

Dispersed among the nations, without a national centre, without a synod to formulate its principles, or any secular power to enforce its decrees, the Synagogue found its home and harmony in the heart of a loyal and consecrated Israel.

There was no school of thought to which it was not exposed, no great philosophic or spiritual influence which did not reach into its life and is not reflected in its development. These foreign-born ideas were all thoroughly assimilated by the Synagogue, and mingled even with its devotion and contemplation. The hymn, "Royal Crown," by R. Solomon b. Gabirol, in the Spanish ritual, and the "Song of Unity," in the German ritual, both recited on the Day of Atonement, are sufficient evidence of this fact, apart from some customs and usages of non-Jewish origin, which were thoroughly converted to Judaism by the Synagogue in the process of time. Having gained an entrance by a process of natural selection and unconscious absorption, the power of Judaism was manifested in its obliteration of all that was strange and objectionable in such accretions, so strong were its digestive powers. But equally, the vitality of the Synagogue was manifested in what it eliminated and rejected as inconsistent with its existence. Whenever any influence, no matter by whom advanced or by whatever power maintained, developed a tendency that was contrary to a strict monotheism, or denied the binding character of the Torah, or aimed to destroy the unity and character and calling of Israel, although