obligation of the circumcised Christian to keep the Law.

Then how are we to understand some apparently hard sayings of Paul concerning the Law ? In the first place, these passages ought not to make us forget the many other statements in which Paul is at pains to do justice to the Law. Secondly, we must remember the personal " catastrophe," the deep change which Paul experienced after his conversion. The religion of Paul became centred on a person, Jesus himself. This personality could by no means be expressed in terms of Torah. Devotion to a person is a mental attitude entirely different from devotion to a doctrine or an ideal. We find here, perhaps, the deepest explanation of the contrast between the New Testament and rabbinical literature. The latter expresses the steadfast devotion to a teaching ; the former expresses the vivid devotion—the " newly awakened devotion," as Travers Herford says—to a person. The spiritual fervour of the Rabbi becomes " study " of the Book, while the Christian

<sup>1</sup> On Paul and Judaism see H. St. John Thackeray, *The Relation of St. Paul to Contemporary Jewish Thought*, London, 1900 ; A. Deissmann, *St. Paul*, translated by L. Strachan, London, 1912 ; and *The Religion of Jews and the Faith of Paul*, translated by W. Wilson, London, 1923 ; C. Montefiore, *Judaism and St. Paul*, London, 1914 ; the symposium *Judaism and the Beginning of Christianity : a Course of Lectures delivered at Jews' College*, London, 1924 ; W. L. Knox, *St. Paul and the Church of Jerusalem*, Cambridge, 1925, and *St. Paul and the Church of the Gentiles*, Cambridge, 1939 ; J. Parkes, *Jesus Paul and the Jews*, London, 1936 ; J. Klausner, *From Jesus to Paul* (in Hebrew) 2 vols, Tel Aviv, 1940.

disciple finds a glowing rapture in the person of the Revealer. The personal relation to Christ takes the place of the Torah as the controlling factor of life. And, lastly, Paul never conceived this personal attachment to the Messiah as abolishing the Law, but rather as founding it and making it alive. Such an attitude is perfectly expressed by Romans iii. 31 : " Do we make then the Law of none effect through faith ? God forbid : nay, we establish the Law."

The true picture of Paul is the picture of a passionate Jew who, even when a Christian, would have gladly sacrificed himself for his people and who found in the total adhesion to his Master the fulfilment, not the destruction, of the Law. The constant " Jewishness " of Paul has been rightly affirmed by Deissmann : " The most genuine characteristics of the Jewish nature were preserved by Paul when he became a Christian. ' St. Paul the Jew ' does not mean that Paul was a Jew only before his conversion and afterwards no longer. Paul remained a Jew even when he became a Christian . . . In opposition to mechanical divisions of the Jewish and the Christian elements in him, we need not hesitate to call him the great Jew-Christian of the earliest age."<sup>1</sup>

A new attitude towards Paul is nowadays noticeable in certain Jewish circles. Paul has ceased to be merely the apostate and the enemy. One can grasp the importance of the recognition of Paul as expressed in the following words of C. G. Montefiore : " We can appreciate to some extent the doctrine of Paul as well as that of Jesus. We can perceive in it . . . a relative justification, and while not agreeing with it as a whole, and still less with its arguments and assumptions, we can, nevertheless, by ' putting ourselves above the documents ' (which is far removed from considering ourselves *superior* to the documents or their authors), find in them a certain suggestiveness, illumination and help."<sup>2</sup> And again Montefiore : " Jesus and Paul can help us as well as Hillel and Akiba. Let them do so."<sup>3</sup> Another striking instance of this new attitude towards Paul is afforded by a literary work to the inner meaning of which a Christian could fully subscribe—the drama *Paulus unter den Juden* of the Jewish-German writer, Franz Werfel.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *St. Paul*, p. 98.

<sup>2</sup> *The Old Testament and After*, London, 1923, p. 229.

<sup>3</sup> *ibidem*, p. 291.

<sup>4</sup> Translated into English by P. Levertoff : *Paul Among the Jews*, London 1928.