

CAN YOU ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS?

1. When were the Dead Sea Scrolls written?
2. Who was the founder of the Qumran sect?
3. How did the beliefs of the Essenes differ from that of the Pharisees?
4. How did the calendar of the Qumran sect differ from the traditional calendar?
5. List at least three halachic differences between the Qumran sect and the Pharisees?

This and much more will be addressed in the eleventh lecture of this series: "The Dead Sea Scrolls".

To derive maximum benefit from this lecture, keep these questions in mind as you listen to the tape and read through the outline. Go back to these questions once again at the end of the lecture and see how well you answer them.

PLEASE NOTE: This outline and source book was designed as a powerful tool to help you appreciate and understand the basis of Jewish History. Although the lectures can be listened to without the use of the outline, we advise you to read the outline to enhance your comprehension. Use it as well as a handy reference guide and for quick review.

THE EPIC OF THE ETERNAL PEOPLE

Presented by Rabbi Shmuel Irons

Series II Lecture #11

THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

I. The Essenes

A. Palestinian Syria, too, has not failed to produce high moral excellence. In this country live a considerable part of the very populous nation of the Jews, including as it is said, certain persons, more than four thousand in number, called Essenes. Their name which is, I think, a variation, though the form of the Greek is inexact, of holiness, is given them, because they have shown themselves especially devout in the service of G-d, not by offering sacrifices of animals, but by resolving to sanctify their minds. The first thing about these people is that they live in villages and avoid the cities because of the iniquities which have become inveterate among city dwellers, for they know that their company would have a deadly effect upon their own souls, like a disease brought by a pestilential atmosphere. Some of them labor on the land and others pursue such crafts as cooperate with peace and so benefit themselves and their neighbors. They do not hoard gold and silver or acquire great slices of land because they desire the revenues therefrom, but provide what is needed for the necessary requirements of life. For while they stand almost alone in the whole of mankind in that they have become moneyless and landless by deliberate action rather than by lack of good fortune, they are esteemed exceedingly rich, because they judge frugality with contentment to be, as indeed it is, an abundance of wealth. As for darts, javelins, daggers, or the helmet, breastplate or shield, you could not find a single manufacturer of them, nor, in general, any person making weapons or engines or plying any industry concerned with war, nor, indeed, any of the peaceful kind, which easily lapse into vice, for they have not the vaguest idea of commerce either wholesale or retail or marine, but pack the inducements to covetousness off in disgrace. Not a single slave is to be found among them, but all are free, exchanging services with each other, and they denounce the owners of slaves, not merely for their injustice in outraging the law of equality, but also for their impiety in annulling the statute of Nature, who mother-like has borne and reared all men alike, and created them genuine brothers, not in mere name, but in very reality, though this kinship has been put to confusion by the triumph of malignant covetousness, which has wrought estrangement instead of affinity and enmity instead of friendship. As for philosophy they abandon the logical part to quibbling verbalists as unnecessary for the acquisition of virtue, and the physical to visionary praters as beyond the grasp of human nature, only retaining that part which treats philosophically of the existence of G-d and the creation of the universe. But the ethical part they study very industriously, taking for their trainers the laws of their fathers, which could not possibly have been conceived by the human soul without divine inspiration. In these they are instructed at all other times, but particularly on the seventh

days. For that day has been set apart to be kept holy and on it they abstain from all other work and proceed to sacred spots which they call synagogues. There, arranged in rows according to their ages, the younger below the elder, they sit decorously as befits the occasion with attentive ears. Then one takes the books and reads aloud and another of especial proficiency comes forward and expounds what is not understood. For most of their philosophical study takes the form of allegory, and in this they emulate the tradition of the past. They are trained in piety, holiness, justice, domestic and civic conduct, knowledge of what is truly good, or evil, or indifferent, and how to choose what they should and avoid the opposite, taking for their defining standards these three, love of G-d, love of virtue, love of men. Their love of G-d they show by a multitude of proofs: by religious purity constant and unbroken throughout their lives, by abstinence from oaths, by veracity, by their belief that G-d is the cause of all good things and nothing bad. They show their love of virtue by their freedom from the love of either money or reputation or pleasure, by self-mastery and endurance, again by frugality, simple living, contentment, humility, respect for law, steadiness and all similar qualities. They show their love of men by benevolence and sense of equality, and their spirit of fellowship, which defies description, though a few words on it will not be out of place. First of all then no one's house is his own in the sense that it is not shared by all, for besides the fact that they dwell together in communities, the door is open to visitors from elsewhere who share their convictions. Again they all have a single treasury and common disbursements; their clothes are held in common and also their food through their institution of public meals. In no other community can we find the custom of sharing roof, life and board more firmly established in actual practice. And that is no more than one would expect. For all the wages which they earn in the day's work they do not keep as their private property, but throw them into the common stock and allow the benefit thus accruing to be shared by those who wish to use it. The sick are not neglected because they cannot provide anything, but have the cost of their treatment lying ready in the common stock, so that they can meet expenses out of the greater wealth in full security. To the elder men too is given the respect and care which real children give to their parents, and they receive from countless hands and minds a full and generous maintenance for their latter years. **Philo, Every Good Man Is Free, Par. 53 - 61**

B. Multitudes of his disciples has the lawgiver trained for the life of fellowship. These people are called Essenes, a name awarded to them doubtless in recognition of their holiness. They live in many cities of Judaea and in many villages and grouped in great societies of many members. Their persuasion is not based birth, for birth is not a descriptive mark of voluntary associations, but on their zeal for virtue and desire to promote brotherly love. Thus no Essene is a mere child nor even a stripling or newly bearded, since the characters of such are unstable with a waywardness corresponding to the immaturity of their age, but full grown and verging on old age, no longer carried under by the tide of the body nor led by the passions, but enjoying veritably the only real

freedom. This freedom is attested by their life. None of them allows himself to have any private property, either house or slave or estate or cattle or any of the other things that are amassed and abundantly procured by wealth, but they put everything together into the public stock and enjoy the benefit of them all in common. They live together formed into clubs, bands of comradeship with common meals, and never cease to conduct all their affairs to serve the general weal. But they have various occupations at which they labor with untiring application and never plead cold or heat or any of violent changes in the atmosphere as an excuse. Before the sun is risen they betake themselves to their familiar tasks and only when it sets force themselves to return, for they delight in them as much as do those who are entered for gymnastic competitions. For they consider that the exercises which they practice whatever they may be are more valuable to life, more pleasant to soul and body and more lasting than those of the athlete in as much as they can still be plied with vigor when that of the body is past its prime. Some of them labor on land skilled in sowing and planting, some as herdsman taking charge of every kind of cattle and superintend the swarms of bees. Others work at the handicrafts to avoid the sufferings which forced upon us by our indispensable requirements and shrink from no innocent way of getting a livelihood. Each branch when it has received the wages of these so different occupations gives it to one person who has been appointed treasurer. He takes it and at once buys what is necessary and provides food in abundance and anything else which human life requires. Thus having each day a common life and a common table they are content with the same conditions, lovers of frugality who shun expensive luxury as a disease of both body and soul. And not only is their table in common but their clothing also. For in winter they have a stock of stout coats ready and in summer cheap tunics, so that he who wishes may easily take any garment he likes, since what one has is held to belong to all and conversely what all have one has. Again if anyone is sick he is nursed at the common expense and tended with care and thoughtfulness by all. The old men too even if they are childless are treated as parents of a not merely numerous but very filial family and regularly close their life with an exceedingly prosperous and comfortable old age; so many are those who give them precedence and honor as their due and minister to them as a duty voluntarily and deliberately accepted rather than enforced by nature. Furthermore they eschew marriage because they clearly discern it be the sole or the principal danger to the maintenance of the communal life, as well as because they particularly practice continence. For no Essene takes a wife, because a wife is a selfish creature, excessively jealous and an adept at beguiling the morals of her husband and seducing him by her continued impostures. For by the fawning talks which she practices and the other ways in which she plays her part like an actress on the stage she first ensnares the sight and hearing, and when these subjects, as it were, have been duped, she cajoles the sovereign mind. And if children come, filled with the spirit of arrogance and bold speaking she gives utterance with more audacious hardihood to things which before she hinted covertly and under disguise, and casting off all shame she compels him to

commit actions which are all hostile to the life of fellowship. For he who is either fast bound in the love lures of his wife or under the stress of nature makes his children his first care and ceases to be the same to others and unconsciously has become a different man and has passed from freedom into slavery. Such then is the life of the Essenes, a life so highly to be prized that not only commoners but also great kings look upon them with admiration and amazement, and the approbation and honors which they give add further veneration to their venerable name. **Philo, Hypothetica 11:1-18**

C. When I was sixteen years old, I had a mind to make trial of the several sects that were among us. These sects are three: The first is that of the Pharisees, the second that of the Sadducees, and the third that of the Essenes, as we have frequently told you, for I thought that by this means I might choose the best if I were once acquainted with them all. So I contented myself with hard fare and underwent great difficulties and went through them all. Nor did I content myself with these trials only, but when I was informed that one, whose name was Banus, lived in the desert and used no other clothing than grew upon trees and had no other food than what grew of its own accord and bathed himself in cold water frequently both by night and by day in order to preserve his chastity, I imitated him in those things, and continued with him (them?) three years. So when I accomplished my desires, I returned back to the city, being now nineteen years old and began to conduct myself according to the rules of the sect of the Pharisees, which is of kin to the sect of the Stoics, as the Greeks call them. **Josephus, The Life of Flavius Josephus, Par. 2**

D. For there are three philosophical sects among the Jews. The followers of the first of whom are the Pharisees, of the second the Sadducees, and the third sect, who pretends to a severer discipline, are called Essenes. These last are Jews by birth and seem to have a greater affection for one another than the other sects have. These Essens reject pleasures as an evil, but esteem continence and the conquest over our passions to be virtue. They neglect wedlock, but choose out other persons' children, while they are pliable and fit for learning; and esteem them to be of their kindred and form them according to their own manners. They do not absolutely deny the fitness of marriage, and the succession of mankind thereby continued, but they guard against the lascivious behavior of women, and are persuaded that none of them preserve their fidelity to one man. These men are dispossessed of riches, and so very communicative as raises our admiration. Nor is there any one to be found among them who hath more than another, for it is a law among them that those who come to them must let what they have be common to the whole order, - insomuch, that among them all there is no appearance of poverty or excess of riches, but every one's possessions are intermingled with every other's possessions, and so there is, as it were, one patrimony among all the brethren. They think that oil is a defilement; and if any one of them be anointed without his own approbation, it is wiped off his body; for they think to be sweaty is a good thing, as they do also to be clothed in white garments.

They also have stewards appointed to take care of their common affairs, who have no separate business for any, but what is for the use of them all. They have no certain city but many of them dwell in every city, and if any of their sect come from other places, what they have lies open for them, just as if it were their own; and they go into such as they never knew before, as if they had been ever so long acquainted with them. For this reason they carry nothing with them when they travel into remote parts, though still they take their weapons with them, for fear of thieves. Accordingly there is, in every city where they live, one appointed particularly to take care of strangers, and to provide garments and other necessaries for them. But the habit and management of their bodies is such as children use who are in fear of their masters. Nor do they allow for the change of garments or of shoes until they be first entirely torn to pieces or worn out by time. Nor do they either buy or sell any thing to one another, but every one of them gives what he hath to him that wanteth it, and receives from him again in lieu of it what may be convenient for himself, and although there be no requital made, they are fully allowed to take what they want of whomsoever they please. And as for their piety towards G-d, it is very extraordinary; for before sun-rising they speak not a word about profane matters, but put up certain prayers which they have received from their forefathers, as if they made a supplication for its rising. After this every one of them are sent away by their curators, to exercise some of those arts wherein they are skilled, in which they labor with great diligence until the fifth hour. After that they assemble themselves together again into one place, and when they have clothed themselves in white veils, they then bathe their bodies in cold water. And after this purification is over, they every one meet together in an apartment of their own into which it is not permitted to any of another sect to enter while they go, after a pure manner, into the dining-room, as into a certain holy temple, and quietly sit down, upon which the baker lays them loaves in order; the cook also brings a single plate of one sort of food and sets it before every one of them. A priest says grace before meat, and it is unlawful for any one to taste of the food before grace is said. The same priest, when he hath dined, says grace again after meat, and when they begin, and when they end, they praise G-d, as he that bestows their food upon them. After this they lay aside their (white) garments, and betake themselves to their labors again until the evening, then they return home to supper after the same manner, and if there be any strangers there, they sit down with them. Nor is there ever any clamor or disturbance to pollute their house, but they give every one leave to speak in their turn. This silence thus kept in their house appears to foreigners like some tremendous mystery, the cause of which is that perpetual sobriety they exercise, and the same settled measure of meat and drink that is allotted to them, and that such as is abundantly sufficient for them. And truly, as for other things, they do nothing but according to the injunctions of their curators, only these two things are done among them at every one's own free will, which are: to assist those that want it, and to show mercy, for they are permitted of their own accord to afford succor to such as deserve it when they stand in need of it and to bestow

food on those that are in distress, but they cannot give any thing to their kindred without the curators. They dispense their anger after a just manner, and restrain their passion. They are eminent for fidelity, and are the ministers of peace; whatsoever they say also is firmer than an oath, but swearing is avoided by them, and they esteem it worse than perjury, for they say that he who cannot be believed without (swearing by) G-d is already condemned. They also take great pains in studying the writings of the ancients, and choose out of them what is most for the advantage of their soul and body, and they inquire after such roots and medicinal stones as may cure their distempers. But now, if any one hath a mind to come over to their sect, he is not immediately admitted, but he is prescribed the same method of living which they use for a year, while he continues excluded, and they give him a small hatchet, and the fore-mentioned girdle, and the white garment. And when he hath given evidence during that time that he can observe their continence, he approaches nearer to their way of living, and is made a partaker of the waters of purification, yet is he not even now admitted to live with them, for after this demonstration of his fortitude, his temper is tried two more years, and if he appear to be worthy, they then admit him into their society. And before he is allowed to touch their common food, he is obliged to take tremendous oaths, that, in the first place, he will exercise piety towards G-d and then, that he will observe justice towards men and that he will do no harm to any one, either of his own accord, or by the command of others, that he will always hate the wicked, and be assistant to the righteous, that he will ever show fidelity to all men, and especially to those in authority, because no one obtains the government without G-d's assistance, and that if he be in authority, he will at no time whatever abuse his authority, nor endeavor to outshine his subjects, either in his garments, or any other finery, that he will be perpetually a lover of truth, and propose to himself to reprove those that tell lies, that he will keep his hands clear from theft, and his soul from unlawful gains; and that he will neither conceal anything from those of his own sect, nor discover any of their doctrines to others, no, not though any one should compel him so to do at the hazard of his life. Moreover, he swears to communicate their doctrines to no one any otherwise than as he received them himself, that he will abstain from robbery, and will equally preserve the books belonging to their sect, and the names of the angels (or messengers). These are the oaths by which they secure their proselytes to themselves. But for those that are caught in any heinous sins, they cast them out of their society, and he who is thus separated from them does often die after a miserable manner, for as is bound by the oath he hath taken and by the customs he hath been engaged in, he is not at liberty to partake of that food that he meets with elsewhere, but is forced to eat grass and to famish his body with hunger till he perish, for which reason they receive many of them again when they are at their last gasp, out of compassion to them, as thinking the miseries they have endured until they came to the very brink of death to be sufficient punishment for the sins they had been guilty of.

But in the judgments they exercise they are most accurate and just, nor do they pass sentence by the votes of a court that is fewer than a hundred. And as to what is once determined by that number, it is unalterable. What they most of all honor, after G-d himself, is the name of the legislator; whom, if any one blaspheme, he is punished capitally. They also think it a good thing to obey their elders, and the major part. Accordingly, if ten of them be sitting together no one of them will speak while the other nine are against it. They also avoid spitting in the midst of them, or on the right side. Moreover, they are stricter than any other of the Jews in resting from their labors on the seventh day, for they not only get their food ready the day before that they may not be obliged to kindle a fire on that day, but they will not remove any vessel out of its place, nor go to stool thereon. Nay, on the other days they dig a small pit, a foot deep, with a paddle (which kind of hatchet is given them when they are first admitted among them), and covering themselves round with their garment, that they may not affront the divine rays of light, they ease themselves into that pit, after which they put the earth that was dug out again into the pit; and even this they do only in the more lonely places which they choose out for this purpose, and although this easement of the body be natural, yet it is a rule with them to wash themselves after it, as if it were a defilement to them.

Now after the time of their preparatory trial is over, they are parted into four classes, and so far are the juniors inferior to the seniors, that if the seniors should be touched by the juniors, they must wash themselves as if they had intermixed themselves with the company of a foreigner. They are long-lived also, insomuch that many of them live above a hundred years by means of the simplicity of their diet, nay, as I think, by means of the regular course of life they observe also. They disdain the miseries of life, and are above pain, by the generosity of their mind. And as for death, if it will be for their glory, they esteem it better than living always, and indeed our war with the Romans gave abundant evidence what great souls they had in their trials, wherein, although they were tortured and distorted, burnt and torn to pieces, and went through all kinds of instruments of torment, that they might be forced either to blaspheme their legislator, or to eat what was forbidden them, yet could they not be made to do either of them, no, nor once to flatter their tormentors, or to shed a tear, but they smiled in their very pains, and laughed those to scorn who inflicted the torments upon them, and resigned up their souls with great alacrity, as expecting to receive them again.

For their doctrine is this: That bodies are corruptible, and that the matter they are made of is not permanent, but that the souls are immortal, and continue forever, and that they come out of the most subtle air, and are united to their bodies as in prisons, into which they are drawn by a certain natural enticement, but that when they are set free from the bonds of the flesh, they then, as released from a long bondage, rejoice and mount upward. And this is like the opinion of the Greeks, that good souls have their habitations beyond the ocean, in a region that is neither oppressed with storms of rain, or snow, or with

intense heat, but that this place is such as is refreshed by the gentle breathing of a west wind that is perpetually blowing from the ocean; while they allot to bad souls a dark and tempestuous den, full of never-ceasing punishments. And indeed the Greeks seem to me to have followed the same notion, when they allot the islands of the blessed to their brave men, whom they call heroes and demigods, and to the souls of the wicked, the region of the ungodly, in Hades, where their fables related that certain persons, such as Sisyphus, and Tantalus, and Ixion, and Tityus, are punished, which is built on this first supposition, that souls are immortal, and thence are those exhortations to virtue, and exhortations from wickedness collected, whereby good men are bettered in the conduct of their life, by the hope they have of reward after their death, and whereby the vehement inclinations of bad men to vice are restrained, by the fear and expectation they are in, that although they should lie concealed in this life, they should suffer immortal punishment after their death. These are the divine doctrines of the Essens about the soul, which lay an unavoidable bait for such as have once had a taste of their philosophy.

There are also those among them who undertake to foretell things to come, by reading the holy books, and using several sorts of purification, and being perpetually conversant in the discourses of the prophets, and it is but seldom that they miss in their predictions.

Moreover, there is another order of Essenes, who agree with the rest as to their way of living, and customs, and laws, but differ from them in the point of marriage, thinking that by not marrying they cut off the principal part of the human life, which is the prospect of succession. Indeed, if all men should be of the same opinion, the whole race of mankind would fail. However, they try their spouses for three years; and if they find that they have their natural purgations thrice as trials that they are likely to be fruitful, they then actually marry them. But they do not accompany their wives when they are with child as a demonstration that they do not marry out of regard to pleasure, but for the sake of posterity. Now the women go into the baths with some of their garments on, as the men do with somewhat girded about them. And these are the customs of this order of Essenes.

Josephus, The Wars of the Jews II 8:2-13

E. The doctrine of Essenes is this: That all things are best ascribed to G-d. They teach the immortality of souls and esteem that the rewards of righteousness are to be earnestly striven for. When they send what they have dedicated to G-d into the Temple, they do not offer sacrifices, because they have more pure lustrations of their own; on which account they are excluded from the common court of the Temple, but offer their sacrifices themselves; yet is their course of life better than that of other men; and they entirely addict themselves to husbandry. It also deserves our admiration, how much they exceed all other men that addict themselves to virtue, and this in righteousness; and indeed to such a degree, that as it hath never appeared among any other man, neither

Greeks nor barbarians, no, not for a little time, so hath it endured a long while among them. This is demonstrated by that institution of theirs which will not suffer any thing to hinder them from having all things in common; so that a rich man enjoys no more of his own wealth than he who hath nothing at all. There are about four thousand men that live in this way, and neither marry wives, nor are desirous to keep servants; as thinking the latter tempts men to be unjust, and the former gives the handle to domestic quarrel; but as they live by themselves, they minister one to another. They also appoint certain stewards to receive the incomes of their revenues, and of the fruits of the ground; such as are good men and priests, who are to get their corn and their food ready for them. They none of them differ from others of the Essens in their way of living, but do the most resemble those Dacae who are "Polistae" [dwellers in cities]. **Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, Book XVIII 1:5**

F. At this time there were three sects among the Jews, who had different opinions concerning human actions; the one was called the sect of the Pharisees, another the sect of the Sadducees, and the other the sect of the Essenes. Now for the Pharisees, they say that some actions, but not all, are the word of fate, and some of them are in our own power, and that they are liable to fate, but are not caused by fate. But the sect of the Essenes affirm, that fate governs all things, and that nothing befalls men but what is according to its determination. And for the Sadducees they take away fate and say there is no such thing, and that the events of human affairs are not at its disposal, but they suppose that all our actions are in our own power, so that we are ourselves the causes of what is good, and receive what is evil from our own folly. However, I have given a more exact account of these opinions in the second book of the Jewish war. **Antiquities Book XIII Chap. 5:9**

G. On the west side of the Dead Sea, away from the coast, where there are harmful vapors (or influences), lives the solitary tribe of the Essenes. This tribe is remarkable beyond all others in the whole world, because it has no women, has rejected sexual desires, is without money and has only the company of palm trees. Day by day the crowd of refugees is renewed by hordes of people tired of life and driven there by the waves of fortune to adopt their customs. Thus through thousands of ages -incredible to relate- the race in which no one is born lives forever; so fruitful for them is other men's dissatisfaction with life!

Below the Essenes was the town of Engeda, second only to Jerusalem in the fertility of its soil and in its groves of palm trees, but now, like Jerusalem, another heap of ashes. Then comes Masada, a fortress on a rock, not far from the Dead Sea. This is the extent of Judaea. **Pliny, Natural History 73**

II. The Damascus Covenant

A. "We have learned from trustworthy Jews . . . that some books were found ten years ago in a rock-dwelling near Jericho. The story was that the dog of an Arab out hunting went into a cave in pursuit of game and did not come out again; its owner went in after it and found a chamber in the rock, in which there were many books. The hunter went off to Jerusalem and told his story to the Jews, who came out in great numbers and found books of the Old Testament and others in the Hebrew script." **A letter written by Timotheus I (727-819), a ninth century Nestorian Patriarch of Seleucia, to Sergius, a Metropolitan of Elam, first published in 1901, quoted in "The Dead Sea Scrolls", by Edmund Wilson**

B. Hear now, all you who know righteousness, and consider the works of G-d; for He has a dispute with all flesh and will condemn all those who despise Him.

For when they were unfaithful and forsook Him, He hid His face from Israel and His Sanctuary and delivered them up to the sword. But remembering the Covenant of the forefathers, He left a remnant to Israel and did not deliver it up to be destroyed. And in the age of wrath, three hundred and ninety years after he had given them into the hand of king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, He visited them, and He caused a plant root to spring from Israel and Aaron to inherit His land and to prosper on good things of His earth. And they perceived their iniquity and recognized that they were guilty men, yet for twenty years they were like blind men groping for the way.

And G-d observed their deeds, that they sought Him with a whole heart, and He raised for them a Teacher of Righteousness to guide them in the way of His heart. And he made known to latter generations that which G-d had done to the latter generation, the congregation of traitors, to those who departed from the way. This was the time of which it written, "Like a stubborn heifer thus was Israel stubborn." (Hos. 4:16), when the Scoffer arose who shed over Israel the waters of lies. He caused them to wander in a pathless wildereness, laying low the everlasting heights, abolishing the ways of righteousness and removing the boundary with which the forefathers had marked out their inheritance, that he might call down on them the curses of His Covenant and deliver them up to the avenging sword of the Covenant. For they sought smooth things (דורשי חלקות a phrase similar to דורשי הלכות) and preferred illusions and they watched for breaks (פרצות) and chose the fair neck; and they justified the wicked and condemned the just, and they transgressed the Covenant and violated the Precept. They banded together against the life of righteousness and loathed all who walked in perfection; they pursued them with the sword and exulted in the strife of the people. And the anger of G-d was kindled against their congregation so that He ravaged all their multitude; and their deeds were defilement before Him.

"The Priests, the Levites, and the sons of Zadok who kept the charge of My Sanctuary when the children of Israel strayed from me, they shall offer me fat and blood." (Ezekial 44:15) The "Priests" are the converts of Israel who departed from the land of Judah, and (the Levites are) those who joined them. The "sons of Zadok" are the Elect of Israel, the men called by name who shall stand at the end of days.

"Their wine is the venom of serpents, the cruel poison of asps." (Deuteronomy 32:33) The "serpents" are the kings of peoples and their "wine" is their ways. And the "head of asps" is the chief of the kings of Greece who came to wreak vengeance upon them. But all these things the "builders of the wall and those who daub it with plaster" (בנה חיץ) a phrase similar to (סיג) have not understood because a follower of the wind, one who raised storms and rained down lies, had preached to them and all of whose assembly the anger of G-d was kindled.

The Damascus Covenant, was discovered in the "genizah" of the Ben Ezra Synagogue in Old Cairo in 1896 and published in 1910 by S. Schechter (Fragments of Zadokite Work, Cambridge)

III. The Community of Qumran

A. The Calendar

1)

בחודש הראשון בארבעה בו שבת. בעשתי עשר בו שבת. בארבעה עשר בו פסח. בשמונה עשר בו שבת. בעשרים וחמשה בו שבת. אחר בעשרים וששה בו יום הנף ... באחד בחודש השביעי בו יום הזכרון בארבעה בו שבת ... ושלמה השנה שלוש מאת וששים וארבעה יום. מקצת מעשי התורה חלק א'

In the first month on the fourth of it is a Shabbos. On the eleventh of it is Shabbos. On the fourteenth of it is Pesach. On the eighteenth of it is a Shabbos. On the twenty-fifth of it is a Shabbos. On the twenty-sixth of it is the Waving of the Omer ... In the first of the seventh month is the Day of Remembrance. The fourth of it is Shabbos ... Thus the year is complete: three hundred and sixty four days. **Miksat Maasei HaTorah Part 1 4Q394**

2)

כיצד בודקין את העדים זוג שבא ראשון בודקין אותו ראשון ומכניסין את הגדול שבהן ואומרין לו אמור כיצד ראית את הלבנה ... ראש השנה כג:

How do they test the witness? The pair who arrive first are tested first. The senior of them is brought in and they say to him: "Tell us how you saw the moon." **Rosh Hashanah 23b**

B. The Red Heifer

1)

ואף על טהרת פרת החטאת השוחט אותה והסורף אותה והאוסף את אפרה והמזה את מי החטאת לכול אלה להערבות השמש להיות טהורים. ממ"ה חלק ב'

Also, with regard to the purity of the heifer of sprinkling (the Red Heifer): he who slaughters it and he who burns it and he who gathers its ashes and he who sprinkles the water - all of these are to be pure with the setting of the sun. **MMT Part 2**

2)

ובית הטבילה היה שם ומטמאים היו את כהן השורף את הפרה מפני הצדוקים שהיו אומרים במעורבי שמש היתה נעשית. פרה ג:ז

There was there (on the Mount of Olives) a place of immersion and they would make impure the priest that would burn the heifer [and then he would immerse himself in the "mikveh" and burn the heifer. This was done] because of the Sadducees. For they were saying that it (the red heifer) was done by those [that immersed themselves and waited for the final purification of] the setting of the sun. **Parah 3:7**

C. Poured Liquids

1)

ואף על מוצקות אנחנו אומרים שהם שאין בהם טהרה ואף המוצקות אינם מבדילים בין הטמא לטהור כי לחה המוצקות והמקבל מהמה כהם לחה אחת. מקצת מעשה התורה ח' ב'

Concerning poured liquids (from a pure vessel to an impure vessel), we say that they possess no purity. Poured liquids do not separate between the impure and the pure because the fluid of the poured liquids and that of the receptacle of them are one fluid. **MMT Part 2**

2)

אומרים צדוקים קובלים אנו עליכם פרושים שאתם מטהרים את הנצוק. ידיים ד:ז

The Sadducees said: We have a critique against you, Pharisees, for you consider poured liquids as pure. **Yadaim 4:7**

D. Priestly Entitlements

1)

ואף על מטעת עצי המאכל הנטע בארץ ישראל כראשית הוא לכהנים ומעשר הבקר והצון לכהונים הוא. ממ"ת חלק ב'

Regarding the trees planted for food in the land of Israel, (the fruit of the fourth year) is analogous to a first fruit offering and belongs to the priests. Likewise the tithe of cattle and sheep belongs to the priests. **MMT Par. 2**

2)

התרומה והבכורים ... אסורים לזרים . . . מה שאין כן במעשר [שני]. בכורים ב:א

גמרי קודש קודש ממעשר מה מעשר יש לו חומש ויש לו ביעור אף כרם רבעי יש לו חומש ויש לו ביעור. קדושין נד:

הבכור נאכל לכהנים ומעשר לכל אדם. זבחים נו:

Terumah and Bicurim (the first fruit offering) is forbidden to non priests ... which is not the case by Maaser Shaini (the second tithe). **Bicurim 2:1**

We derive by the rule of "gezeira shava" by the similar phraseology "kodesh" that the laws of Maaser Shaini and Kerem Revai (the produce of the fourth year) are similar i.e. that they are to be redeemed with the addition of a fifth and they are subject to the laws of "biur". **Kiddushin 54b**

The first born animal is eaten by the priests and the tithe of animals [is eaten] by any man. **Zevachim 56b**

E. Marriage

1)

... אל יקח איש את בת אחיו ואת בת אחותו ... Q2514

... A man should not marry the daughter of his brother or the daughter of his sister . . .
4Q251

2)

... והנושא את בת אחותו ... עליו הכתוב אומר אז תקרא וד' יענה תשוב ויאמר הנני. יבמות סב:—סג.

... and someone who marries the daughter of his sister . . . regarding him is it written: "Then shall you call and the Lord shall answer; you shall cry, and He shall say: Here I am." (Isaiah 58:9) **Yevomos 62b-63a**

IV. The Schism

A. The Separation

ואתם יודעים שפרשנו מרוב העם ונמנענו מהתערב בדברים האלה ומלכוא עמהם על גב אלה ואתם יודעים שלא ימצא ביתו מעל ושקר ורעה כי על אלה אנחנו נותנים את הדברים האלה וכתבנו אליכה שתבין בספר מושה ובדברי הנביאים ובדויד ובדברי ימי כול דור ודור ... ואנחנו מכירים שבאו מקצת הברכות והקלות שכתוב בספר מושה וזה הוא באחרית הימים שישבו בישראל לתורת אל בכול לבם ולא ישובו אחור והרשעים ירשיעו ... זכור את מלכי ישראל והתבונן במעשיהם שמי מהם שהוא ירא את התורה היה מצול מצרות ... ואף אנחנו כתבנו לך את מקצת מעשי התורה שחשבנו לטוב לך ולעמך שראינו עמך ערמה ומדע תורה והבן בכל אלה ובקש מלפניו שיתקן את עצתך והרחק ממך מחשבת רעה ועצת בליעל בשל שתשמח באחרית העת במצאך מקצת דברינו כן ונחשבה לך לצדקה בעשותך הישר והטוב לפניו לטוב לך ולישראל. מקצת מעשי התורה חלק ג'

Now, you know that we separated from the mainstream of the people and refused to mix or go along with them on these matters. You also know that no rebellion or lying or evil should be found in His Temple. It is because of these things we present these words and wrote to you that you shall discern the Book of Moses and the words of the Prophets and of David, along with the chronicles of every generation ... And we recognize that some of the blessings and curses that are written in the Book of Moses have come to pass, therefore this is the End of Days, when those in Israel are to return to the Law of G-d with all their heart, never to return back again. Meanwhile, the wicked will increase in wickedness . . . Remember the kings of Israel and understand their works. Whoever of them feared the Law was saved from sufferings. . . . And we wrote you about some of the works of the Law which we reckoned for your own good and for that of your people, for we see that you possess discernment and knowledge of the Torah. Consider all these things, and beseech Him to grant you proper counsel, and to keep you far from evil thoughts and the counsel of corruption (Belial). Then you will rejoice at the End of Time, when you find that some of our words (which we communicated to you) were true. Thus "It will be reckoned to you as Righteousness", your having done what is Upright and Good before Him, for your own good and for that of Israel. **Miksat Maasei Hatorah**

Par. 3

B. King Jonathan (Alexander Jannaeus)

1)

שיר קדש על יונתן המלך וכל קהל עמך ישראל אשר בארבע רוחות שמים יהי שלום כלם שלם מלפניך וחבר בשמך. שיר למלך יונתן Q4484

A sacred poem for King Jonathan and all the Congregation of Your people Israel, who are spread in every direction under Heaven may they all be well, Perfect before You, and a Commonwealth in Your Name . . . **Paean of King Jonathan 4Q448**

2) Demetrius, the king of Greece, ... at the insistence of them "that sought smooth things" (דורשי חלקות, a pun on דורשי הלכות,) sought to enter Jerusalem . . . the Young Lion of Anger (Alexander Jannaeus) wrought vengeance on them "that sought smooth things" in that he proceeded to hang them up alive. Such a thing has never been done in Israel . . ." **Nahum Peshar**

C. Salome

(1 . . . לתת לו יקר בערבים . . . יסוד באה שלמציון . . . הרקנוס מרד (על אריסטבולוס) 4Q323 . . .

. . . to give him honor among the Arabs . . . foundation, Shalomtzion (Salome) came . . . Hyrcanus rebelled (against Aristobulus) . . . **4Q323**

2) So she made Hyrcanus high priest, because he was the elder, but much more because he cared not to meddle with politics, and permitted the Pharisees to do everything; to whom she also ordered the multitude to be obedient. She also restored again those practices which the Pharisees had introduced, according to the traditions of their forefathers, and which her father-in-law, Hyrcanus, had abrogated. So she had indeed the name of the Regent, but the Pharisees had the authority; for it was they who restored those who had been banished, and set those who were prisoners at liberty, and, to say all at once, they differed in nothing from lords. **Antiquities XIII 16:2**

D. Aemilius (Scaurus)

. . . בחודש הששי יום הרג אמליוס . . . הרג אמליוס. **4Q324**

... in the sixth month, the Day that Aemilius killed . . . Aemilius killed ... **4Q324**

E. Shimon ben Shetach

On the twenty eighth of Teves the Assembly was rightfully constituted. When the Sanhedrin, constituted by Sadducees, was in session together with Yanai (Alexander Jannaeus) and Salome at his side, there was none of the main body of Israel with them with the exception of Shimon ben Shetach. They (the king, queen, and Shimon) asked of the "Sanhedrin" various questions dealing with different areas of Halacha, but they were not able to cite any sources from the Torah to support their positions. Shimon ben Shetach said to them, "Anyone who is able to support his view with a proper citation from the Torah is fit to sit on the Sanhedrin. However, anyone that cannot is not fit." Once, a case came before them that they clearly were unable to resolve by bringing a decisive proof from the Torah. One of their elders, however, tried but was challenged by Shimon ben Shetach. The elder said, "Give me time to think it through, and by tomorrow I'll answer you." But even after much thought he was still unable to respond to Shimon ben Shetach. Too embarrassed, he did not show up the next day. Shimon replaced him with one of his own disciples. He explained to them that a Sanhedrin must be composed of 71 members and this scholar (his disciple) was the only suitable replacement. One by one he was able to eventually replace the whole Sanhedrin. The day that the process was completed was declared a holiday. **Megilas Tanis Chapter 10**

When Yanai (Yochanon) killed out the Rabbis, Shimon ben Shetach was hidden by his sister (Salome). Yehoshua ben Perachia fled to Alexandria in Egypt. When conditions were tranquil, Shimon ben Shetach sent to him the following message: From me, Jerusalem, to you, Alexandria my sister; my husband is dwelling in your midst and I am destitute. He said: It seems from this communication that it is peaceful (in Jerusalem). **Sota 47a (uncensored version)**

V. The Teacher of Righteousness

A. "The wicked man encompasses the righteous man" (Habakkuk 1:4) The meaning is that the wicked man is the Wicked Priest and the righteous man is the Teacher of Righteousness. **Habakkuk Peshar**

B. "Look among the nations, and see; wonder and be astounded." (Habakkuk 1:5) This means that those who acted treacherously together with the Man of the Lie at the end of days; that is, those who are ruthless against the covenant and do not believe when they hear all the things that are coming upon the last generation from the Priest into whose heart G-d put wisdom to explain all the words of his servants the prophets, through whom G-d declared all the things that are coming upon his people and his congregation. **Habakkuk Peshar**

C. "Why do you look on faithless men, but you are silent at the swallowing by the wicked man of one more righteous than he?" (Habakkuk 1:13) This means the house of Absalom and the men of their party, who kept silent at the chastisement of the Teacher of Righteousness and did not help him against the Man of the Lie, who rejected the law in the midst of congregation." **Habakkuk Peshar**

Absalom, who was at once both uncle and father-in-law to Aristobulus (II) was taken captive [by Pompey at the time of the conquest of Jerusalem]. **Josephus, Antiquities XIV 4:4**

D. "Write the vision, and make it plain upon the tablets, that he may run [through it, he] who reads it." (Habakkuk 2:2) This refers to the Teacher of Righteousness, to whom G-d made known all the mysteries of the words of his servants the prophets." **Habakkuk Peshar**

E. "Moreover, wine (wealth) is treacherous to an arrogant man and he cannot resist. His greed is as wide as Sheol and, like death, cannot be satisfied." (Habakkuk 2:5) This means the Wicked Priest, who was named according to the truth when he first took office; but when he began to rule in Israel, his heart was lifted up, and he forsook G-d and betrayed the statutes because of wealth. He plundered and assembled the wealth ... of people, adding to himself iniquity and guilt, and ways of abomination he wrought, in all impurity of uncleanness. **Habakkuk Peshar**

F. "Because you have plundered many nations, all the remnant of the peoples will plunder you." (Habakkuk 2:8) refers to the Wicked Priest, whom for the wrong done to the Teacher of Righteousness and the men of his party, G-d delivered him into the hands of his enemies, afflicting him with a destroying scourge, in bitterness of soul, because he acted wickedly against His elect. **Habakkuk Peshar**

G. "Woe to him that makes his neighbors drink, who pours out his wrath; yea, he had made them drunk, to gaze on their festivals (nakedness)." (Habakkuk 2:15) This refers to the Wicked Priest who persecuted the Teacher of Righteousness in order to confound him in the indignation of his wrath, wishing to banish him (or in his place of exile); and at the time of their festival of rest, the Day of Atonement, he appeared to them to confound them and to make them stumble on the day of fasting, the Sabbath of rest. **Habakkuk Peshar**

F. "The Wicked Priest . . . put forth his hand against him who was teaching the Law aright in order to have him put to death and to make an end of the Covenant of the Law." **Peshar to Psalm 37**

VI. ישׁוּ הַנוֹצְרִי - Yeshu HaNotzri

A.

מתני' מצאו לו זכות פטרוהו ואם לאו יצא ליסקל וכרוז יצא לפניו איש פלוני בן פלוני יוצא ליסקל על שעבר עבירה פלונית ופלוני עדין כל מי שיודע לו זכות יבא וילמד עליו.

גמ' לפניו אין, מעיקרא לא. והתניא בערב הפסח תלאוהו לישׁוּ [הנוצרי] והכרוז יוצא לפניו מ' יום קודם שהוא [ישו הנוצרי] יוצא ליסקל על שכישף והסית והדיח את ישראל כל מי שיודע לו זכות יבא וילמד עליו ולא מצאו לו זכות ותלאוהו בערב פסח. אמר עולא ותסברא בר הפוכי זכות הוא? מסית הוא! ורחמנא אמר לא תחמול ולא תכסה עליו. אלא שאני ישׁוּ [הנוצרי] דקרוב למלכות הוה. ת"ר חמשה תלמידים היו לו לישׁוּ מתאי נקאי נצר ובוני ותודה. איתוהי למתי אמר להו מתי יהרג? הכתיב מתי אבוא ואראה פני אלקים. אמרו ליה אין מתי יהרג דכתיב מתי ימות ואבד שמו. איתוהו לנקאי. אמר להו נקאי יהרג? הכתיב ונקי וצדיק אל תהרג. אמרו ליה אין נקאי יהרג דכתיב במסתרם יהרג נקי. איתוהו לנצר אמר להו נצר יהרג? הכתיב ונצר משרשיו יפרח. אמרו ליה אין נצר יהרג דכתיב ואתה השלחת מקברך כנצר נתעב. איתוהו לבוני אמר להו בוני יהרג? הכתיב בני בכורי ישראל. אמרו ליה אין בוני יהרג דכתיב הנה אנכי הורג את בנך בכורך. איתוהו לתודה. אמר להו תודה יהרג? הכתיב מזמור לתודה. אמרו ליה אין תודה יהרג דכתיב זובח תודה יכבדנני. סנהדרין מג. (חסרונות הש"ס)

רש"י ד"ה מעיקרא לא. ארבעים יום קודם: יהרוג נקי. רוצח הוא נקי זה וראוי להרג שהרג במסחרים ותשובה בעלמא הוא מפני האומות שקרוב למלכות היה והיו צריכים להשיב על כל ראיות של הבל שלהם. סנהדרין מ"ג: (חסרונות הש"ס)

B.

תנו רבנן לעולם תהא שמאל דוחה וימין מקרבת. לא כאלישע שדחפו לגחזי בשתי ידיו ולא כיהושע בן פרחיה שדחפו ליש"ו הנוצרי בשתי ידיו ... יהושע בן פרחיה מאי היא? כדהוה קא קטיל ינאי מלכא לרבנן שמעון בן שטח אטמינהו אחתיה רבי יהושע בן פרחיה אזל ערק לאלכסנדריא של מצרים. כי הוה שלמא שלח ליה שמעון בן שטח: מני ירושלים עיר הקודש לך אלכסנדריא של מצרים אחותי בעלי שרוי בתוכך ואני יושבת שוממה. אמר שמע מינה הוה ליה שלמא. כי אתא איקלע לההוא אושפיזא. קם קמייהו ביקרא שפיר עבדי ליה יקרא טובא. יתיב וקא משתבח: כמה נאה אכסניא זו! אמר ליה: רבי, עיניה טרוטות! אמר ליה: רשע! בכך אתה עוסק? אפיק ד' מאה שיפורי ושמתינה. כל יומא אתא לקמיה ולא קבליה. יומא חד הוה קרי ק"ש אתא לקמיה. הוה בדעתיה לקבוליה. אחוי ליה בידיה. סבר מידחא דחי ליה. אזל זקף לבינתא פלחא. א"ל חזר בך! א"ל כך מקובלני ממך כל החוטא ומחטיא את הרבים אין מספיקין בידו לעשות תשובה. דאמר מר: יש"ו [הנוצרי] כישף והסית והדיח והחטיא את ישראל. סוטה מז., סנהדרין קז: (חסרונות הש"ס)

C.

אזל אסקיה ליש"ו בנגידא. א"ל מאן חשיב בהדיא עלמא? א"ל ישראל. מהו לאדבוקי בהו? א"ל טובתם דרוש רעתם בל תדרוש כל הנוגע בהן כאלו נוגע בכבת עינו. א"ל דיניה דההוא גברא במאי? א"ל בצואה רותחת. דאמר מר כל המלעיג על דברי חכמים נידון בצואה רותחת. גיטין נ"ז. (חסרונות הש"ס)

D.

מינא: תלמידי יש"ו שאינן מודים לדברי חכמים. רש"י לחגיגה ה: (הנמצא ב"חסרונות הש"ס")