

## INTRODUCTION

Various preconceptions have dominated Qumran research. These, in turn, have blurred the significance of documents of the most incalculable historical value, so that only 35 years after their discovery, they have become objects of only passing interest to many scholars. Primarily, these preconceptions stem from an animus towards and derogation of the Maccabean family and the additional underlying motive (albeit at times unconscious) of trying to distance the materials in question as far as possible from Christianity's formative years in Palestine. These preconceptions subtly deform archaeological and palaeographic studies as well, so that scholars end up with "results" that are psychologically and spiritually more in keeping with their original assumptions and beliefs. In turn, these are used to render solutions, based on the clear thrust of internal data and the reality of the historical *sitz-im-leben*, stillborn.

Though Josephus is properly recognized as the important source he is, his associations with both the "Essene" and "Zealot" movements (and what we shall refer to as "the Messianic"), and his canny evasions resulting from these, are in large measure ignored. It is forgotten, too, that apart from the period 55-75 A.D., when he was a mature observer, he too was working from sources: sources he sometimes either treated too hastily or did not fully understand himself; and his confusions compound our own. For example, he takes notices (probably from different sources) about Herod's regard for both "Pharisees" and "Essenes" and sets them side-by-side without realizing his sources were themselves most likely talking about the same group. This confusion of "Pharisee" and "Essene" terminologies is also at the root of the contradictory notices about "Hassidaeans" in 2 Macc and 1 Macc as both the supporters of Judas *par excellence* and his betrayers. Elsewhere, Josephus contradicts himself in what he says about James' nemesis, the high priest Ananus, heaping praise on him in the *War*, while abusing him in the *Antiquities* and the *Vita*. In fact, many startling omissions in the *War* are made good in this way in the *Antiquities* and the *Vita*. Compounding this particular confusion, early Church accounts insist that Josephus connected James' death with the fall of Jerusalem, which is precisely what he tells us about Ananus' in the extant copy of the *War*.

The inability to come to grips with a whole new vocabulary in Hebrew also prevented many scholars from seeing through to the real implications of the materials before them. In particular, it proved difficult to recognize the Hebrew originals of familiar expressions known only

through Greek, Latin, and more modern translations, e.g., *Derech* ("the Way"), *Tamim* or *Tom* ("Perfection"), *Da'at* ("Knowledge"—"Gnosis" in some traditions), *ʿamall/maʿasim* ("works"), *yazdik/yizadek* ("justify" or "be justified"), *Yom* or *Beit ha-Mishpat* ("the Last Judgement"), etc. Perhaps because of a dearth of really credible translations, specialists also found it difficult to come to grips with the use of interchangeable metaphor where the names of numerous familiar groups were concerned, e.g., "Essenes" (*Hassidim*), Zadokites (*Zaddikim*), Ebionites (*Ebionim*), Nazoraeans (*Nozrim*), "the Meek" (*ʿAnavim*), "the Saints" (*Kedoshim*), "Zealots" (*Kanna'im*), etc. This is compounded by the basically secretive nature of the tradition, which itself was connected with an ongoing "hidden" tradition, and in turn, accounts for the seemingly dizzying multiplication of sects and groups, when in fact one has to do essentially with one "Essene" or "Zealot"-type orientation. Part of the problem, too, stems from the inability to recognize subversive groups in what on the surface, anyhow, appeared to be harmless "ascetics". Here, Josephus is more forthcoming, albeit still using his familiar circumlocutions, when he tells us that "the imposters and deceivers" (i.e., whom we shall call our "Zadokite" leaders) were scheming to bring about *both* "innovations" (i.e., religious reform) *and* "change in Government".

One must be prepared to put aside all preconceptions stemming from one's own terms-of-reference, usually either the viewpoints of Rabbinic Judaism or "Christianity" as it has devolved upon us, since the tradition under consideration is implacably hostile to both. For example, the authenticity of the Letter of James has been consistently undermined from Eusebius' time to Luther's; but aside from some polishing and minimal ideological tinting, it fits perfectly into the materials of concern to us in this study. Exhibiting that studied reticence in identifying its antagonists which is usually the result of fear of powerful, hostile forces; its "not one jot or tittle" approach to *Torah*, its constant stress on "keeping (not "breaking") the Law", and its antagonism to "fornication" (cf. Ja 2:8ff., the formulations of which appear to predate and underlie Mt 5:17ff.) all have their parallels in Qumran usage. Its application of "tongue" imagery, extant at Qumran, to describe a troublesome internal adversary, is also generically parallel to the "lying", "spouting", and insolent "scoffing" allusions there. Elsewhere, the interpolation in Paul's presentation of the order of resurrection appearances in 1 Co 15.4ff. is widely assumed to involve the reference to "James and all the apostles". However, we prefer to turn this around, considering it rather to consist of the improbable "Cephas and the twelve" (there were only eleven at the time). Neither can the historical *sitz-im-leben* of the Qumran tradition be reconstructed solely on the basis of traditions to which Rab-

binic Judaism is the heir. In fact, in this period both it and "Gentile Christianity" exhibit a telltale pattern of deference to Herodian religious requirements and political designs.

Some words should be said about our reference in passing to *Zohar* tradition, correspondences to which are pointed out in the footnotes. It should be noted that I confine myself to the "Noah" and "Phineas" sections only, where allusions relevant to James' person are found. Though I prefer to stand aside on the question of the Second Temple or medieval origins of *Zohar* tradition (cf. Paul on Mosaic "splendor"; 2 Co 3:8ff.), the appropriateness of these allusions to the materials under consideration should give those who dogmatically adhere to the latter position something to consider; certainly these references have nothing whatever to do with thirteenth century Spain. Correspondences are also pointed out in the footnotes to Karaite traditions and *selected* use is made of materials in the Slavonic Josephus. Anyone who would object to recourse to such parallels should realize that Gospel and Rabbinic traditions are not much better attested to and all such materials, anyhow, must be treated *equally* according to the *same* criteria. Here, attention to work done in traditions in the Islamic field of a *completely disinterested kind* might prove helpful. Its results illustrate that traditions of the most surprising content, considered poorly authenticated for some reason, or "divergent", by majority opinion, often turn out to carry the earliest strata of historical data. Where the documents at Qumran are concerned, of course, we are in possession fortunately of contemporary accounts in large measure unaffected by the distortions of tradition-manufacture and the retrospective imposition of a later historical consensus.

Another serious problem in Qumran textual studies is the inability to come to grips with literary genre and literary device; in particular, the Hebrew love of word-play. This is true, for instance, of the Qumran exegesis of the crucial "Zadokite Statement" of Ez 44:15 (which is very definitely *eschatological*, as is that of Hab 2:4), the use of the term "the Many" in Qumran community organization and (together with both "*amal*" and "*Da'at*") in "justification"-theorizing going back to Is 53:11 usage (the currency of which is attested to by Paul in 1 Co 15:4 above), and figurative allusion to the central priestly triad as "the Holy of Holies" in a general context of Is 40:3 "making a Way in the wilderness" and Ps 118:22 "cornerstone" imagery.

Two basic Hebrew concepts, *Hesed* and *Zedek* ("Piety" and "Righteousness"), run through all descriptions of opposition groups in this period. Justin Martyr identifies these as the twin components of the "all Righteousness" doctrine. Putting them side-by-side with the elemental Noahic proscriptions on "idolatry, fornication, and manslaughter" (also

at the root of James' "Jerusalem Council" directives), he shows how this duality was expressed in the two scriptural commandments of "loving God" (*Hesed*) and "loving one's neighbor" (*Zedek*; cf. Mt 22:34ff. and Mk 12:28ff.). Starting with the description of the *Anshei-Hesed/Zaddikim* in Hebrew Ecclesiasticus and Josephus' parallel note about Simeon the *Zaddik* in the *Antiquities*, this dichotomy is the common thread running through all Josephus' descriptions of "Essenes", his description of John the Baptist's wilderness activities, and all early Church accounts of James; and comprises the essential basis of what we shall describe as "the Zadokite Hassidaean" movement. Where James and "the Essenes" were concerned (and probably Jesus as well), the "Righteousness" commandment (cf. Ja 2:8 on "the Supreme Law of Scripture") underwent the additional fundamental metamorphosis into a demand for economic equality, which is at the root of "the Poor" terminologies and "the hostility towards the Rich" so closely connected with all these Essene-like or "Jewish Christian" personalities.

Another important theme in this period is the "hidden" ideology we have alluded to above. This is linked in our literature to "hiding in *caves*" and taken all the way back via *Zohar* tradition to the first *Zaddik* Noah's paradigmatic experience of "being hidden" (by God) in the ark to escape the destruction that was being unleashed. It finds additional expression in a strong *redivivus* tradition adhering to these "Noahic" priest-*Zaddiks*, which, in turn, is closely associated with another element in the "Noahic" tradition, *rain-making*. An additional echo of all of these motifs is to be found in the Talmud in the *redivivus* and "hidden" traditions circulating about Honi, the circle-drawing *Zaddik*, not to mention in Josephus' "magician" and "imposter" accusations.

Not only does the *ARN* associate rain-making (not insignificantly under the heading of "Simeon the *Zaddik*") with proper (i.e., "Zadokite") "Temple service", but in the War Scroll eschatological "rain" imagery is definitively connected to the exegesis of "the Star" prophecy. This is expressed in terms of "the Messiah" coming to give "Judgement" (*Mishpat*) and the coming of "the Heavenly Host" to "rain judgement" from the clouds "on all the sons of men". The connection of both of these allusions with the well-known Messiah "coming on the clouds of Heaven" imagery should be clear (cf. also Paul in 1 Thess 3:13-4:17 and Jude 14f.). This is precisely the proclamation early Church tradition attributes to James (to whom the rain-making tradition also adhered) and it is repeated in the letter conserved under his name, which itself culminates in Messianic "rain" imagery, and in the process, specifically refers to one of the key rain-making forerunners in the *redivivus* tradition, Elijah.

Two titles, *Zaddik* and *Oblias* (or “Protection of the People”; the last paralleled in Qumran “Shield”/*Ma‘oz* and “Fortress”/*Migdal* imagery), were applied as if integrally to James’ being; and it is specifically acknowledged that Qumran-style scriptural exegesis was carried on with regard to his person (as at Qumran, the passage in question, Is 3:10, is a *zaddik*-passage of the kind applied to the events of the life of the Righteous Teacher; cf. Hab 2:4, Ps 37, etc.). Also, two adversaries can be readily identified with regard to his life. These, in turn, precisely parallel the two nemeses of the Righteous Teacher, one an establishment high priest outside the movement called “Wicked” and the other, a “treacherous” individual within the movement who follows a more antinomian approach to the Law (including “denying the Law in the midst of the whole congregation”), “leads Many astray” (in contradistinction to the more proper “justification” activity of “making Many Righteous”), and is variously dubbed “the Liar”, “the Pourer out of Lying”, “the Scoffer” or “Boaster”. Tradition, too, actually places James with *all his community* in the Jericho area in the early 40’s, corresponding to an impressive rise in Qumran coin distribution under Agrippa I (Rec 1.71, a notice which can hardly be ascribed to historical interpolation).

It should be appreciated that according to the scheme of the Zadokite Document, the Messianic “Root” has already been killed, and that, therefore, dwelling too much on the person of “the Messiah” (who even for Gospel artificers and their modern-day form-critical and redactionist inheritors is a figure shrouded in mystery) will not prove very productive. This was the defect of J. Teicher’s fantastic theorizing, which did more to discredit work on this subject than advance it, itself prefigured in the earlier and *more solid* work done on the Zadokite Document by G. Margoliouth. However, the Zadokite Document does conclude with the unmistakable evocation of a “Messianic” *return* (repeated three times). The language it uses precisely corresponds to James’ several like-minded proclamations noted above and Paul in 1 Thess 3:13. A proper grasp of the Hebrew usage, “*‘amod*”, which does not only mean “coming” as per most translations, but also “standing up”, as per the original reference in Ezekiel, would clarify these matters.

Finally, it should be appreciated that Qumran exegetical interpretation raises the clear presumption of a first century provenance for most Qumran sectarian materials. This is as true of the exegesis of Hab 2:4 (including the notice about “the delay of the *Parousia*” which precedes it), as it is for the citation of “the Star” prophecy (which Josephus definitively connects with the uprising against Rome and which all available evidence attests was “in the air” from the 40’s to the 60’s A.D. and beyond) upwards of three times in the extant corpus—once in con-

nection with the Messianic "rain" imagery described above; the reference to "the True Prophet" proof-text (Deut 18:15) well-known in Jewish Christian tradition; and the application of "Lebanon" imagery to the fall of the Temple, which *ARN* definitively ties to the fall of the Temple in 70 A.D.

In addition, there is the implied presence of the terminology of Is 53:11 in the very structure of Qumran organization itself, as well as in Qumran eschatological exegesis of Ez 44:15 and Hab 2:4, and the fairly large collection of Qumran allusions, including "the Way" (which Luke identifies as an alternative name for first century "Christianity" in Palestine), "the Poor", "the Meek", *Yom ha-Mishpat* (cf. Jude 6), "works", "the *kez ha-aharon*" (cf. Heb 9:27), etc., all with a fairly well attested first century provenance.

Then what principally holds researchers back from arriving at such conclusions? Aside from a strong psychological and spiritual predisposition not to arrive at such results, the answer is to be found in the supposedly secure "results" palaeographers and archaeologists have claimed for themselves. Here, a small group of specialists, largely working together, developed a consensus which was used to press the provenance of the most important Qumran sectarian texts back into the first (and sometimes even the *second*) century B.C. In *lieu* of clear historical insight or a firm textual grasp, preconceptions and reconstructions, such as they were, were stated as facts, and these results, which were used to corroborate each other, in turn became *new* assumptions, that were used to draw away a whole generation of students unwilling (or simply unable) to question the work of their mentors. The archaeological evidence they used was mainly based on a questionable treatment of coin data; while the flaws in palaeography (a subject notorious for its imprecision) were mainly connected with F. M. Cross' and S. Birnbaum's assumptions of a "rapid", *straight-line* development of scripts. In fact, where palaeographic sequences are concerned and the rather simplistic straight-line functions developed to describe these, the situation is probably far more uneven and complex than either scholar originally envisioned; and historical and textual studies will be able to do much to clarify these, not *vice versa*. Despite the fact that a majority of concerned persons do not appear to have seriously examined the various positions of those principally responsible for this consensus or their methodologies, this consensus has been allowed to stand. Therefore, I have felt obliged to treat and criticize their arguments and conclusions in detail in the latter part of this work, particularly in the footnotes. (These footnotes contain much substantive material and supplementary documentation generally. Because of their

length, they have been placed at the back of the book, but the reader is nevertheless urged to study them carefully.)

In providing an alternative historical and textual framework in which to fit the most important Qumran sectarian documents, it is hoped that most of the preconceptions that have dominated Qumran research for so long will fade away, and that new ideas will be brought into play and previously unused sources given their proper scope. When this is done, individual beings, the facts of whose lives tradition has distorted beyond recognition, or who have been consigned to historical oblivion, spring immediately to life and a whole block of associated historical fabrications and accusations evaporate.

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