

Matthew's Gospel

Chapter 4b

Jeremiah 16:14-16

“Therefore, behold, the days are coming, declares Adonai, when it shall no longer be said, ‘As Adonai lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt,’ but ‘As Adonai lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the north country and out of all the countries where he had driven them.’ For I will bring them back to their own land that I gave to their fathers. “Behold, I am sending for many fishers, declares Adonai, and they shall catch them. And afterward I will send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain and every hill, and out of the clefts of the rocks.”













“Every person in Israel is obligated to be engaged in Torah learning, whether one is poor or wealthy, whether one is whole in body or afflicted with suffering, whether one is young or one is old and feeble, even a poor person who is supported by charity and goes from door to door seeking benevolence, even the man supporting his wife and children – everyone is required to find a set time during the day and the night to study Torah, as it was said, ‘you shall go over it, again and again, day and night’ (Joshua 1:8).”

∞ Moses Maimonides, *Mishnah Torah 1.8*

Two Kinds of Rabbis in 1st Century Israel

Torah Teachers (“Teachers of the Law”)

- Could only teach the Torah (*“It is written...”*)
- Could only teach established doctrine
- Were expected to quote their sources

Rabbis with *Smicha* (“authority”)

- Masters of the entire Tanach
- Master teachers
- Often performed miracles, healings
- Could generate new interpretations (*“You have heard it said... but I say to you...”*)
- Usually 60+ years of age before receiving *smicha*
- Received *smicha* from another rabbi with *smicha*



Luke 2:46-47

After three days they found Him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard Him were amazed at His understanding and His responses.

BEIT SEFER:

- All children 4-12
- Boys study and memorize the Torah
- Girls memorize Deuteronomy, Psalms and Proverbs

BEIT MIDRASH:

- Boys 12-15 who have successfully memorized the Torah
- Began memorizing the rest of the Tanach
- May spend part of the day learning a trade

BEIT TALMUD:

- Young men 15 and up (called "*talmidim*")
- Fewer than .1% accepted
- Would live with a Rabbi
- Studied the classic rabbinic interpretations

1. Radical call to a mentoring relationship

"If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple." (Luke 14:26)

"Although a man's father brings him into the world, his teacher who instructs him in God's wisdom from the Torah brings him into the World to Come."

∞ m. Bava Metzia 2.11

2. Demanded obedience

"Everyone then who hears these words of Mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. (Matthew 7:24)

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations... teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you..." (Matthew 28:19-20)

3. Learned by observation. Expected to conduct themselves like their rabbi.

And he appointed twelve ... so that they might be with Him and He might send them out to proclaim. (Mark 3:14)

“Any Christian that tells me he is a disciple of Jesus but does not read the four Gospels at least once a month is a liar!”

✎ Dr. David Flusser

Let your house be a meeting place for sages; cover yourself in the dust of their feet, and with thirst, drink in their words.

✎ Pirkei Avot 1:4