

Table of Contents

Chapter One



Introduction	21
1. Some Basic Problems	21
2. Purpose	28
2.1. A New Investigation into an Old Problem	28
2.2. Defining the Question	29
3. Methods and Perspectives	37
3.1. A Socio-Historical Study	37
3.2. Defining and Analysing Ritual	42
3.2.1. A Model for Analysing Ritual	44
3.2.2. Defining Liturgy	55
3.2.3. Defining Synagogue Liturgy	57
3.2.4. Summary	59
4. Procedure	60
5. Some Common Terms	62

Chapter Two



Important Views and Theories over 2000 Years	67
1. Introduction	67

2. Patriarchal and Mosaic Times: The Foundational Periods in Jewish Tradition	73
2.1. Attributions to Patriarchal Times	73
2.2. Moses as the Originator of the Synagogue	79
2.2.1. Philo	80
2.2.2. Josephus	82
2.2.3. Acts of the Apostles	83
2.2.4. The Jerusalem Talmud	84
2.2.5. Targum Pseudo-Jonathan	84
2.3. Conclusion	87
3. The Monarchic Period/Iron Age II (1000-586 BCE): Traditional Views Meet Modern Scholarship	87
3.1. The City Gate and the Origin of the Synagogue	87
3.2. <i>Bamoth</i> as the Origin of the Synagogue	97
3.3. The Origin of the Synagogue Under the Reign of King Manasseh	101
3.4. King Josiah and the Origin of the Synagogue	104
3.5. Conclusion	109
4. The Babylonian Period (586-539 BCE): Replacing Sacrificial Cult in a Foreign Country	110
5. The Persian Period (539-332 BCE): The Achievements of Ezra	123
6. The Hellenistic Period (332-37 BCE): The Triumph of Sources	128
6.1. Synagogue Origins in the Diaspora	128
6.1.1. Voluntary Associations as the Origin of the Synagogue	129
6.1.2. Synagogue Origins as an Inner-Jewish Development in a Foreign Country	134
6.2. Synagogue Origins in the Land of Israel	137
6.3. Conclusion	146

7. The Roman Period (37 BCE-324 CE): The Triumph of Definitions	148
8. Summary and Conclusions	161

C h a p t e r T h r e e



The First Century Synagogue	169
1. Introduction	169
2. The First Century Synagogue: Some Important Aspects	171
2.1. Terms and Distribution	171
2.2. The Archaeological Evidence	174
2.2.1. The Land of Israel	176
2.2.2. The Diaspora	185
2.3. The Synagogue and its Activities	189
3. Torah Reading: The Characteristic Activity of Early Synagogues	193
3.1. Defining Torah Reading and Study as Ritual	193
3.2. The Public Reading of Torah as Evidenced in the Mishnah	196
3.2.1. Extra-Temple Torah Reading Rituals: Their Nature and Performance	196
3.2.2. Torah Reading Rituals in the Jerusalem Temple	207
3.2.3. Concluding Remarks	212
3.3. The Public Reading of Torah as Evidenced in First Century Sources	213
3.3.1. Public Synagogues	213
3.3.2. Semi-Public Synagogues	223
3.3.3. Concluding Remarks	231
4. Conclusions	232

C h a p t e r F o u r



The Origins of the Synagogue in the Land of Israel	237
1. Introduction	237
2. Public Reading and Teaching of Torah: Categorising the Sources	240
2.1. Readings in Connection with Sacrificial Rituals	240
2.2. Reading and Teaching Independent from Sacrificial Rituals	241
2.3. Private Reading and Teaching	245
3. Locating the Sources in History	245
4. Persian Imperial Politics and the Creation of a Socio-Religious Institution	259
4.1. The Creation and Maintenance of a Secondary State: Yehud in its Socio-Historical Context	261
4.1.1. Public Reading and Teaching of Torah as Political Strategy	278
4.1.2. Torah Reading Rituals in their Local Contexts	283
4.2. Summary and Conclusions	300
5. Beyond the Persian Period: The Continuity of Reading and Teaching Rituals	304
5.1. The Early Hellenistic Period (332-167 BCE)	304
5.1.1. Torah Reading in Context: Public Teaching and Semi-Public Schools	305
5.2. The Late Hellenistic Period (167-37 BCE)	320
5.2.1. Torah Reading in Context: War, Schools, and Public Assemblies	322
5.3. Summary and Conclusions	339

6. The Setting of Public Reading and Teaching of Torah and its Development	342
6.1. The Liturgical Setting	342
6.2. The Spatial Setting	350
6.3. The Non-Liturgical Setting	370
6.4. Summary and Conclusions	377
7. The Institutional Aspect and its Development	379
8. The Origins of the Samaritan Synagogue	388
9. Conclusion: When, Where, How, and Why the Palestinian Synagogue Originated	395

C h a p t e r F i v e



The Origins of the Synagogue in the Diaspora	401
1. Introduction	402
2. Jewish Temples Outside the Land of Israel	403
2.1. Temples Beyond the Borders of the Later Hasmonean Nation	404
2.1.1. Babylonia	404
2.1.2. Egypt	409
2.1.3. Cyrenaica	415
2.1.4. Transjordan	417
2.1.5. Syria	421
2.2. Temples Within the Borders of the Later Hasmonean Nation	422
2.2.1. The Province of Samaria	422
2.2.2. The Province of Idumea	423
2.3. Concluding Remarks: National Politics and the Centralisation of Sacrificial Cult	426
<i>Excursus: Προσευχή</i> as a Jewish Temple Term	429

3. From Temple to Synagogue: The Case of Egypt	436
3.1. Jewish Temples and The Transformation of Liturgy	437
3.1.1. The Introduction of Torah Reading Rituals	441
3.2. Philo and the First Century <i>Proseuchai</i>	446
3.3. The Therapeutae as a Jewish Voluntary Association	455
3.4. Concluding Remarks	458
4. The Diaspora Except Egypt	459
4.1. Babylonia: Private Prayer and Public Temples but no Synagogues?	460
4.2. Hasmonean Politics and the Provinces of Samaria and Idumea	462
4.3. Syria and Asia Minor: From Temple to Synagogue?	463
4.4. <i>Collegia, Politeumata</i> and the Origins of the Synagogue	467
4.5. Concluding Remarks	471
5. Conclusion: When, Where, How, and Why the Diaspora Synagogue Originated	472

C h a p t e r S i x



Some Decisive Stages in the Development of the Early Synagogue	477
1. Introduction	477
2. The Origins and Earliest Development of the Synagogue	478

3. The First Century Synagogues	483
4. Beyond the First Century: From Where Did the Rabbinic Synagogue and the Catholic Church Originate?	486
Plans and Photographs	491
A Note on Abbreviations and Translations	505
Bibliography	507
1. Primary Sources and Translations	507
1.1. Literary Sources	507
1.2. Inscriptions and Papyri	510
2. Secondary Literature	511
Illustration Credits	555
Source Index	557
Subject Index	569