

## Gamliel (Hebrew name) גַּמְלִיאֵל

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**Gamaliel** - (Hebrew, "recompense of God") - In the cabala and gnostic writings, one of the great acons and luminaries, a beneficent spirit associated with Gabriel, Abraxas, Mikhar, and Samlo. However, Levi rates Hamaliel, as evil, "an adversary of the cherubim" serving under Lilith (who is the demon of debauchery). In the Revelation of Adam to His Son Seth (a Coptic apocalypse), Gamaliel is one of the high, holy celestial poers whose mission is "to draw the elect up to Heaven.

<http://www.angelicreflections.com/angel-Dictionary-G.asp>

# Gamaliel

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Rabbinical Eras
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chazal               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Zugot</li> <li>Tannaim</li> <li>Amoraim</li> <li>Savoraim</li> </ul> </li> <li>Geonim</li> <li>Rishonim</li> <li>Acharonim</li> </ul>



*This article is about Gamaliel the Elder. For other individuals and uses see Gamaliel (disambiguation)*

**Gamaliel the Elder** /ɡəˈmeɪljəl/,<sup>[1]</sup> (also spelled **Gamliel**; Hebrew: רַבֵּן גַּמְלִיאֵל הַזֶּקֶן; Greek: Γαμαλιήλ ο Προσβύτερος) or **Rabban Gamaliel I**, was a leading authority in the Sanhedrin in the early-1st century CE. He was son of Simeon ben Hillel, and grandson of the great Jewish teacher Hillel the Elder, and died twenty years before the destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem (70 CE). He fathered a son, whom he called Simeon, after his father,<sup>[2]</sup> and a daughter, whose daughter (*i.e.*, Gamaliel's granddaughter) married a priest named Simon ben Nathanael.<sup>[3]</sup> In Christian tradition, his second son Abibo (also Abibas, Abibus) converted to Christianity and is venerated as a saint. *Gamaliel* is a Hebrew name meaning *reward of God*.

In the Christian tradition, Gamaliel is celebrated as a Pharisee doctor of Jewish Law.<sup>[4]</sup> The Acts of the Apostles speaks of Gamaliel as a man of great respect who spoke in favor of the arrested apostles of Jesus in Acts 5:34<sup>[5]</sup>,<sup>[6]</sup> and the Jewish law teacher of Paul the Apostle in Acts 22:3<sup>[7]</sup><sup>[8]</sup>.

## In Jewish tradition

In the Talmud, Gamaliel is described as bearing the titles Nasi and *Rabban* (our master), as the president of the Great Sanhedrin in Jerusalem; although some dispute this, it is not doubted that he held a senior position in the highest court in Jerusalem. Gamaliel holds a reputation in the Mishnah for being one of the greatest teachers in all the annals of Judaism:

"Since Rabban Gamaliel the Elder died, there has been no more reverence for the law, and purity and piety died out at the same time".<sup>[9]</sup>

Gamaliel's authority on questions of religious law is suggested by two Mishnaic anecdotes in which "the king and queen" ask for his advice about rituals.<sup>[10]</sup> The identity of the king and queen in question is not given, but is generally thought to either be King Herod Agrippa I and his wife Cypros, or King Herod Agrippa II and his sister Berenice.<sup>[11]</sup>

As classical rabbinical literature always contrasts the school of Hillel to that of Shammai and only presents the collective opinions of each of these opposing schools of thought without mentioning the individual nuances and opinions of the rabbis within them, these texts do not portray Gamaliel as being knowledgeable about the Jewish scriptures, nor do they portray him as a teacher. For this reason, Gamaliel is not listed as part of the chain of individuals who perpetuated the Mishnaic tradition.<sup>[12]</sup> Instead the chain is listed as passing directly from Hillel to Johanan ben Zakkai.

Nevertheless, the Mishnah mentions Gamaliel's authorship of a few legal ordinances on the subjects of community welfare and conjugal rights. He argued that the law should protect women during divorce, and that, for the purpose of re-marriage, a single witness was sufficient evidence for the death of a husband.<sup>[13]</sup> The Mishnah also contains a saying it attributes to "Gamaliel", although it is vague about which particular "Gamaliel" it means. The saying itself concerns religious scruples:

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"Obtain a teacher for yourself, keep yourself [on religious questions] far from doubt, and only infrequently give a tithe using general valuation."<sup>[14]</sup>

Various pieces of classical rabbinic literature additionally mention that Gamaliel sent out three epistles, designed as notifications of new religious rulings, and which portray Gamaliel as the head of the Jewish body for religious-law.<sup>[15][16][17][18]</sup> Two of these three were sent, respectively, to the inhabitants of Galilee and "the Darom" (southern Judea), and were on the subject of the Levite Tithe. The third epistle was sent to the Jews of the Diaspora, and argued for the introduction of an intercalary month.

Since the Hillel school of thought is presented collectively, there are very few other teachings which are clearly identifiable as Gamaliel's. There is only a somewhat cryptic dictum, comparing his students to classes of fish:

A ritually impure fish: one who has memorised everything by study, but has no understanding, and is the son of poor parents

A ritually pure fish: one who has learnt and understood everything, and is the son of rich parents

A fish from the Jordan River: one who has learnt everything, but doesn't know how to respond

A fish from the Mediterranean: one who has learnt everything, and knows how to respond

In some manuscripts of Dunash ibn Tamim's tenth-century Hebrew commentary on the Sefer Yetzirah, the author identifies Gamaliel with the physician Galen. He claims to have seen an Arabic medical work translated from Hebrew entitled "The Book of Gamaliel the Prince (Nasi), called Galenos among the Greeks."<sup>[19]</sup> However, since Galen lived in the second century and Gamaliel died during the mid-first century, this is unlikely.

## In Christian tradition

The Acts of the Apostles introduces Gamaliel as a Pharisee and celebrated doctor of the Mosaic Law in Acts 5:34–40<sup>[20]</sup>. In the larger context (vs.17–42<sup>[21]</sup>), Peter and the other apostles are described as being prosecuted before the sanhedrin and senate (or elders) for continuing to preach the gospel, despite the Jewish authorities having previously prohibited it. The passage describes Gamaliel as presenting an argument against killing the apostles, reminding them about the previous revolts of Theudas and Judas of Galilee which had collapsed quickly after the deaths of those individuals. Gamaliel's advice was accepted after his concluding argument:

"And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God." —Acts 5:38–39<sup>[22]</sup>

The Book of Acts later goes on to describe Paul the Apostle recounting that although "born in Tarsus", he was brought up in Jerusalem "at the feet of Gamaliel, [and] taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers". (Acts 22:3<sup>[7]</sup>) No details are given about which teachings Paul adopted from Gamaliel, or how much Gamaliel influenced aspects of Christianity. However, there is no other record of Gamaliel ever having taught in public, although the Talmud does describe Gamaliel as teaching a student who displayed "impudence in learning", which a few scholars identify as a possible reference to Paul.<sup>[23]</sup> The relationship of Paul the Apostle and Judaism continues to be the subject of scholarly debate. Helmut Koester, Professor of Divinity and of Ecclesiastical History at Harvard University, is doubtful that Paul studied under this famous rabbi, arguing that there is a marked contrast in the tolerance that Gamaliel is said to have expressed about Christianity with the "murderous rage" against Christians that Paul is described as having prior to his conversion (Acts 8:1–3<sup>[24]</sup>).<sup>Wikipedia:Citation needed</sup>

In the apocryphal *Gospel of Gamaliel*, he figures as a witness to the raising of a dead man at Jesus' tomb.<sup>[25]</sup>

## Veneration as a Saint

Ecclesiastical tradition maintains that Gamaliel had embraced the Christian faith and his tolerant attitude toward the Early Christians is explained by this. According to Photius, he was baptized by Saint Peter and Saint John, together with his son Abibo (Abibas, Abibus) and Nicodemus.<sup>[26]</sup> The Clementine Literature suggested that he maintained secrecy about the conversion and continued to be a member of the Sanhedrin for the purpose of covertly assisting his fellow Christians.<sup>[27]</sup> Some scholars consider these traditions to be spurious.<sup>[28]</sup>

The Eastern Orthodox Church venerates Gamaliel as a saint, where he

is commemorated on August 2, the date when tradition holds that his relics were found, along with those of Stephen the Protomartyr, Abibas (Gamaliel's son), and Nicodemus. The traditional liturgical calendar of the Roman Catholic Church celebrates the same feast day of the finding of the relics on August 3. It is said that in the 5th century, by a miracle, his body had been discovered and taken to Pisa Cathedral.<sup>[29]</sup>

The Jewish account maintains that he remained a Pharisee until his death. Contemporary Jewish records continue to list him first among the Sanhedrin.



*Saint Stephen Mourned by Saints Gamaliel and Nicodemus*, follower of Carlo Saraceni, c. 1615, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

## References

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- [13] *Yebamot* 16:7
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Preceded by <b>Shammai</b>	<b>Nasi</b> c. 30–50	Succeeded by <b>Shimon ben Gamliel</b>
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