

(1968, reprinted in 2000); S. Gibson, *The Cave of John the Baptist* (2004).

[Shimon Gibson (2nd ed.)]

***JOHN CHRYSOSTOM** (354–407), most distinguished *Church Father of the East and one of the most virulently anti-Jewish preachers. Born in Antioch, the son of pagan parents, he was baptized in 373 and ordained a priest in 384. His eight sermons (homilies) against the Jews were delivered during his first two years of preaching activity in Antioch (386–387). They were written down verbatim by his audience and subsequently circulated. Thus their great anti-Jewish influence was felt beyond the period in which they were written. Chrysostom attacks not only the teachings of Judaism, but more especially the way of life and the views of contemporary Jews (incidentally, thereby giving valuable information on the life of Antioch Jewry in the fourth century and on the influence they exerted on their non-Jewish environment), accusing them of missionary activity, which dangerously competed with that of the Christians. The defeated and dispersed Jews, he ironically adds, were becoming the teachers of the whole world. He criticized those Christians in Antioch who cooperated with Jews in religious matters, kept the Sabbath, the “great fast,” and other Jewish festivals; they even submitted to circumcision and participated in pilgrimages to Jewish holy places. Chrysostom claimed that on the Sabbaths and festivals the Jewish synagogue was full of Christians, especially Christian women, who loved the solemnity of the Jewish liturgy, enjoyed listening to the *shofar* on Rosh Ha-Shanah, and applauded famous preachers (according to contemporary custom). Chrysostom attempted to defame the synagogue, which he compared to a pagan temple and which he represented to his audience as the source of all vices and heresies. In this connection he reported that actors appeared in the synagogues on Jewish festivals. His claim that among the Jews the priesthood may be purchased and sold for money is specified by his biographer, Palladius, who writes that “the patriarch – as well as the head of the synagogue – is changed every year so as to replenish the cash-boxes.” In other respects as well, Chrysostom, the pioneer of ascetic monkish life, criticized the Jews for their avarice and viciousness. He also testified to the Jewish influence on the judiciary of Antioch by reporting that Christians often took refuge in Jewish law courts and, when on oath, often used the Jewish oath formula. Even his sermons on the Maccabees were not in praise of the Jews, but in order to emphasize the difference between Jews and Christians, and it is not a mere coincidence that the destruction of the synagogue of Callinicon (also in Syria, cf. *Ambrose of Milan) took place immediately after a series of anti-Jewish sermons on the occasion of a procession in honor of the Maccabees in 388.

After a short period of activity in Constantinople, Chrysostom fell victim to court intrigues and was deposed by Emperor Arcadius. He then admitted that Jews, heretics, and pagans felt sorry for him, but Christians closed their hearts.

Whether this “confession” was only a rhetoric paradox, or whether there were really Jews in Constantinople who behaved to him in a friendly manner, is hard to determine. Nor is it possible to decide if his downfall was not engineered by some influential Jews at Arcadius’ court.

Like the writings of other Church Fathers, Chrysostom’s books contain various exegetical commentaries that concur with talmudic *aggadah*.

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[Yohanan (Hans) Lewy]

JOHN (Johannan) THE ESSENE (d. 66 C.E.), patriot and leader, described by Josephus as a man of outstanding courage and sagacity. Already recognized for his ability at the beginning of the revolt against the Romans, he was placed in command of the province of Thamna by the revolutionary government. Shortly afterward, in association with Niger of Perea, the deputy governor of Idumea, and Silas the Babylonian, a trained soldier formerly in the service of King Agrippa (both of whom had distinguished themselves in the victory over *Cestius), he was put in charge of the disastrous expedition against Ashkelon.

He and Silas were killed in the first attack. It is doubtful if “the Essene” implies that he belonged to that body. It may mean “a man of Esse,” i.e., Gerasa in Transjordan.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Jos., *Wars*, 2:567; 3:19; Klausner, *Bayit Sheni*, 5 (1951²), 309, index.

[Cecil Roth]

JOHN OF CAPUA (Johannes de Capua; 13th century), Italian translator who lived in Rome during the pontificate of Bonifacius VIII (1294–1303). Probably born in Capua before 1250, John of Capua, an apostate, is known for his translation of *Kalila and Dimna* from Hebrew into Latin. John translated this famous collection of tales, working on the basis of a previous Hebrew version done from Arabic in the 12th century by a Jew named Joel. He worked on this Latin translation between 1263 and 1278 and dedicated it to Cardinal Matteo Orsini. The work was thereafter widely known under its Latin name, *Directorium humanae vitae, alias parabola antiquorum sapientium* (“The Guide of Human Life, or Proverbs of the Ancient Sages”). The influence of the *Directorium* on the writers and collectors of fables with an ethical-didactic purpose was immense, and eminent writers and novelists dealt with this work until the 17th century. The *Directorium* was first published between 1484 and 1493; a critical edition was established by F. Geissler only in 1960. John of Capua also translated – always from the Hebrew translations of the Arabic – treatises dealing with medicine, including the *al-Taysir* (“The Facilitation”), a treaty on pathology and therapeutics by Abu Marwan ibn Zuhr (1090–1162); several medical texts by Maimonides: “On