

no longer deemed trustworthy or needed. Their own companies had become more important than the mass gatherings of the clans, so to speak, although it would have been dangerous to have said this openly. From these points of view, Judaism was ripe for reform.

Some reform attempts had been produced by a number of sectarian and cultic bodies...just the sort of thing that does not produce reform! Chief among these were:

Sadducees: Hellenistically inclined syncretizers of Judaism and Hellenism. Not popular spiritually but holding much of the wealth, power, and favor of Rome, their tendency would have destroyed the essential character of Judaism had they not been successfully counterbalanced.

Pharisees: These were keepers of the tradition of the law who had separated themselves (paratz) from the hellenistic ideals and practices of the non-Jewish population of Palestine. The Pharisees had become more a guardian of the tradition and so had deteriorated from their original purpose.

/The articles on these groups in the new JEWISH ENCYCLOPEDIA are very worth the time of reading/

Essenes: The term represents a "clean" group that sought to secure its identity outside the Temple since it regarded the temple worship of the time as deformed and degrading. The sect promoted an ascetic approach to truth and we think the Qumran sectarians were probably essenic in character if not that in direct recognition.

Herodians: This was a smaller cadre of Jewish leaders who sought a more complete union with Rome and felt that Roman control was what was needed to perfect and restore the Temple..although their ideas of temple restoration were not compatible with those of the Pharisees.

Zealots: As such this segment represented revolutionaries seeking to overthrow Rome and promoting civil disobedience and public disorder to that end. It was a varied body and not a continuing group. Its strong moment will come with the revolution of 67-70 AD and later with bar Cochba.