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## [1] Why give any Attention to the Dead Sea Scrolls?

Over the past several decades I have wholly or partially read about 200 books and journal articles concerning the Dead Sea Scrolls (= DSS), making an effort to keep up with the most recent publications. Some of my reasons for doing this are:

- (1) to grasp the significance of the **biblical scrolls** (about 220 such scrolls among a total of nearly 900) found among the DSS;
- (2) to determine what might be learned about the **Septuagint** in comparison to the DSS;
- (3) to learn how some rarely used **biblical words** are also used in the DSS where the context might contribute to the meaning of those words in Scripture;
- (4) to learn how the nature of the Hebrew grammar used in the DSS might contribute to the **history of the Hebrew language** as well as the **nature of the authors** of the DSS;
- (5) to understand the nature of the **calendars** proposed by the DSS and how this compares to the Scriptures;
- (6) to understand what **scientific knowledge** the authors of the DSS possessed in comparison to the Babylonians and the Greeks;
- (7) to understand what contribution the DSS might make in filling in details of **Jewish history**;
- (8) to understand some of the beliefs and motivations of the authors of the DSS;
- (9) to see what lessons might be learned from the people associated with the DSS for today's audience; and
- (10) to explain how the sectarian people associated with the DSS could have come to their thinking on the calendar.

My goal in writing this is to expound on these items in summary fashion without writing a full book, yet giving some references with targeted quotations that are to the point. It seems obvious that the authors of the non-biblical texts among the DSS considered themselves to be followers of YHWH in the sense that they used the Pentateuch as authoritative and they mostly wrote in the Hebrew language, thus showing that they were from greater Judaea and preferred the Hebrew language to the Aramaic language, although the use of Aramaic was more widespread in Palestine than Hebrew after Ezra and Nehemiah returned from Babylon, as will be shown.

## [2] Modern Discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls

The DSS were discovered in 1947 at the northwest corner of the Dead Sea at or very near a location named Qumran, so that they are sometimes called the Qumran Scrolls. They were found in 11 caves, so that each document is technically labeled in three

parts: first, the cave number from 1 to 11, second, the letter Q (from Qumran), and third, a unique number assigned to the specific scroll. Sometimes a commonly accepted English name or its abbreviation has been associated with a certain scroll, so that instead of using the technical label, the common English name or abbreviation is used.

Each biblical scroll among the DSS is only from a single book of the Bible, and only some scrolls contain the entire book, although many have only some missing segments. The total number of all the DSS is about 900 (small fragments not counted) with about 220 from the Bible. The others among the 900 fall into two categories: sectarian scrolls and non-sectarian scrolls. The use of the word *sectarian* relates to the unusual beliefs and teachings in some of the scrolls compared to either the Pharisees or the Sadducees (the priestly party according to Acts 5:17), and especially the calendars promoted within the DSS. However, there is one primary calendar promoted among the DSS with some minor variations of this one calendar.

The Bible maintained by the Jews down through the centuries even until today, written in Hebrew with parts of two of its books written in the Aramaic language will simply be called the Hebrew Bible or the **Tanak**. Shortly after the year 650 CE the Jewish approved trained copyists of the Hebrew Bible known as the Masoretes added vowel marks and marginal notes to the Hebrew Bible, and the result is known as the **Masoretic Text (MT)**. For simplicity, when the MT has its vowel marks and marginal notes removed to restore its prior appearance, the result will still be called the MT (or the Tanak) in this document. The oldest complete handwritten copy of the Tanak dates back to c. 1000 CE (the Leningrad Codex), yet when Jerome translated the Tanak from Hebrew into Latin between 391 and 405, his surviving Latin translation shows great conformity to the present day Tanak. Thus we have an independent witness that the MT remained faithful. Apart from this, there are some parts of the Tanak that have survived on the top of Masada and in caves (not the Qumran caves) to the west of the Dead Sea that have been found c. 1960, and these are letter for letter with the archaic form of Hebrew grammar identical to the Tanak of today.

**One significantly noteworthy feature of the MT is that its grammar shows archaic Hebrew, not like the Hebrew commonly spoken in or near the first century.** All the Hebrew texts of the biblical books found among the DSS show the contemporary Hebrew of its own time rather than the ancient grammatical Hebrew. The verb endings of archaic Hebrew are especially different from that of first century Hebrew (Abegg 1998). The approved trained copyists of the MT did **not** attempt to bring the exact spellings of the ancient Hebrew words into the contemporary usage of the first century. Keeping the ancient spellings exactly the same in the MT is a distinction of the

faithfulness of the copying regardless of the modifications in speaking Hebrew in the first century (Van der Woude 1992; Kutscher 1982 p. 93).

Concerning the use of different languages found among **all** the DSS (**not only the biblical texts**), Brooke 2007 p. 54 states, “Most of the Qumran MSS [= manuscripts] contain compositions written in Hebrew; some of the Hebrew imitates scriptural language, some is possibly a reflection of local spoken dialects, and some anticipates forms known in the MISHNAH [c. 200]. Also 130 MSS contain Aram. [Aramaic] compositions. Greek MSS are found only in Caves 4 (6 MSS) and 7 (19 MSS).”

This above quotation involves the Mishnah, which is a document written c. 200 in a form of Hebrew that has significant Aramaic words and grammar mixed in with the Hebrew, so that its language is called Mishnaic Hebrew.

The documents among the DSS that are sectarian in nature refer to the people and authors that followed its teachings as **Yahad**. While it may seem negatively prejudicial to refer to the Yahad as sectarians, the fact is that this group is never mentioned in the New Testament, thus indicating that they were not consequential in Judaea in the first century. The DSS never mention the word Essenes, yet many modern scholars often refer to the Yahad as Essenes.

### [3] Scroll 4QMMT and the Hebrew Bible

Scroll 4QMMT (sometimes abbreviated MMT) has generated much scholarly interest. The symbol MMT is an abbreviation of the Hebrew that means “some of the works of the law”. Its attention has produced numerous journal articles, book chapters, and even a whole book whose chapters are written by different authors concerning its nature, purpose, authorship, and the identity of the Jewish group that adhered most closely to the positions stated in its contents. The main reason that 4QMMT takes such an early position within this document is that it has an important passage that identifies the substance of the Hebrew Bible. As is typical of most of the scrolls, some parts have not survived the ravages of time, so scholars have filled in, within square brackets, what they believe to have been the original text, even when only part of a word.

The WAC translation 1996 of 4QMMT on p. 363 at C:10 states, “we [have written] to you so that you might understand the book of Moses, the book[s of the Pr]ophets and Davi[d...].”

The above statement is very significant because anyone who has examined a Bible published by Jews will note that its books are sectioned into three parts abbreviated TNK, and with added vowels it is the Tanak. Its historical origin into three parts is not authoritatively documented. Here 4QMMT mentions these three parts.

The last word “David” is typically used as a designation of the all the Writings, not only the Psalms of David. The first word of this verse is “we”, showing that the author represents himself as part of a group. The intended recipient of the document is not known, although some scholars conjecture it to be the high priest in Jerusalem. About 20 laws from the Pentateuch are stated after this.

The important point of this is to make it clear that the author knows what the recipient expects the inspired Scriptures to be, and the author says nothing to doubt this. No other text in the DSS has this phrase that designates inspired Scripture to mainstream Jews from that time to the present.

On p. 364 at C:21-22 it says, “Now this is the Last Days; when those of Isra[el] shall return to the L[aw of Moses with all their heart] and will never turn away again. But the wicked will incr[ease in wickedness and ...”

Here the phrase “Last Days” is used, which occurs frequently in the sectarian scrolls, and it typically is used to indicate an impending cataclysmic war during which the Almighty will save His people. The sectarians believed they were living in the Last Days.

Some of the statements in 4QMMT mention events from the Scriptures in Israel’s history beyond the Pentateuch, showing an acceptance of the validity of the Tanak.

On p. 363 at C:7-9, it says, “[But you know that] we have separated from the majority of the peo[ple (or council of the con[gregation]) and from all their uncleanness] [and] from being party to or going along wi[th them] in these matters. And you k[now that no] unfaithfulness, deception, or evil are found in our hands, for we have given some thought (?) to [these issues].”

The key point in that last segment is the phrase “we have separated from the majority”, which indicates that those allied with the author are not fellowshipping with others who do not adhere to their beliefs. This is a mark of sectarianism, which is also highlighted by the following quotation in contrast to the author using “we”.

On p. 364 at C:26-28, it says, “Now we have written to you some of the works of the Law, those which we determined would be beneficial for you and your people, because we have seen [that] you possess insight and knowledge of the Law.”

The phrase “you and your people” implies that the recipient is a leader of Jewish people. This is a reason that some scholars think this was written to the High Priest in Jerusalem, and the “we” refers to those sectarians who have separated themselves from the majority.

We will soon see that the sectarians, the Yahad, considered the Book of Jubilees to be authoritative for themselves, although the intended recipient of 4QMMT apparently did

not accept the Book of Jubilees to have authority since it was not mentioned in this scroll and also because of the calendar favored in the Book of Jubilees.

## [4] Romans 3:1-2 and the Books of the Hebrew Bible

We have seen above that 4QMMT contains words that designate the Tanak. This also occurs in the New Testament, shown next.

Luke 24:44, “And He said to them, These [are] the words which I spoke to you, yet being with you, that must be fulfilled, all the things having been written in the Law of Moses, and the Prophets, and the Psalms, concerning Me.”

In the above quote from Luke, the Psalms, being the largest part of the Writings, is used as a keyword that represents all of the Writings.

**In other words, Luke 24:44 shows that the inspired writings of the Jews are the three divisions of their Bible represented by the three letters that are the Hebrew equivalents of TNK, from which the word Tanak is composed.**

The prologue to the Book of Sirach, dated c. 130 BCE, also mentions the three part division of the Hebrew Bible. The date of 4QMMT is not agreed upon by scholars, but it is often dated from about 100 to 50 BCE.

In the Gospel of John there is a statement made by Yeshua and a lengthier related statement by Josephus on this subject that is significant. In the following quote, the key part is in parentheses, “the Scripture cannot be broken”.

John 10:35, “If He called them elohim to whom the word of the Almighty came (and **the Scripture cannot be broken**),

10:36, do you say of Him whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, ‘You are blaspheming,’ because I said, ‘I am the Son of Elohim’?”

From this statement “**the Scripture cannot be broken**” the Jews to whom Yeshua spoke in Jerusalem would agree that the Scripture did not have multiple different official versions such as are found among the DSS.

The similar statement in Josephus from Apion 1:42 is, “We have given practical proof of our reverence for our own Scriptures. For, although such long ages have now passed, no one ventured either to add, or to remove, or to alter a syllable; and it is an instinct with every Jew, from the day of his birth, to regard them as the decrees of the Almighty, to abide by them, and, if need be, cheerfully to die for them.”

Here Josephus wrote “such long ages have now passed”, indicating that the Scriptures of the Jews have been considered inspired for a very long time.

Josephus is known to exaggerate, yet his statement is akin to the statement in John 10:35. Thus Yeshua and Josephus indicate that official copies of the Scripture did not vary, unlike the copies from the DSS. These quotations also indicate that from more ancient times the Hebrew Scriptures did not vary.

In Apion 1:39-40 Josephus accounts for all the books of the Hebrew Scriptures accepted by the Jews as inspired. This reads as follows: “Our books, those which are justly accredited, are only 22, and contain the record of all time. Of these, five are the books of Moses, comprising the laws and the traditional history from the birth of man, down to the death of the lawgiver. This period falls only a little short of 3,000 years. From the death of Moses until Artaxerxes, who succeeded Xerxes as king of Persia, the prophets subsequent to Moses wrote the history of their of the events of their own times in 13 books. The remaining four books contain hymns to the Almighty and precepts of conduct of human life.”

Jewish tradition combines some books of the Tanak into a single scroll, so that the separation of the 22 scrolls into  $5 + 13 + 4$  must be unraveled to see how this total is achieved.

The opinion of the translator and commentator Henry St. John Thackery in the footnotes on p. 179 of Josephus\_1 1926 is to include the following for the 13 books: (1) Joshua; (2) Judges + Ruth; (3) Samuel (I and II); (4) Kings (I and II); (5) Chronicles (I and II); (6) Ezra + Nehemiah; (7) Esther; (8) Job; (9) Isaiah; (10) Jeremiah + Lamentations; (11) Ezekiel; (12) all the Minor Prophets' (13) Daniel. His final four books are: (1) Psalms; (2) Song of Songs; (3) Proverbs; (4) Ecclesiastes.

These are the books that Jews consider to be inspired today even as they were in the time of Jerome when he translated the Tanak into Latin between 391 and 405.

Acts 17:2, “And according to Paul’s custom, he went in to them and reasoned with them from the Scriptures on three Sabbaths ....”

This shows that the Books of the Bible that Paul used were accepted as authoritative by the Jews to which he spoke here and elsewhere. The Books of their Bibles were not a controversy, so they must have had the same Books that were referred to in Luke 24:44.

Now consider the following from the apostle Paul.

Rom 3:1, “What then [is] the superiority of the Jew? Or what [is] the profit of circumcision [= symbol of Jewish identity]? ”

Rom 3:2, Much in every way. For first, indeed, that they were entrusted with the Oracles of the Almighty.”

In Rom 3:2 the expression “Oracles of the Almighty” is an alternate way of referring to the Scriptures as accepted by Jews generally at the time of Paul. This was penned before the New Testament was written. As shown in Luke 24:44, the Oracles of the Almighty were the contents of the Tanak, but to the audience of Paul it was a Greek translation. We do not possess any copy of any book of the Greek translation from the first century, and the currently known Septuagint dates from c. 350. We cannot say that the surviving Septuagint is what the Jews of Asia Minor had in the first century.

Certainly there were other intertestamental writings of the Jews such as I and II Maccabees and the Book of Sirach. There are also the writings of Philo of Alexandria and Josephus. While these writings have historical value, they do not rise to the level of inspired writings because they were not accepted as part of Scripture by Jews generally in the early first century. They were not part of the Tanak.

When Paul wrote in Rom 3:2, “For first, indeed, that they [= the Jews] were entrusted with the Oracles of the Almighty”, what Jews had the authority to decide what these inspired writings were?

The answer is provided in Psalm 133 with the oil flowing down Aaron’s beard to bring about unity among the brethren. The Aaronic priesthood had the responsibility to decide what was in the Scriptures.

Josephus wrote that the holy books were kept in the Temple in Ant 3:1:7 (= 3:38); 5:1:17 (= 5:61); 10:4:2 (= 10:58). When Josephus wrote this, he understood that what was done in his own lifetime also prevailed in ancient times.

**Since the Aaronic priesthood had charge of the Temple and Psalm 133 shows the authority of this priesthood to bring about unity of the Israelites, this implies that the Aaronic priesthood in Jerusalem determined the contents of the Tanak.**

There are many sectarian writings found among the Dead Sea Scrolls, such as 4QMMT, The Temple Scroll, The Damascus Document, The Book of Jubilees, and the Book of Enoch. These books were not accepted as part of the Tanak, so that these books should also be rejected as part of Scripture according to Rom 3:1-2 and Luke 24:44. Even 4QMMT from the DSS acknowledges that the Tanak was authoritative to the recipient of 4QMMT.

## [5] Languages used in Palestine in the First Century

In order to help assess the prevalence of the three languages of Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek in Judaea in the first century the only objective method we have is to examine the written evidence. The DSS as discussed above show the use of Greek to be the least used. The use of Hebrew is most prevalent, and the use of Aramaic is also widespread. In 2015 Michael O. Wise wrote a book based upon letters from caves on the western side of the Dead Sea, not part of the DSS. These letters show a chronological chain along some family lines with letters from all over Palestine from the first century through c. 135 CE with many signatures on documents. On p. 331 Wise wrote, “Virtually all Judaeans spoke one dialect or another of Aramaic”. On p. 296 Wise presents circumstantial evidence that perhaps two-thirds of the Jews knew some Hebrew. On p. 344 Wise indicates that there is insufficient data to arrive at a percentage of the population who spoke Greek.

People who were employed by the Roman government had to know some Greek. Roman soldiers stationed in Judea spoke Greek (Rocca 2008 p. 247), so that salespeople who sold goods to Roman soldiers had to know some Greek. Coastal cities that harbored Greek trading vessels needed people who spoke some Greek. Trading roads that ran through Palestine needed people who spoke some Greek. There was a trade route that ran through southern Galilee (Porter 1994 p. 135). However, people who knew sufficient Greek to meet these needs did not need a large Greek vocabulary.

## [6] Some Evidence that the Moon determines the Month in the Bible

The reason for discussing the role of the moon for the biblical month is that the DSS denies that the moon determines the month in the calendar of YHWH. While the present document is not intended to be a treatise on the biblical calendar, at least this one aspect of the calendar must be addressed to some degree.

### (A) A Month is a Cycle of the Moon

Note the use of the word **moon** in the next verse.

Ps 104:19, “He made [the] **moon** [3394 *yahrayach*] for appointed-times [4150 *moed* in the plural], [the] sun knows its going-away.”

The vast majority of the uses of the Hebrew word *moed* occur in the phrase “Tent of Meeting”, and the second most frequent use, 40 times, refers to the festivals and the Sabbath (this includes the Day of Atonement). Other uses of *moed* have nothing to do

with the moon. Also, the seventh day Sabbath has nothing to do with the moon. The only logical conclusion is that the festivals are referred to in Ps 104:19. Thus the moon is used to determine the festivals. Since the festivals are determined by counting days within a month, the cycle of the moon must determine the biblical month.

Archaeology has shown that the vocabulary of the ancient Phoenician language and the Ugaritic language are nearly identical to that of the ancient Hebrew language. Both of these languages have the same two Hebrew words for month, namely *yerach* (3391) and *chodesh* (2320). The two verses below show that these two words have the same meaning, with one word used when the name of a month is given, and the other word used when the number of the month is given.

I Ki 6:38, "And in the eleventh year in the month [3391 *yerach*] Bul, it [is] the eighth month [2320 *chodesh*], the house was finished for all its parts and for all its plans, [and] thus he built it seven years."

I Ki 8:2, "And all the men of Israel were assembled toward King Solomon at the feast in the month [3391 *yerach*] Ethanim, which [is] the seventh month [2320 *chodesh*]."

Strong's number 3394 for moon (*yahrayach*) and Strong's number 3391 for month (*yerach*) have the same three Hebrew consonants and look the same when the vowels are removed. In the Hebrew language the 22 letters shown in the sections of Ps 119 are called consonants even though some of them act as vowels. The original Hebrew text of the Scriptures only had these 22 consonants. The vowels were added to aid pronunciation by the Masoretes about the year 650. This identical original appearance in the Hebrew word for moon (3394) and this Hebrew word for month (3391) shows that a biblical month is based upon the moon. The verses above, I Ki 6:38; 8:2, also have another word for month [2320 *chodesh*], and it shows that the two different words, *yerach* and *chodesh*, indicate the same thing, a month. The two words, *yerach* and *chodesh* for month, were both in the cognate language of the land of Canaan before Abraham and his servants emigrated there. Thus both words became part of the Hebrew language.

A summary of the above reasoning is that the Hebrew word for moon is essentially the same as the Hebrew word *yerach* for month, and *yerach* has the same meaning as the other word *chodesh* for month. Thus *chodesh* is based upon a cycle of the moon.

It can be shown from the early chapters of Ezekiel that there was a year with 13 months, which is possible with lunar months, but not with a 364-day year.

## (B) Hebrew *chodesh* can mean *month* or *new-moon*

It has been made clear that one meaning of *chodesh* is month. Now consider the following use of chodesh.

Ezek 46:1, “Thus says [the] Lord YHWH, [the] gate of the inner court facing east shall be shut on the six working days, but on the Sabbath day and on [the] day of the *chodesh* it shall be opened.”

This shows that there is one particular day that designates the usage *chodesh*. This day is shown to be the first day of each month by comparing two ways in Hebrew for expressing days of a burnt offering.

Num 28:11, “And at the beginnings of your months [2320 *chodesh* in plural] you shall offer a burnt offering to YHWH, two young bulls, and one ram, seven male lambs a year old, without blemish.”

The other way is seen from the following.

Compare this with the statement for burnt offerings in I Chr 23:31. The common translation of *chodesh* using the word pair “new-moons” in verse 31 will be justified shortly.

I Chr 23:30, “and [the sons of Aaron are] to stand every morning to thank and to praise YHWH, and likewise at evening,

I Chr 23:31, and over all burnt offerings to YHWH, presenting on Sabbaths, on new-moons [2320 *chodesh* in plural], and on appointed-times [4150 *moed*], according to their required number, periodically before YHWH.”

**The translation “new-moon” for *chodesh* is justified for the following two reasons:**

**(1) The Hebrew word *chodesh*, when vowels are removed, becomes identical to the Hebrew word *chadash* when its vowels are removed. The Hebrew word *chadash* is used as both an adjective (2319, meaning new) and a verb (2318, meaning to make new, or to renew).**

**(2) A biblical month is based upon a cycle of the moon.**

Thus the first day of a month includes the concept of “new” as well as the meaning of month that is based upon a cycle of the moon.

Ps 81:3, “Blow at the new-moon [*chodesh*] the ram’s horn [*shofar*], at the **full-moon** [= *keseh*] on our feast day.”

Here the focus of attention here is on the full-moon, which does certainly involve the moon. Ancient Semitic cognate contexts prove that “full-moon” is accurate here for

*keseh*, as nearly all modern translations show. The first day of Unleavened Bread and also the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles are festival days upon which the moon is very roundish, and the end of this verse mentions the feast day. If the full moon would not be involved on an annual basis, Ps 81:3 would lose its meaning. Thus Ps 81:3 shows the cycle of the moon is used for a biblical month.

In Leviticus 23 all the festivals are mentioned, and the Hebrew word *moed* occurs six times in this chapter to refer to the festivals.

Ps 89:37, “It [= his throne] shall be established forever like the **moon**, and the witness in the sky is faithful; Selah.” This is an indirect reference that the moon is the faithful witness for the start of a month. This verse shows that the moon had significance to ancient Israel.

### **(C) After returning to Jerusalem Ezra Correctly Knew the Month**

Both Ezra and Nehemiah are present in Jerusalem in Nehemiah 8 where the festival of the first day of the seventh month is celebrated. Twice in this chapter it mentions that “this day is holy”. This shows that the determination of the start of a month in Jerusalem was correct as determined by the leaders of the Jews at that time. Ezra and Nehemiah did **not** adopt a pagan concept for the start of a month from Babylon. The few Scriptures mentioned above show that the moon was involved.

There are other Scriptures that show the role of the moon in the calendar, but this document is not designed to cover all those details.

### **(D) More History for the use of the Moon for a Month**

From the viewpoint of history in the first century, Philo of Alexandria mentions that the sighting of the moon after the conjunction determines the beginning of the month of the Jews. He urges the Jews to go to the Temple in Jerusalem to keep the festivals. Josephus uses the adjective “lunar” before the word “month” in several places when writing to the Roman nobles (who used the Julian calendar), thus showing that the cycle of the moon determines a month for the Jews. Josephus was a priest who was reared in Jerusalem, although admittedly that in itself does not ensure that he is always to be trusted.

Luke 2:41-42, “His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. And when He was 12 years old, they went to Jerusalem according to the custom of the

feast.” This feast was conducted at the Temple where priests officiated at the Passover. Based upon the testimony of both Philo and Josephus, the Passover was determined counting days from the start of the month based upon the moon. The priests at the Temple officiated. According to Num 10:8-10 the Aaronic priests had the responsibility to declare the start of the month by blowing two silver trumpets. Luke 2 shows Yeshua participating with His parents at the Passover under the lunar calendar maintained by the Aaronic priesthood at the Temple.

The result is that the Tanak, in agreement with history at the Temple in the first century, shows that the moon was used to determine the start of a month.

There are two other historical events that show the use of the moon for the Jews after Ezra.

Beginning in the sixth century BCE there were Jewish mercenaries on the island of Elephantine in southern Egypt. This island was controlled by the Persian administration from the mainland city of Syene next to Elephantine. Persia accepted the Babylonian calendar when it conquered Babylon. Documents discovered on this island as well as in Syene were doubled dated, which means that events were dated in both the Egyptian civil calendar and the Babylonian calendar. A letter known as the Passover letter, dated in the year 420/419 BCE was written from Jerusalem to Jews on that island telling them to keep the Passover on the 14th day of Nisan. Nisan was the Babylonian month name, which was based upon the moon, beginning the month with the sighting of the new crescent of the moon.

The Book of Sirach is also called Ecclesiasticus, or more fully The Proverbs of Ben Sira. It was written by Simon II, a Zadokite high priest in Jerusalem, in Hebrew c. 200 BCE. About two-thirds of it exists in Hebrew, and all of it exists in Greek. Simon II’s grandson translated it into Greek c. 130 BCE, and he added a prologue to it. The prologue mentions “the law and the prophets and the other books of our fathers”, which is considered to be a reference to the three part division of the Tanak. There are two passages in which the moon is mentioned, and these exist in Hebrew.

Sirach 50:6, “as a luminous star in the midst of the clouds, as the full [*meel*] moon [*yahrayach*] determining the festal days.” (from Otto Mulder 2003, pp. 119-121),

(NRSV, and see Levi 1967 for the Hebrew) Sirach 43:6, “It is the moon that marks the changing seasons, governing the times, their everlasting sign,  
Sirach 43:7, From the moon comes the sign for festal days, a light that wanes when it completes its course.

Sirach 43:8, The new moon, as its name suggests, renews itself, how marvelous it is in this change, a beacon to the hosts on high, shining in the vault of the heavens!"

## [7] Introduction to the Calendar seen in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Jubilees

Now the discussion switches over to the DSS regarding the role of the moon in the calendar of the Yahad. Attention will focus on the Book of Jubilees at this time. Later it will be explained that the Book of Enoch, which also discusses the calendar, was less influential for the Yahad.

P. 5 of JUBIL 2018 lists 14 partial copies of the Book of Jubilees that survived among the DSS. These are all written in Hebrew. This many copies is heavy evidence that Jubilees was highly regarded by the Yahad. One of the sectarian books among the DSS is called the Damascus Document, abbreviated CD. P. 2 of JUBIL states that 10 partial copies of the Damascus Document have been found among the DSS, and "Jubilees" is mentioned in its Prologue and in 1:26 of the Damascus Document. From this, scholars are confident that the Book of Jubilees was authoritative among the Yahad. In the attic of a synagogue in Cairo, Egypt thousands of very old handwritten copies of Jewish writings were retrieved c. 1900 and brought to Cambridge University in England. This written treasure from that attic is known as the Cairo Geniza. One document among the Geniza is a copy of the Damascus Document.

In the following quotation from the Book of Jubilees it mentions that observing the moon is corrupt and that it falls 10 days short of the year, implying that 12 lunar months is approximately 354 days which is about 11 days short of a year, although the quote below prefers to say this is 10 days short, which implies the year is  $354 + 10 = 364$  days, instead of about 365.25 days. When it mentions Sabbaths, it refers to the seventh year land Sabbath that will be thrown off from their supposedly correct year timing, and that is the reason it includes the jubilee year.

On p. 299 of JUBIL the translation of Jub 6:36 is, "There will be people who carefully observe the moon with lunar observations because it is corrupt (with respect to) the seasons and is early from year to year by ten days. [6:37] Therefore years will come about for them when they will disturb (the year) and make a day of testimony something worthless and a profane day a festival. Everyone will join together both holy days with the profane and the profane day with the holy day, for they will err regarding the months, the Sabbaths, the festivals, and the jubilee. [6:38] For this reason I am commanding you and testifying to you so that you may testify to them because after your death your children will disturb (it) so that they do not make the year (consist of)

364 (days) only. Therefore they will err regarding the first of the month, the season, the Sabbath, and the festivals.”

On the same page at Jub 6:32, “Now you command the Israelites to keep the years in this number – 364 days. Then the year will be complete and it will not disturb its time from its days or from its festivals because everything will happen in harmony with their testimony. They will neither omit a day nor disturb a festival.”

Thus the number of days in the year is repeated to be exactly 364 days in the Book of Jubilees, and this number is repeated in several other documents in the DSS. There is no role at all for the moon.

On p. 167 of JUBIL at Jub 2:9, “The Lord appointed the sun as a great sign above the earth for days, Sabbaths, months, festivals, years, Sabbaths of years, jubilees and all cycles of the years.”

This is a contradiction to Gen 1:14 which has the plural “light-bearers” for days and nights, festivals, and years. It substitutes the singular “sun” for the plural “light-bearers”.

On p. 168 of JUBIL at Jub 2:30, “They are not to bring (anything) out or in from house to house on this day because it is more holy and more blessed than any day of the jubilee of jubilees. On it we kept Sabbath in heaven before it was made known to all humanity that on it they should keep Sabbath on earth. [2:31] The Creator of all blessed but did not sanctify any people(s) and nations to keep Sabbath on it except Israel alone. To it alone did he give (the right) to eat, drink, and keep Sabbath on it upon the earth. [2:32] The Creator of all who created this day blessed it for (the purpose of) blessing, holiness, and glory more than all (other) days. [2:33] This law and testimony were given to the Israelites as an eternal law throughout their history.”

Here the Book of Jubilees restricts the keeping of the Sabbath to Israel alone, yet Leviticus 23 makes no such restriction. Mark 2:27, “And He was saying to them, ‘The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath.’” Thus the Sabbath is not restricted to Israel. This contradicts the Book of Jubilees.

The Book of Jubilees does not discuss the agricultural year in relation to the 364-day year and does not discuss the vernal equinox. It allows the year to slowly drift due to missing the average of about 365.25 days per year.

In chapter 6 of the Book of Jubilees it mentions that all 12 months of the year have 30 days except months 3, 6, 9, and 12. Those four months have 31 days. Thus the total number of days in the year is 364.

It is difficult to imagine how Jews could distort the calendar this way when the Hebrew Bible shows the moon to be involved, especially in light of the fact that 4QMMT mentions the three part division of the Tanak that has been recognized by mainstream Judaism longer than 4QMMT. Some of the history of the Jews along with the history of the Hebrew language that led to the DSS requires some investigation in order to make some sense out of some of the contents of the DSS. There is much that the authors of the DSS do not explain about their own history and how the DSS came to be deposited in the caves in which they were found. Thus it is necessary to explore the historical context. The historical context will not justify the 364-day calendar, but it will help to grasp how this could have happened, and the history is informative in itself.

**To some readers it may seem strange to read that there are some people today who choose to believe that the calendar in the Book of Jubilees is in fact the original calendar of the Bible. One aspect of this belief claims that the yahad was founded by geneological priests of the line of Zadok, while the priests in Jerusalem were not of the line of Zadok and were therefore illegitimate and had an incorrect calendar. Some of this theory will be discussed in this document and much attention will be given to the Zadokite priesthood.**

## **[8] Brief History of the House of Judah from Jeremiah to Herod in 53 BCE**

### **(A) Exile of the House of Judah during the time of Jeremiah**

In multiple places Jeremiah warned the people of Judah that they would be taken into exile by the king of the north, which was Babylon, Jer 1:13; 20:4; 25:8. The reason for this exile was the sins of Judah, Jer 1:16; 6:13; 7:1-11.

Jer 5:15, “Behold, I am bringing a nation [Babylon] against you from afar, O house of Israel, declares YHWH. It is an enduring nation, it is an ancient nation, a nation whose language you do not know, nor can you understand what they say.”

This language is seen to be Aramaic from Dan 2:4, “Then the Chaldeans spoke to the king [Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon] in **Aramaic...**”

The Aramaic language gradually spread from the nation of Aram (often translated as Syria) to Assyria, and then to Babylon. Then it became the common language of Persia. The Aramaic language went through five stages of change over centuries, so that an analysis of a specimen of Aramaic can show approximately when it was written.

Jeremiah told the people how their lives can be spared. Jer 21:9, “He who remains in this city shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence, but he who goes out and defects to the Chaldeans who besiege you shall live, and his life shall be as a prize to him.”

Many educated and skilled people of Judah voluntarily went into captivity. Jer 24:1, “After Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had carried away captive Jeconiah, the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and the officials of Judah with the craftsmen and smiths from Jerusalem, and had brought them to Babylon, YHWH showed me, behold, two baskets of figs set before the Temple of YHWH.”.

The Babylonians left some **unskilled farmers** stay in Judah after defeating Judah. II Ki 25:12, “But the captain of the guard left some of the poor of the land as vinedressers and farmers.” This is repeated in Jer 39:10; 52:15-16. The educated and skilled people of Judah would be assets to Babylon’s economy, so they were deported. More significant is that these skilled people are the ones who would be able to manufacture weapons of war. On p. 28 of Cansdale 1997 we read, “... Josephus wrote of the Essenes as dwellers in towns where they could have been occupied in various crafts and commerce rather than engaged wholly in agricultural work. [War 2:124]” Such crafts would include making weapons, and this requires a town or city to support such activity. The Babylonians would not want such skills to be left behind.

These uneducated people of the land who were left behind continued to speak **Hebrew** as they had before. **Except** for the religious teachers, especially the priests, those who were taken captive eventually lost their knowledge of Hebrew because of the influence of using Aramaic in Babylon.

Oded Lipschits is a scholar of ancient of Israel and an archaeologist who studied the relative population of those uneducated people who were left compared to the total population. P. 78 of Lipschits 2011 states, “From the demographic point of view, based on all the available archaeological data, one can estimate that, as a result of the long war and as part of its effect and outcome, there was approximately a 60 percent decline in population, from about 110,000 people to about 10,000 [after deaths in warfare are included].” This should primarily pertain to the region in greater Jerusalem rather than the entire area of all of Judah.

## **(B) Culture of the Jews in Judah in the Fifth Century BCE**

There were several phases of returns of Jews to Jerusalem from Babylon. First there were a small number called the remnant in Hag 1:12, who returned in 538 BCE to help rebuild the Temple with motivation by Haggai and Zerubbabel. Next there were a few thousand who returned with Ezra in 457 BCE. Then another few thousand returned with Nehemiah in 444 BCE. The total number of those who returned in these phases may have been about 6,000. Lipschits estimated that the population of those who never left greater Jerusalem at the time of the exile to Babylon was 10,000. Those who returned from Babylon, except the small number of religious teachers and priests, spoke only Aramaic.

**Those who never left Judah spoke only Hebrew, and these were almost all uneducated and illiterate, and besides this, they had well over a hundred years to forget most of the religion that had been taught with laxity before the exile to Babylon.**

Thus c. 440 BCE Jerusalem had very roughly half its people who spoke Hebrew, but who had little knowledge of their ancient religion. The others who were returnees, spoke Aramaic and had some reasonable knowledge of their ancient religion. The conclusion is that Judah slowly became bilingual, with many able to speak both Hebrew and Aramaic. There was a great variation in knowledge of the Scriptures and in religious zeal. It is also realistic to think that many of those in Judah even wondered how accurately the priests were conveying their religion to them because they were largely illiterate and most of the priests were not a good example of their personal behavior as seen by the general population to be discussed below.

## **(C) Change in the Hebrew Language before and after the Exile**

The Babylonian exile did have an effect upon the Hebrew language as used by the Jews when comparing that language before the exile with after the exile. In the year 539 BCE King Cyrus of Persia conquered Babylon and the Persian empire reigned over the territory that included Judaea. The phrase “Babylonian exile” is not changed merely because the Persians were now in control. King Cyrus of Persia issued a decree that allowed Jews to return to Jerusalem. The Hebrew language **before** the exile is called Standard Biblical Hebrew (SBH). The Hebrew language **after** the exile is called Late Biblical Hebrew (LBH). One reason for this is that the people from Judah who were never taken into captivity spoke a rural form of Hebrew different from the more refined

Hebrew of the educated class in Jerusalem taken into exile. This educated class lost its Hebrew usage when it accepted Aramaic in Babylon. The educated teachers and priests in Babylon (and then Persia) had to translate the Hebrew inspired writings into Aramaic when teaching the people. When Ezra read the Law of Moses to the people at the first day of the seventh month in Jerusalem, his audience consisted of the returnees who lost their knowledge of Hebrew along with some of those who had remained in the land.

Neh 8:8, “So they [the teachers] read in the book in the law of the Almighty, translating [6567 *parash*] and made-clear [7760 *sohm*] the meaning [*shekel* 7932 ] of the reading.”

The teachers had to translate from Hebrew to Aramaic so that those who returned from Persia could understand it in the language they knew. This explanation of Neh 8:8 is given on p. 147 of Schniedewind 2013. On p. 139 Schniedewind wrote, “Vernacular Hebrew continued to be spoken in isolated villages of Judah and written Hebrew survived as a symbol of ethnicity, political legitimacy, and national autonomy.”

Concerning the preservation of the Hebrew language, on p. 149 he wrote, “Nevertheless, the disjunction [= separation from previous to current methods] of the Hebrew scribal institutions [= schools for teaching Hebrew literacy] from the sixth century [beginning c. 600 BCE] until the revival of schools in the Hellenistic period [this begins with Alexander the Great’s military victories] means that archaic linguistic structures and uncommon words were no longer precisely understood by later scribes.”

The phrase “hapax legomena” refers to words in the Hebrew Bible that only occur once or twice so that the context is too sparse to show its meaning. On p. 151 he wrote, “The hapax legomena were words whose meanings were presumably understood by ancient Hebrew scribes down through the sixth century, but these meanings were lost when the scribal traditions of Hebrew suffered a disjunction by the end of the sixth century B.C.E. [c. 500 BCE]. It is noteworthy that not a single one of these difficult hapax legomena is found in the corpus [= whole collection of writings] of LBH texts (for example, Esther, Dan., Ezra, Neh., Chron.).”

Bilingualism in Judah helped Hebrew to survive, and Hebrew literacy survived through the educated Aaronic priesthood whose income was derived through tithes, but literacy among the laity was very sparse due to the expense of paper, the expense of paying for education, the difficulty in traveling to a school from rural areas, the time taken by ordinary chores and growing food without machinery, and the lack of the printing press. Paying for written material was prohibitively expensive. The Hebrew literacy that did survive was deficient when compared to SBH because the meaning of certain words was lost and the rural form of Hebrew that survived was different. In large towns and

cities the population was dense enough that highly motivated students with sufficient time and income were able to become literate in Hebrew of the LBH variety.

## (D) Political Tragedy Helps Hebrew Revive

It is ironic that a great tragedy upon the Jews helped to revive literacy of Hebrew among Jews beyond only the priesthood. After the death of Alexander the Great, his four generals split up control of his Hellenistic empire. The succession of Ptolemies ruled over Egypt and the succession of Antiochus kings ruled over the Seleucid empire to the north and east of the Ptolemies. For a while the Seleucids and Ptolemies fought over who had control over Judah, but eventually the Ptolemies gave up and let the Seleucids take control without further battles. The tragedy is that Antiochus IV Epiphanes (ruled 169-167 BCE) issued decrees that prohibited the practice of Judaism and he offered a pig in the Temple. Religious zeal of the family of Maccabees caused them to revolt against the Seleucids and they were eventually victorious, thus re-establishing the practice of Judaism. The Maccabees were part of the Hasmonean families, so the term Hasmonean is treated as synonymous with Maccabean.

The Hasmonean revolt began when Mattathias Maccabee defied the decree of Antiochus against the practice of Judaism. On p. 25 of Atkinson 2016 he wrote, “His family’s war against the Seleucid rulers lasted for nearly twenty-five years. During the reign of his son Simon, in the Seleucid year 170 (= 143/2 B.C.E.), the Hasmoneans gained independence for Judea. His [Simon’s] legitimacy to rule this new state largely rested in his having fought in the original revolt against the Seleucid Empire led by his father Mattathias.” On p. 27 we read, “In 164 B.C.E. he [Judas Maccabee] captured Jerusalem, cleansed the temple, and reinstated the sacrificial rites.” On p. 1 Atkinson wrote, “The history of the nine decades when the Hasmonean dynasty ruled Judea (152-63 B.C.E.) is the tale of a family whose zeal for their ancestral faith helped them survive a turbulent period in the Middle East, and create an independent state surrounded by hostile powers.”

After the return from exile under Ezra and Nehemiah it was recognized that the ancient Hebrew of the Bible (SBH) could not be accurately translated into another language because some words had an uncertain meaning. There were other reasons for difficulty in translating Hebrew into another language. For example, some Hebrew words did not exactly match the meaning of any word in another language. Thus the original word must be left intact for zealous study with the hope that the meanings would perhaps be revealed. Another major problem is that many Hebrew words had multiple meanings and it was often a challenge to decide which meaning to use in the other language. The

modern study of ancient Semitic languages using archaeology has been of great help in identifying cognate words to show the original meaning. Religious zeal to attain a reasonable knowledge of Hebrew was a motivating factor to keep the Hebrew language alive.

After the return to Jerusalem, in Neh 13:23-24 the governor Nehemiah was angered that many of the Jews in Jerusalem had married foreign women and because of that influence of a different language and a different religion, they were not able to speak Hebrew. Nehemiah recognized that in order to restore the ancient religion, it was necessary to expunge foreign languages and whatever interfered with using Hebrew. He did not attempt to defeat the use of Aramaic which he himself used, but he was content with bilingualism.

Only when the leaders of Judah were motivated to promote the Hebrew religion and the learning of Hebrew could Hebrew literacy flourish. The Hasmonean dynasty ruled Judea from 152-63 B.C.E. The founder of this dynasty, Mattathias Maccabee, fought the much larger Seleucid power with religious fervor to cast off the anti-Jewish yoke, but it took much bloodshed and about 25 years for his sons to finally succeed. On p. 108 of Regev 2013, he wrote, “Mattathias’s religious heritage is stressed in his farewell speech, in which zeal for the Torah is the major idea (I Macc 2:50). Mattathias ordered his sons to gather around them all those who observed the Torah, and to reestablish the performance of the commandments (I Macc 2:67-68). Undoubtedly, Torah observance formed the basis of the opposition to the Seleucids. For the author of I Maccabees, Mattathias and his followers ‘saved the Torah from the hand of the Gentiles and from the kings’ (I Macc 2:48). This would be the foundational ethos [= nature and character] of the entire dynasty.”

Paleo-Hebrew refers to the shapes of writing the letters of the Hebrew language before the Babylonian exile. After the Babylonian exile the Jews used the square script for the letters that was used in Aramaic writing. Aramaic and Hebrew used the same 22-letter alphabet, but there were differences in grammar and vocabulary. SBH may be written in paleo-Hebrew or in the square script of Aramaic. What distinguishes SBH from LBH is the grammar and especially the verb endings, not the letter script.

On p. 166 of Schniedewind 2013 we read, “With the emergence of a Jewish state in the second century B.C.E. [through the Maccabees], Hebrew language and Paleo-Hebrew script were then used on the coins of the Hasmonean dynasty as an expression of early Jewish nationalism.”

## (E) Hellenization within Judaea

Deut 12:29-31, “When YHWH your Almighty cuts off before you all the nations which you are going to dispossess, and you dispossess them and dwell in their land, [12:30] beware that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed before you, and that you do not inquire after their deities, saying, ‘How do these nations serve their deities, that I may do likewise?’ [12:31] You shall not behave thus toward YHWH your Almighty, for every abominable act which YHWH hates they have done for their deities; for they even burn their sons and daughters in the fire to their deities.”

This passage from Deuteronomy can later be understood as a warning to avoid Hellenism which became a problem after Alexander the Great and later rulers adopted Hellenistic ways. On p. 19 of Regev 2013 we read, “In modern scholarship, Hellenism denotes ‘Greek ways,’ and hellenization is the adoption of Greek culture (including language and religion) by non-Greeks.” It also includes Greek educational methods and Greek buildings.

On p. 15 of Regev 2013 he wrote (based on a combination of I Maccabees, II Maccabees, and Josephus), “Substantial portions of the Zadokite high priesthood and other priestly circles had been proven greedy, manipulative, and violent. The Seleucid kingdom, which had supported Jewish legal privileges in 198 BCE, became unpredictably antagonistic. And the core of Jewish identity, the Torah, was now endangered from two different angles: on the one hand, between 167 and 164 it was dangerous to live according to its precepts; and on the other hand, already from 175 BCE some Jews had come to be seen as less committed to the Torah, even though they were members of the religious or priestly elite. All this must have occasioned not only daily distress, but also overall confusion for Judaean Jews.”

On p. 18 of Regev he wrote, “The independent Hasmonean state was established by Jonathan in 152 BCE and collapsed when Mattathias Antigonus was defeated by Herod (37 BCE).”

On p. 20 Regev wrote, “The [pro-] Hellenistic reform in Jerusalem was initiated in 175 BCE by Jason, the Zadokite high priest, who established a [Greek] gymnasium and *ephebeion* in Jerusalem, and transformed Jerusalem into a Hellenistic *polis* [Greek-like city-state].”

Also on pp. 20-21 Regev wrote, “The Maccabees did not oppose everything that had to do with Hellenism, but only specific aspects which they found threatening. They

opposed pagan cults and fought against the Seleucid troops who forced them to transgress the Jewish Torah. Their rebellion was against the political system which persecuted their religion and imposed paganism upon them.”

Regev documented some of his conclusions from archaeology. On p. 22 Regev wrote, “As observant Jews, the Maccabees rejected many of the components of Hellenistic culture, but they did embrace others.”

Also on p. 22 Regev wrote, “Greek language was an integral part of the Hasmonean cultural milieu. Without it the Hasmoneans could not communicate with the world.” This statement refers to the governmental elite, not the general population.

On p. 23 Regev wrote, “In light of the Hellenization of the Maccabees, the Hellenistic elements used by the Hasmoneans no longer seemed innovations, but rather the continuation and acceleration of an existing cultural trend, although it is necessary to note the limits of this usage.”

On p. 24 Regev wrote, “Scholars have concluded that the Hasmoneans conformed to the conventions of the Hellenistic world, but also accepted the restraints of Jewish law (e.g., no graven images). In evaluating the extent and motivation of their hellenization, it is appropriate to distinguish between conscious and unconscious influences. Some of the Hellenistic elements mobilized by the Hasmoneans were necessary for political survival (military tactics, armor, and mercenaries).”

Later, on p. 24 Regev wrote, “This does not mean that Hellenistic culture prevailed in Judaea and its environs outside of the Hasmonean court. Until the Herodian period it penetrated slowly and gradually,”

It is important to recognize that the Hasmoneans functioned as both kings and priests, although they never claimed to be kings because they knew they were not in the line of King David. They did have the office of high priests.

## **(F) Spiritual Condition of the Priests in Judah from c. 450 BCE onward**

The date of the writing of the prophet Malachi is not known, but is generally thought to be near the time of Nehemiah. The first two chapters of Malachi contain a rebuke against the Aaronic priesthood.

Mal 1:7-8 states that priests were offering defiled food on the altar: blind, lame, and sick animals.

Mal 2:2 warms the priests that if they do not improve their life and morality, YHWH would curse them and their blessings.

Mal 2:3, “Behold I am rebuking your offspring, and I will spread dung on your faces, the dung of your feasts, and someone will lift you away on it.”

Mal 2:8-9, “But you have turned from the way and have caused many to stumble in the Law, says YHWH of Hosts. [2:9] So I have made you despised and abased before all the people because you are not keeping My ways, but are showing partiality in the Law.”

Mal 2:10-16 criticizes both Judah and the priesthood for defiling the marriage laws and for the priests breaking the marriage covenant with their wives.

In Mal 2:3, 8-9 above, the literal translation is taken from Jonathan Gibson 2016.

The Maccabees revolted against the Seleucids to preserve their belief system, their faith. They risked their lives for their faith. Their personal lives were imperfect, and we know that power corrupts and wealth corrupts. The warnings against the priests in Malachi were a general warning against the priesthood from Nehemiah onward, and this includes the high priesthood of the Maccabees.

## [9] Dating the Sectarian Scrolls

There are two papers that most succinctly address the question of when the sectarian scrolls were written: Vermes 2007 and Wise 2003.

On p. 139 of Vermes 2007, we find, “Whatever transpires in the Scrolls from the personalities and events associated with the Dead Sea Community, it comes encoded in the biblical commentaries or *pesharim* and in the Damascus Document, which prefer the use of concealed language.” Later on this page, we see, “Neither the leaders of the sect, nor their enemies are ever called by their names. A little below on this page, “There is not a single person mentioned in the scrolls that unquestionably belongs to the first century AD.” Then Vermes wrote (same page), “The most significant contribution of the texts reviewed here is to suggest that the Qumran history which they reflect belong to the second and the first centuries BC and that the crucial event around

which sectarian history revolves is no longer ... the second century BC Hellenistic crisis which catapulted into prominence Judas, Jonathan, and Simon Maccabees, the presumed opponents of the Qumran Community, but the defeat of their Hasmonean successors by the army of the Kittim [Romans] led by the Great Pompey in 63 BC."

Now we turn to Wise 2003. Early (pp. 55-60) in his paper, Wise discusses the attempted use of paleography for dating, which is the analysis of styles of handwriting based upon the assumption that there is a chronological succession of handwriting styles that enables approximate dating of the documents.

Wise gives credit to Golb 1995 for writing correctly and extensively on the fallacy of attempting to use paleography for dating. Golb also mentions that there are hundreds of different handwriting identifications in the DSS showing that it is impossible for all the documents to have been written at Qumran. The writers of the DSS were educated and wrote elsewhere, and later the documents were brought to Qumran so that they would not be destroyed in the war with the Romans. Golb also theorized that the destroyed edifice at Qumran was a fortress. Cansdale 1997 (pp. 143, 214) further develops the fortress viewpoint of Golb, pointing out that Qumran was on a trade route that would require defense. Cansdale (pp. 124, 148) also points out that the ink wells at the Qumran site, instead of being evidence that writing the scrolls occurred at the site, were used to keep records as a customs post for goods brought along the trade route. This further shows how early assumptions were much later refuted, so that the majority consensus that was originally almost unanimous was seen to have just reason to be rejected. This further shows that picking up a random book on the scrolls can lead to false conclusions, and a broad overview and getting multiple views is safest before casting your thoughts into concrete.

On p. 249 Golb 1995 wrote, "The Paleography of the scrolls – in particular, the examination of the forms of individual letters to determine when the texts were copied – cannot be considered anything like an exact science or even a sophisticated art, since no manuscripts with dates are available, among the scrolls, to serve as standards of comparison." Golb expounds further details in his book.

The above quote from professor Golb was written long after the theory of the use of paleography became well accepted among scholars on the DSS, yet Golb has not been refuted and some scholars (example: Michael O. Wise) have fully accepted what he wrote. This is similar to the fact that the vast majority of biologists accept the theory of evolution, yet it makes no sense.

Wise points out (p. 63) that the approximate chronology given at the beginning of the Damascus Document (= CD) cannot possibly be correct. Then Wise gets to the heart of his approach. He examines all of the allusions to named individuals in the DSS, and there are nearly two dozen such allusions to compare with known events. All of these look back to prior history rather than events occurring as the scrolls were being written. The conclusion of Wise on p. 86, “Leaving aside whatever may have been the situation in the first century C.E., this study has shown that it is reasonable to locate the Teacher of Righteousness in the late second or early first century B.C.E. [thus c. 100 BCE], and that the high tide of his movement was the first century B.C.E. This reformulated chronology is at least as viable as the consensus view that has held sway since the 1950s [which was c. 150 BCE for the Teacher of Righteousness].”

## [10] Nature of the Priesthood in the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Calendar

### (A) Code words in the Dead Sea Scrolls

Vermes 2007 begins with a discussion of the term “Kittim”, saying on p. 121 that in the early days of studies on the DSS “a lively debate raged” over whether the Kittim were the Seleucid Greeks, the Ptolemaic Greeks, or the Romans!! These possible meanings span a long time, from Alexander to the first century. He first says that “‘Kittim’ was obviously a code word”, which is not intended to be taken from known literal history. For readers who like to take everything literally whenever possible, this can cause misconceptions and headaches.

Concerning code words in the DSS, pp. 174-175 of Schniedewind 2013 states, “One of the sectarian characteristics of Qumran Hebrew is its use of secret-code terminology as well as ideologically laden references to language. For example, the sectarian documents typically use opaque language like ‘the man of the lie,’ ‘the lion of Judah,’ ‘the seekers of smooth things,’ or ‘the wicked priest,’ rather than directly identifying people.”

Code words make it difficult to relate the texts to real history, and whole books have been written speculating on the meaning of some of the code words as they relate to real history. If you pick up a book on the DSS at random, a certain viewpoint may be vociferously argued, but the reader may not realize that this viewpoint is a matter of hot debate, so the reader may be mislead, and thereby engage in an argument as presented in that book. Unfortunately this presents problems for the casual reader. One goal of this document is to enable the reader to recognize that such issues exist, and caution the reader to avoid being hasty to jump to a conclusion.

## **(B) Review of Use of the Moon in the Calendar**

The reader must employ common sense in trying to fit the DSS into history. For example, the four books of Esther, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Zechariah all have the names of months that are used in the Babylonian calendar, but they are employed by Jews in the Persian empire. We know from archaeology that the Babylonian calendar months begin with the sighting of the new crescent of the moon. Since Jews were living in that society with the Babylonians first, and then the Persians, if those months represented time that conflicted with the Israelite calendar from before the Babylonian exile, then they could be accused of adopting a wrong calendar. Fortunately, we have Nehemiah 8 as already discussed above, to show that Ezra and Nehemiah began the first day of the seventh month correctly after they returned to Jerusalem. This shows that they did not adopt a false calendar from Babylon although they used the Babylonian month names without confusion living alongside the Babylonians who used those names. They would not have adopted those month names into their calendar if there was a severe conflict between the Babylonian calendar month names and the Israelite months before the exile. Scriptures above were presented to show that the moon is involved in the biblical calendar. Both Scripture and history show that the Yahad of the DSS were misled to think that the “true” calendar did not involve the moon. Common sense must prevail to dispense with false suppositions. The following is now repeated in criticism of the priests.

## **(C) How the Yahad could have Adopted the 364-Day Calendar**

Mal 2:3, “Behold I am rebuking your offspring, and I will spread dung on your faces, the dung of your feasts, and someone will lift you away on it.”

This does not explain what is meant by “the dung of your feasts”. It could simply mean that because of the priestly unrighteous behavior and their adoption of Hellenism, they would not be respected when they performed their ceremonies at the festivals. On the other hand, a charismatic leader, such as the Teacher of Righteousness, could deceive the Yahad into believing that Mal 2:3 meant that the calendar of the priests was corrupted, so they were mentally prepared to accept an alternative calendar.

The Pentateuch does not explain the use of the moon in the calendar, and assuming that the greatest emphasis in learning is on the Pentateuch, people could be misled into accepting a calendar that did not involve the moon. People who became literate in the Hebrew language through study did not have to have deep teaching in the remainder of

the Tanak. If they were not familiar with the history of the month names, and, without a concordance, perhaps they were not aware of the Scriptures that showed the use of the moon. The Book of Esther has the greatest use of Babylonian month names, and it also has the festival of Purim which is never mentioned in the DSS. The Book of Esther is the only book of the Tanak that is not found among the DSS.

By some unknown means the Book of Enoch and the Book of Jubilees were composed and then used as tools to convince the Yahad to accept that calendar by a charismatic leader. Perhaps the Teacher of Righteousness that is mentioned in some of the Qumran scrolls was such a leader. The above chapter on Rom 3:1-2 explains that the priesthood determined that the inspired Scriptures were the three divisions of the Hebrew Scriptures that became known as the Tanak. The Book of Enoch and the Book of Jubilees were not part of the Tanak, thus these books should have been rejected. This thinking was overruled by a charismatic teacher.

The priests were the most educated people from generation to generation along family lines among the Jews. It would be very difficult to believe that the solid tradition concerning the calendar would have caused a split in this practice among priests. Priests were at least highly trained in the Scriptures and would be familiar with those verses that upheld the use of the moon in the calendar. Besides, Num 10:8-10 specified the role of the priests in blowing two silver trumpets to announce the beginning of each month. It would be difficult to imagine that the priests, doing this for hundreds of years, would suddenly not know when to do this. Amos 8:5 and II Ki 4:23 show that at the beginning of each month Israel would have a national holiday. The whole nation did this. How could the whole nation suddenly forget when to do this? It does not make common sense to believe that the priesthood would become confused on the calendar that they had the responsibility to maintain based on Psalm 133.

## (D) The nature of the priesthood in the Yahad

Note the following verses concerning **priests**.

Ex 19:5-6, “Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is mine; [19:6] and you shall be to Me a kingdom of **priests** and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.”

Isa 61:3-6, “To grant to those who mourn in Zion, giving them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a spirit of

fainting, so they will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of YHWH, that He may be glorified. [61:4] Then they will rebuild the ancient ruins. They will raise up the former devastations. And they will repair the ruined cities, the desolations of many generations. [61:5] And strangers will stand and pasture your flocks, and foreigners will be your farmers and your vinedressers. [61:6] But you will be called the **priests** of YHWH; You will be spoken of as ministers of our Almighty. You will eat the wealth of nations, and in their riches you will be magnified.”

In both of the above passages the use of “priests” is literal rather than figurative, but not of descent from Aaron. To the Yahad, the priesthood in Jerusalem was unrighteous as seen in Malachi 1-2, and this disqualified the priests in the eyes of the Yahad.

**On p. 136 of Hempel 2009, she wrote, “A debate [among Qumran scholars] flared up already in the late 1980s about whether or not the groups behind the scrolls were Zadokites or not. I am thinking of Philip Davies’ plea to ‘stop talking Zadokite.’”**

The scholarly community does not change quickly so this controversy has not ended.

On p. 148 Hempel’s opinion is, “The designation ‘sons of Zadok’ is not used to refer to the priests in the *Damascus Document*, but apparently refers to the community as a whole. Finally we noted the absence of rivalry on the part of the sons of Aaron [in the DSS]. On my proposed reading of the material on priestly disqualifications, this section appears introspectively aware of the odd rotten apple in the group, but there is nothing in the *Damascus Document* that is anti-Aaronitic. Rather, it appears to be taken for granted that the priests and the sons of Aaron are one and the same thing.”

On p. 252 of Parry 2010 he wrote, “It is not certain whether any particular genealogical group of priests was even involved in the foundations of the community.”

The book by John J. Collins 2010 discusses some assumptions made by scholars involving the DSS. One assumption is that some of the leaders of the DSS were Zadokite priests.

On p. 47 of Collins, he wrote, “In any case it is unsafe to infer from CD [= the *Damascus Document* (specifically CD 5)] that the members of the movement [Yahad] were Zadokite priests.”

On p. 9 of Collins 2010, he wrote, “This text [4QMMT of the DSS] states explicitly that the reasons for separation [of the Yahad from authorities near the Temple] concerned the interpretation of religious law (*halakah*) and calendrical differences.

There is no mention of any dispute about the high priesthood. Neither is the high priesthood mentioned as an issue in the *Damascus Document* [= CD], which discusses several points of dispute that led to the formation of a new covenant [by the Yahad]. The Wicked Priest is mentioned only in the *pesharim* [= commentaries in the DSS on several prophetic books of the Tanak]. Even there, he [the Wicked Priest] is never actually said to be illegitimate [by ancestral lineage].”

On p. 51 of Collins 2010, he wrote, “The *Damascus Rule* is tantalizingly vague about historical information. It is apparent that the movement existed for some time before the Teacher of Righteousness came along.” Later on the same page he wrote, “Many ideas about the movement that have gained wide currency in recent years appear to be ill-founded. It is not apparent that 'sons of Zadok' was a genealogical designation for the members, or any segment of them, only an honorific title with reference to Ezekiel. Neither is there any reference to a dispute about the high priesthood. The theory that the arrival of the Teacher [of Righteousness] led to a split between the Teacher's community and the rest of the parent movement has very little evidence to support it. The *Damascus Rule*, taken on its own, provides little basis for identifying this movement as 'Essene.'”

On pp. 61-62 Collins states, “One of the most popular theories of the origin of the sect [Yahad] holds that it originated in reaction to the disruption of the Zadokite high priesthood at the time of the Maccabean revolt, and the subsequent usurpation of the office by the Hasmoneans. On this theory it would make sense that Zadokite priests would have figured very prominently in the movement initially, but that they would have faded from prominence after the first generation. But this reconstruction of the origin of the sect is based primarily on inferences from the *pesharim*, or biblical commentaries. Other texts that discuss the causes of separation, such as the *Damascus Rule* and 4QMMT, do not refer to a dispute about the high priesthood at all. We have seen in the previous chapter that the reference to the 'sons of Zadok' in CD 3:21-4:4 is a biblical allusion, applied to 'the chosen of Israel' as an honorific title, and not necessarily an indication of priestly genealogy. Consequently, the idea that the initial leaders of the movement were disaffected Zadokite priests rests on doubtful foundations.”

Collins takes up the difficulty in attempting to extract valid history on the basis of the DSS. Explicit current events are not present in the scrolls except for a few references to people mentioned in pp. 98-99. On p. 101 Collins wrote, “Rather the issue [of identifying descriptions in the scrolls with known events] is that the historical information they provide is oblique and indirect – and usually in code. They provide no coherent narrative to put the allusions in historical context. It is not the purpose of the *pesharim* to provide historical information as such. Rather, it is their purpose to

reassure the members of the *yahad* that history was unfolding as had been foretold by the prophets, and that they would be vindicated in the not too distant future.” On pp. 98-99 Collins mentions the few explicit references in the DSS to known historical people, and these are all during the first century BCE. On p. 120 Collins wrote, “Many of the arguments for dating the Teacher [of Righteousness] and the Wicked Priest to the mid-second century BCE can no longer be accepted. Most significantly, the theory that the Teacher's movement originated in a conflict over succession to the high priesthood is without basis in the texts. Once this is recognized, there is no reason to suppose that the conflict between the Teacher and the Wicked Priest (or the dispute with the man of the lie) took place at the beginning of the history of the sect. The long-accepted identification of the Wicked Priest with Jonathan Maccabee suffers from the anomalous gap of more than fifty years that separates him from any other identifiable person or event reflected in the *pesharim*, which were probably composed in the lifetime of Hyrcanus II.”

On p. 56 of Davies 1987 he wrote, “Thus no basis exists in CD [The Damascus Document] for believing that the community was founded by a ‘Zadok’, or led by Zadokites, or claimed any special attachment to Zadokites or their cause. Such a statement does not mean that subsequently the Zadodite label could not be erroneously attached to this community by Qaraites as it has been by modern scholars.” Then on p. 72 he wrote, “Accordingly, we might be better advised to speak of the non-Zadokite nature of the community at Qumran. At all events, we had better forget the ‘Zadokite’ label until we can find evidence which tells a different story.”

The biblical books in Hebrew that are found among the DSS do not have the ancient Hebrew grammar compared to the MT. The priests in the Temple had the official copies with the ancient Hebrew grammar. This indicates that the Yahad did not have members who were trained to make exact copies of the Tanak, and this is indirect evidence that the Yahad did not have Aaronic priests. Aaronic priests would have accepted the role of the moon in the calendar.

**The views expressed above were based upon the idea of priests in Ex 19:6 and Isa 61:6 and the DSS themselves. Now that there is reason to serious doubt that any of the Yahad were actually priests descended from Aaron, it is easier to make sense about how the Yahad could be deceived on the calendar. The reason for their deception is that they were not priests by lineage and did not have the educated background of history and the in-depth understanding of the use of the moon for the calendar.**

Now the proper groundwork has been laid for the next chapter.

## [11] Were the Maccabean High Priests of the Line of Zadok?

This chapter will discuss much about the Zadokite priesthood between Ezra and the Destruction in 70.

Modern scholars refer to the Temple that is described in a vision to Ezekiel in the last nine chapters of Ezekiel (40-48) as the Third Temple because it is a vision of the future that follows the Second Temple that was destroyed in 70. These chapters also mention a personality called the prince who has a prominent role at the time of the realization of this vision, and certain laws specifically apply to the prince that are not in the Law of Moses where no such prince is mentioned. Ezek 34:24; 37:24-25 show that the prince is King David who is resurrected in the future.

In these chapters of Ezekiel, Zadok is mentioned in 40:46; 43:19; 44:15; and 48:11. Ezek 44:15-16 indicates that in this future Third Temple, the priests will be of the line of Zadok. **There is no statement in Scripture that before the Third Temple is built, all legitimate priests must be of the line of Zadok. King David never made a statement to require that all future high priests should be from the line of Zadok.** Lines of descent of high priests into the first century is not preserved in the historical record.

With this recognition, the question of whether the Maccabean high priests were Zadokites should not really matter, but it will be discussed nevertheless.

The previous chapter showed that there is good reason to believe that the foundational members of the Yahad were not Aaronic priests regardless of the wording used in the DSS. They considered themselves spiritual priests. Their calendar should be called the Jubilees calendar or the Yahad calendar instead of the Zadokite calendar which it is never called in the DSS.

Were the priests of the Second Temple really non-Zadokite?

Num 25:10-13 shows that from Moses onward the Aaronic priesthood should come through the line of Phinehas. I Chron 6:3-8 shows that the line of Phinehas went down to Zadok. But there were other priests from Phinehas besides Zadok, and they were legitimate also.

The claim has been made that the line through Zadok was discontinued when members of the Hasmonean family (the Maccabees) were made high priests.

In I Maccabees 2:1 it states, “In those days Mattathias son of John son of Simeon, a priest of the family of Joarib, moved from Jerusalem and settled in Modein.”

Commentaries on this verse are in agreement that this Joarib is the same Joarib that is mentioned in Neh 11:10 as well as the name that is typically spelled Jehoiarib in I

Chron 24:7. In I Chron 24:7-19 lots were cast to determine the order of priestly service. It is not stated whether this order was to be kept rotating permanently without synchronization with the calendar year or whether there was to be a pattern with the calendar. Rabbinic writings from long after the Temple was destroyed in 70 have a viewpoint on this, but I do not accept those writings as having preserved accurate history from the early first century. In I Chron 24:7 the first lot chose Jehoiarib (= Joarib). The second letter *hay* (= sound of "h") is omitted in Neh 11:10, and this has caused the difference in spelling. This is similar to the omission of the second letter *hay* in Neh 8:17 for "Joshua son of Nun" compared to Josh 1:1 where *hay* is present.

The journal article by Schofield & VanderKam 2005 has the title "Were the Hasmoneans Zadokites?" This article reviews some recent speculations based upon interpretations of some of the DSS. On p. 83 of this article we note, "It is more in tune with the Qumran evidence [this is somewhat implied, but not stated directly] to say that, while the community [= the Yahad] opposed Hasmonean ruler-priests, there is no surviving indication that they [the Yahad] considered them *genealogically* unfit for the high priesthood. And since we know that the community was concerned about legitimacy, they probably would have mentioned the matter if they thought the Hasmoneans were *genealogically illegitimate* for the high priesthood." The last conclusion on p. 87 states, "As a result, we have considerable reason to believe that the Hasmoneans were a Zadokite family and no evidence to the contrary."

Babota 2014 is a full book devoted to this matter and related questions. On p.276 we note, "There seems to be sufficient evidence that by the Hasmonean times the priests would regard themselves as 'sons of Aaron' rather than 'sons of Zadok.' The latter reference is found for the first time in the visionary language of Ezek 40-48." Below this Babota continues, "Reference to the 'sons of Zadok' is found nowhere else in the Hebrew Bible. The appellation 'sons of Zadok' reappears instead in several DSS." On p. 286 Babota states, "Many scholars have assumed that the Hasmoneans through their revolt [against the Seleucids] put an end to the 'Zadokite' line of high priests. This assumption was rejected here [by Babots], among others, for three primary reasons..." The interested reader should consult this source. On p. 284 Babota concluded, "In the previous chapters it has been shown that the institution of the Hasmonean high priesthood was not looked at with favor by many priests. The present chapter made it clearer that the main reason for this was not connected primarily with the priestly descent." That present chapter (pp. 269-284) is titled "The Hasmonean High Priests and their Priestly Descent". This chapter mentioned criticism of the moral character and promotion of Hellenization of the Hasmoneans. No evidence beyond speculation (that is, no primary source evidence) by modern scholars is presented toward criticism of their priestly lineage. In this chapter Babota cites Schofield & VanderKam 2005 mentioned in the previous paragraph.

In Regev 2013 the context is the Hasmoneans and the section on pp. 120-124 is titled, "Priestly Descent and the Zadokite Problem". On p. 121 Regev wrote, "It is widely argued that both the Pharisees and the Qumran sectarians criticized the Hasmonean high priesthood as illegitimate since they were not Zadokites. However, this is merely a scholarly assumption, since no such charge is documented or even implied." Regev goes on to explain that the Pharisees wanted the Hasmonean high priest Hyrcanus to resign his office on the basis that his mother was a captive and might have been raped, so that perhaps Hyrcanus was illegitimate. This was a speculative charge that had nothing to do with descent from Zadok by the whole Hasmonean line.

On pp. 213-214 of Grabbe 2003 we find, "The answer to our initial question thus has to be broken down into several aspects. Were the high priests in the Second Temple period thought of as descendants of Zadok? Yes, they probably were, by almost everyone. At the same time, there is no evidence that the high priestly line (at least until the Maccabees) was regarded as uniquely Zadokite. Rather, *all altar priests* were regarded as 'sons of Zadok' by some Jews, if not by most." Later on p. 214 Grabbe continues, "The view that the high priestly line was the exclusive Zadokite line, and in that way differed from other priests, is nowhere attested in our sources. In that sense, the high priests of the Second Temple did not bear the exclusive or particular designation of 'sons of Zadok' or "Zadokite'."

## [12] Was the Yahad of the DSS the Essenes?

In the early first century Philo of Alexandria wrote the essay *On the Contemplative Life* in which he described the cohesive group that is put into Latin transliteration as Therapeutae. He also wrote the essay *That Every Good Person is Free* (paragraphs 75-91 fit our context) and the essay *Hypothetica* (paragraphs 11.1-8 fit our context) in which he described the cohesive group that is put into Latin transliteration as Essenes. All three of these essays are found in Philo\_9.

Pliny the Elder briefly describes a cohesive group that he calls Essenes in Pliny\_5 paragraph 73.

Josephus describes a cohesive group of Jews that he refers to as Essenes in several places and he also compares Essenes with Pharisees and Sadducees.

Mason 2012 takes up the question of whether the Essenes are the Yahad of the DSS and compares the Essenes as described by Josephus, Philo, and Pliny. On p. 249 Mason wrote, "In lived reality, the Essenes either were or were not the people of the Qumran scrolls. I do not know whether they were, and I do not see how anyone else can know on the evidence now available." Later on that page he wrote, "I have interacted with the [Essene = Yahad] hypothesis in the body of the essay because it tends to overreach by configuring the Essene evidence in advance, and in my conclusions because I am

expected to comment on the implications of this preliminary study for larger coordinating hypotheses.” Thus Mason indicates that others bias their thinking because they want Essenes to be the Yahad. Mason refers to both Pliny and Josephus as statesmen (p. 241) who represent the bulk of the Jewish community, and he asks other modern historians to explain why these two statesmen would speak so highly of these Essenes if they were the Yahad who opposed the calendar of the Temple (p. 248). Mason does show significant differences in the Essenes as described by Josephus, Philo, and Pliny. There is no clear way to explain why these three primary sources disagree on the characteristics of the Essenes.

On p. 88 of Regev 2010 he wrote, “A comparison of *I Enoch* and *Jubilees* with the Essenes as portrayed by Philo, Josephus, and Pliny results in a picture of very general similarities and numerous and fundamental dissimilarities between the Essenes and the groups behind the earlier documents [DSS], which seem quite remote from them in terms of social outlook.” Regev mentions specific details to prove his point. Thus Regev shows problems in identifying the Yahad with Essenes.

### [13] The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Hebrew Bible

Many of the biblical scrolls of the DSS are like the Masoretic Text except for the first century contemporary grammar in the scrolls that differs from the exact MT. Some of these biblical scrolls are like the Samaritan Pentateuch, and some have mixed characteristics that are not easily categorized. P. 177 of VanderKam 2001 shows that there are fragments of five biblical scrolls written in Greek: Exodus, two of Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. P. 364 of Joosten 2010 shows that there are three biblical scrolls written in Aramaic: Leviticus and two of Job. **Thus only 8 of the 220 biblical scrolls are not written in Hebrew.**

Concerning the occurrence of biblical books accepted by Jews as inspired, among the DSS we note the following on p. 56 of Brooke 2007, “At the time of the Qumran community there was no list of authoritative works [that is known in preserved history before Josephus wrote after the Temple was destroyed in 70], nor were they available in a book or on a single scroll. Nevertheless it is evident that all the books that were later made canonical [= accepted to be inspired by Jews] were known at Qumran, as even the phraseology of Esther is apparent in some of the sectarian compositions. Some books are better attested than others. Esther is not extant in a separate MS, perhaps its attention to the festival of Purim, which was not marked by the community who put the library [= contents of the 11 caves] together, resulting in it being largely ignored.”

Emanuel Tov from Hebrew University in Jerusalem is a specialist in the Hebrew and Greek of the DSS, the texts from the Judean desert, the Septuagint, and the MT and has

written books and journal articles on these matters. Note that the reference to the Judean desert is not the DSS. The Judean desert refers to the caves to the west of the Dead Sea while the DSS refers to the area of Qumran at the northwest corner of the Dead Sea.

On p. 41 of Tov 2012 he wrote, “The fact that we can pre-date [by about 1000 years before the Leningrad Codex of c. 1000 CE] the text of MT is very important, but not revolutionary as scholars have assumed for a long time that MT must have been in use in the last centuries B.C.E. and the first centuries C.E. since the biblical text quoted in rabbinic literature is identical to MT.”

On p. 42 of Tov 2012 he wrote, “All the texts that were found at sites in the Judean Desert other than Qumran display complete identity with the medieval tradition of MT.”

The Dead Sea Scrolls have other changes to their Hebrew Bibles besides the contemporary grammar. These are not faithful copies. The marks of a faithful copy are exactness to the original in the copy.

## [14] The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Septuagint

The Pentateuch of the Septuagint (LXX) was translated from Hebrew into Greek c. 270 BCE in Alexandria, Egypt to satisfy the needs of the Jews in Egypt who no longer had a knowledge of Hebrew. Since a small minority of Jews in Judaea in the first century spoke Greek, and this is reduced if the requirement of a large vocabulary is expected, the LXX would not have been used in Judaea except perhaps in a coastal area which might have been largely Greek speaking. In the first century, outside of Palestine Hebrew was not used, so that the LXX would have been used except to the east of the Mediterranean Sea where only Aramaic was used by the general population.

When the LXX was initially translated from the Hebrew, that Hebrew text from which it was translated has been called the **Vorlage**. We do not possess the Vorlage, so there is only scholarly speculation concerning the exact contents of the Vorlage. Except for small fragments of the LXX, no significant amount of even a single book exists before c. 350 CE, over 600 years after the original translation. From c. 350 CE we have hundreds of handwritten copies of the LXX that have many variations among them.

Now the relationship between the DSS and the LXX will be discussed. The surviving handwritten copies of books of the LXX were not copied by Jews, but by Christians,

and these copies have numerous differences. There are several small segments of the LXX found from before c. 350 CE and we have some passages from the writings of Philo of Alexandria who used the LXX and also from the writings of Origen who used the LXX.

Although we do not have any parts of the LXX from the first century when the New Testament (NT) was written, we can compare quotations from the Tanak in the NT with those same passages in the LXX from Philo. **From this comparison, some specialists in the LXX and Philo have concluded that even as early as the first century there were multiple versions of the LXX.** The oldest piece of the LXX that we have is about 100 words from Deuteronomy that dates to c. 150 BCE.

The question of whether any of the Hebrew scrolls of the Hebrew Bible found among the Dead Sea Scrolls were significantly closer to the Septuagint than the MT, has been studied and summarized by Emanuel Tov in several publications.

Tov 1995 and 1998 discusses the different types of biblical texts found among the Dead Sea Scrolls, including relationships to the assumed Vorlage (1995, pp. 96-97). Tov mentions that among the Dead Sea Scrolls there is one Hebrew text of Jeremiah, one Hebrew text of Deuteronomy, and one partial Hebrew text of Leviticus that show a strong affinity with the assumed Vorlage, using the Septuagint for this assumed Vorlage.

Tov 2012 discusses this again in more detail on pp. 3-17. He wrote on p. 14, “The description of the character of the [Hebrew] texts [of the Bible from Qumran] that are close to the LXX in the various Scripture books shows that they share only a limited number of features; therefore, it would be inappropriate to speak of a Septuagintal text-type, Septuagintal features, or the like.” This paper discusses seven scrolls that have some aspects that show different degrees of affinity to the Septuagint, but only one scroll of Jeremiah and one of Samuel has significant affinity. These two scrolls are still not close enough to the Septuagint to have been used to make the Septuagint translation, according to Tov.

**What the above shows is that although there are a wide variety of kinds of biblical texts found among the Dead Sea Scrolls so that those who gathered these Hebrew texts seem to have had no prejudice about what types of texts to collect, none of the scrolls shows a copy of the Vorlage that could be used as the source to reasonably accurately translate the Septuagint as we have it.**

## [15] Some Rare Hebrew Biblical Words used in the Dead Sea Scrolls

The DSS provides examples of the use of certain rarely used Hebrew words in the Tanak with additional contexts that help to pinpoint their meaning as understood in the first century. In other words, it helps to understand the Bible in some contexts.

For example, the Hebrew words *aviv* (as in Ex 9:31; Lev 2:14) and *tkufah* (as in Ex 34:22; II Chr 24:23; Ps 19:6) occur in the DSS. The *Dictionary of Classical Hebrew* (eight volumes) shows where these words and others from the Hebrew Bible occur in the DSS.

In Ex 9:31 the word *aviv* refers to barley that is not yet ripe; otherwise it would have been harvested instead of it being ruined. In The Temple Scroll (11QT 19:7) *aviv* refers to bread made from *aviv*. It indicates that *aviv* has a wide range of meaning in reference to grains.

In the book chapter by Johann Maier 1992 one of the DSS is discussed that contains the Hebrew word *tkufah*. On p. 146 Maier wrote, “The Songs [of the Sabbath] themselves are attached to the thirteen Sabbaths of one quarter or season (*tqufah*) of a year, according to the editor the first quarter (the Nisan season) only.” Here we see the Hebrew word *tkufah* used for the season of spring, which begins with the vernal equinox and ends with the summer solstice. This shows that in the culture of the first century in Judea the word *tkufah* was used for the season that began with the vernal equinox and ended with the summer solstice. In light of this note the same use of *tkufah* in the following verse.

II Chr 24:23, “And it came to be during [the spring] season [= *tkufah*] of the year [the] army of Aram marched against him.”

## [16] The Book of Enoch and the Calendar

The Book of Jubilees was discussed above where it was mentioned that there are 14 copies of this book found among the DSS, all written in Hebrew, and this book is mentioned in The Damascus Document. This book was authoritative among the Yahad and it champions the 364-day calendar.

There is another scroll among the DSS called The Book of Enoch which also claims the 364-day calendar. This book has four copies in the DSS and is not mentioned by name in any of the DSS. A major difference between the Book of Enoch and the Book of Jubilees is that Enoch does keep its annual calendar pegged to the vernal equinox, but Jubilees does not. Thus Jubilees is more realistic because it allows its year to slowly

drift recognizing that 364 days is a little short of the solar year. Thus Enoch is of lesser authority than the Jubilees in the eyes of the Yahad.

Enoch\_72\_82 by VanderKam 2012 is a careful translation with commentary of the astronomical chapters (chapters 72 to 82 which includes the calendar) of the Ethiopic Book of Enoch. Its very detailed 72 page *Introduction* to the ancient copies and their languages along with a summary of its contents appears on pp. 335-407. On p. 335 VanderKam wrote that among the DSS, four **partial** copies of the astronomical chapters have been found, and these are written in Aramaic rather than Hebrew. According to VanderKam the original text was written in Aramaic, but there is not sufficient material from the Aramaic texts to construct the astronomical chapters as a whole. For this reason, VanderKam used the version from Ethiopia in the Ge'ez language (p. 350) as the basis for a translation. Scholarly opinion is that the original Aramaic text was translated into Greek (no longer preserved), and then the Greek version was translated into Ge'ez. In this 72 page *Introduction*, VanderKam gave no hint that any copy of the The Book(s) of Enoch was written in Hebrew. On p. 351 he wrote that we cannot have confidence that the Ethiopic version is the equivalent of the original Aramaic version, but that is what we have available for a full translation, and hence all discussion of the Book of Enoch is from this Ethiopic Book of Enoch. The Ethiopic Book of Enoch, also called I Enoch.

Only chapter 72 provides a clear account of the calendar, within verses 6-32. In Enoch\_72\_82 chapter 72 is translated on pp. 416-417 with the commentary ending on p. 419. In chapter 72 the word “month” only occurs twice: once in 72:6 and once in 72:7. In both places it states “first month”, so that the beginning of the discussion of the calendar is with the first month.

This chapter has an unusual method to show a transition from one month to the next month, without using the word “month”. Each full day (= daytime plus night) is given 18 parts of time. The length of daytime compared to night is stated as an idealized whole number of parts of daytime and a whole number of parts of night, with the sum always equal to 18. When it states a transition to a different number of parts of daytime compared to night, then another month has passed by, yet without stating the word “month”. However, when doing this, the text also uses the number 30 or 31. The reader is left to wonder whether the thirty-first day is within the month or simply an extra day between two months in the four times this happens. However, the final effect is to produce 12 months of day lengths 30-30-31, four successive times. This yields a year of 364 days.

For the first three months it states that daytime increases in length, and at the end of this time, daytime is 12 parts and night is 6 parts. In the context this is the greatest

length of daytime at the summer solstice. This implies that three months earlier was the vernal equinox. Each month (without using the word “month”, but only a transition in the comparison of the length of daytime compared to night along with mention of 30 or 31) shows the following pattern. Eight months use the number 30 days, and the other four months (in the order 3, 6, 9, and 12) state 31 days. On the thirty-first day of each of months 3, 6, 9, and 12 there is an equinox or a solstice. The first month begins with the vernal equinox as seen in the verse below.

**Verse 72:32 states, “On that day [day 31 of month 12] the night decreases and is nine parts [of time], with a daytime of nine parts [of time]. Daytime is equal to the night, and the year is exactly 364 days.”**

Verse 32 above is *Enoch's* description of the vernal equinox without directly using words for the vernal equinox. In ancient times it was assumed that daytime and night were exactly equal in length at the equinoxes, but they did not possess any time measuring instrument that was sufficiently accurate to verify their imagination. With the invention of the pendulum clock in 1656 by Christiaan Huygens, there was finally a means to show that the day upon which daytime and night are equal varies according to the earth's latitude due to refraction of light through the atmosphere. Ancient people did determine the day of the equinoxes using the shadow of the sun, not by measuring time, and such sun shadow methods do not vary with the latitude. A precise measure of the length of time is foreign to Scripture because it is not a light from a heavenly body. Near the equinoxes the length of daylight changes by about two minutes from one day to the next. Ancient water clocks did not have such an accuracy. Properly made water clocks from ancient Babylon were able to *average* measuring the time of an observed lunar eclipse by an error of eight minutes.

Through the use of time measuring in the Book of Enoch, it is using an unscientific measurement of the change in seasons because the interpretation of time measuring varies with the latitude. It is understood that anciently, the method to determine the length of daytime and night is through the use of water clocks. It is in Babylon that the astronomer-astrologers used water clocks to quantify astronomical and daily time relationships. On pp. 373-390 of the *Introduction*, VanderKam discusses the apparent dependency of the Book of Enoch on the two Babylonian documents named MUL.APIN and EAE according to several scholars familiar them. These Babylonian documents mention the length of daytime and night according to the season, and this is what is used in the Book of Enoch. On p. 377 there is indication that these documents go back to c. 1000 BCE, the time of King Solomon.

**The following in the Book of Enoch has been understood to be recognition that because of the sins of humankind, normal conditions of the seasons will not appear when expected. This is taken to be notification by the Book of Enoch, according to**

**modern commentators, that a year of 364 days will appear to be not working as expected. Enoch's cause for this will be punishment for sin rather than a mistake in the length of the year by Enoch.**

It should be noted that during the years 747 BCE to 75 CE there are almost 200 lunar eclipse events recorded on Babylonian clay tablets, many of them also having the time of day of the eclipse based upon water clocks. These eclipse records are verified by modern computers with astronomy software making a very minor adjustment for the reduction in the rotation of the earth due to the pull of the moon on the oceans and other natural factors. The resulting change in the length of a year from that time until today does not amount to one second.

Enoch 80:2, “In the days of the sinners the rainy seasons will grow shorter, their seed will become late on their land and in their fields. Everything on the earth will change and will not appear at their times, the rain will be withheld, and the sky will stand still.

80:3, At those times the fruit of the earth will be late and will not grow at its normal time, and the fruit of the trees will be withheld at its (normal) time.”

The three primary reasons for the belief that the Book of Enoch was written before the Book of Jubilees are that: (1) On pp. 398-399 of the *Introducton*, Jubilees 4:17-19 is quoted where it names the person Enoch who wrote about astronomy and arranged the months; (2) Enoch was written in Aramaic rather than Hebrew, although Jubilees was written in Hebrew, the preferred language of the Yahad; and (3) Enoch pegs the annual calendar to begin with the vernal equinox, which, using its 364-day calendar, significantly drifts away from the vernal equinox as the years pass by, yet Jubilees does **not** peg its annual calendar to the vernal equinox, so that the calendar in Jubilees recognizes the shortfall in the 364-day year. Both Enoch and Jubilees indicate that their own year does not have more than 364 days, and there is nothing in the ancient texts and the DSS to make any adjustment to make their year longer.

JUBIL 4:17, “He [Enoch] was the first of humanity who was born on the earth who learned (the art of) writing, instruction, and wisdom and who wrote down in a book the signs of the sky in accord with the fixed patterns of their months so that humanity would know the seasons of the years according to the fixed patterns of each of their months. [4:18] He was the first to write a testimony. He testified to humanity in the generations of the earth. The weeks of the jubilees he related, and made known the days of the years, the months he arranged, and related the sabbaths of the years, as we had told him.”

Concerning the flood in the days of Noah, where Gen 7:11, 24; 8:3-4 shows that five months lasted 150 days, we note JUBIL 5:27, “The waters remained standing on the surface of the earth for five months – 150 days.” Thus *Jubilees* agrees with Genesis.

The above is a contradiction to the sequence of month lengths in both *Jubilees* and *Enoch* where every third month has 31 days, which would make five months equal 151 days instead of 150 days.

It is a mistake to hypothesize that the Yahad (or *Jubilees* or *Enoch*) did make an adjustment of some type of intercalation to keep the vernal equinox where it ought to be because both say that the year is 364 days. There is every reason to believe that the Yahad did follow a 364-day year based on their documents. It is peculiar that neither Josephus nor Philo mention this about unusual Jewish sects.

Jude 14 does mention a prophecy of Enoch, but this does not say how this was known by Jude, nor does it mention the Book of Enoch. A quotation from a non-biblical source does not prove the inspiration of the non-biblical source.

## [17] Astronomical Science in the Dead Sea Scrolls

In Ben-Dov 2003 there is a discussion of some calendric texts found among the Dead Sea scrolls. The three calendric texts that contain astronomical elements are labeled 4Q320, 4Q321, and 4Q321a. On p. 134 he wrote, “In contrast to the Mesopotamian and Greek [astronomical] disciplines, no systematic ‘diary’ or almanac was kept in Qumran, tracking concrete appearances of major heavenly corpora.” Then on p. 135 he wrote, “The lists of lunar phenomena according to the *mishmarot* cycle [the cycle of priestly courses] are not based on observational data, and are due to produce an ever-growing difference from the actual movements of the moon and sun.” The reason for this growing difference is that these particular scrolls from the Dead Sea caves use an exactly repetitive cycle which does not exactly agree with the actual cycle of the moon, so that it deviates more as time passes. This is not based on mathematical astronomy in the sense of Babylonian or Greek science.

In Ben-Dov 2012 the calendar among these scrolls is discussed in detail, and the following is a summary. A schematic calendar is a calendar that uses a unit of a 24-hour day with cycles that exactly repeat without regard to observable phenomena of astronomy. The triennial cycle found among the Dead Sea Scrolls is a schematic calendar that is labeled a lunar calendar, yet it is not based upon an observable lunar cycle. It has two years of 12 months followed by one year of 13 months. The 12 months alternate between 29 and 30 days so that it has exactly 354 days. The 13th month in the third year had 30 days. Hence the total days in a triennial cycle is  $(3 \times 354) + 30 = 3 \times 364$ . It will make Passover drift into the winter at the average rate of 1.25 days per year. It is fake to claim that this is borrowed from the Babylonian calendar which is not schematic. The triennial cycle has a month length of 29.5135. A true lunar cycle has a length of 29.5306.

The triennial cycle calendar has nothing in common with the Babylonian calendar, and it is not based on observable astronomy. On the other hand these few texts among the Dead Sea Scrolls that favor the triennial cycle also mention three astronomical observable items that are called the Lunar Three. The Lunar Three are not used in the calendar within those scrolls. The Lunar Three are discussed in detail in Ben-Dov and Horowitz 2005. The Lunar Three are mentioned as three items that the Babylonians recorded, but these are recorded in Babylonian documents named MUL.APIN and EAE, which are not mathematical in nature. By some unknown means the Lunar Three became known to some writers of the Dead Sea Scrolls. This is a mystery, yet it does not prove that they knew any mathematical astronomy.

P. 181 of Ben-Dove 2012 states, “The practice of some Yahad scribes to record three pieces of lunar data is not a reduplication of the Babylonian discipline, but rather an independent phenomenon.”

Ben-Dov later made further comments on this. On p. 231 of Ben-Dov 2014 he states, “Nonmathematical Babylonian astronomy formed a *koine* [= common culture] of popular astronomy throughout many parts of the ancient world: Persia, India, Greece, Egypt, and as it seems now [from the Dead Sea Scrolls], also Israel.” Later on the page, we find, “The crown jewel of Babylonian astronomy, the Astronomical Cuneiform Texts (ACT), are not represented at all in the Jewish material.” Then on p. 232 Ben-Dov wrote, “The extant material from the Jewish apocalyptic tradition seems to attest to the transmission of popular astronomy only. It suggests an acquaintance with a *koine* of originally Mesopotamian science, translated into Aramaic and practiced by various ancient Near Eastern cultures.”

## [18] Qumran Hebrew

How does the use of the Hebrew language in the DSS compare with SBH and LBH? That is the subject of this chapter.

On p. 178 of Schniedewind 2013 we note, “Applying these same observations to Qumran Hebrew, we should expect that it was at the same time a continuation of LBH and a reaction against the colloquial languages spoken in Palestine – both Aramaic and Rabbinic Hebrew.”

On p. 184 we note, “Qumran Hebrew is conspicuous in its paucity of loanwords.” In other words, it tries to avoid Greek and Aramaic borrowings.

On p. 186 we note, “It is impossible to fully account for the linguistic peculiarities of QH [= Qumran Hebrew] by supposing that it was simply an attempt to imitate biblical Hebrew [SBH]. We must dismiss the idea that QH is simply archaizing.”

## [19] The Teacher of Righteousness

The only person who is singled out as an authoritative leader by the *Yahad* living among themselves is called the Teacher of Righteousness.

The *Damascus Document* (CD) has multiple fragments whose pieces comprise the total original that does not appear in any single document. The Geniza has a more complete copy than many fragments.

On p. 52 of WAC, Geniza CD A:1:11, “So He raised up for them a Teacher of Righteousness to guide them in the way of His heart.”

On p. 60 of WAC, Geniza CD B:20:13-15, “Now from the day the Beloved Teacher passed away to the destruction of all the warriors who went back to the Man of the Lie will be about forty years.”

On p. 60 of WAC Geniza CD B:20:27-28, “But all who hold fast to these rules, going out and coming in according to the Law, always obeying the Teacher...”

On pp. 60-61 of WAC Geniza CD B:20:31-33, [All] “who discipline themselves by the old laws by which the members of the *Yahad* were governed and listen attentively to the Teacher of Righteousness, not abandoning the correct laws when they hear them – they will rejoice and be happy and exultant.”

These pieces show the position of the Teacher of Righteousness within the *Yahad*. It shows the problem with following a person rather than putting all emphasis on the inspired Tanak. While several scrolls mention the Teacher of Righteousness, none add more to his life. Current scholars date him to c. 100 BCE.

## [20] Attempted Synthesis

Attempts to date the history of the *Yahad* have shown biased opinions due to a combination of factors. Sometimes paleography is involved, but this should be rejected. In the early years of study scholars have made unfounded assumptions such as the guess that the Maccabees needed to be Zadokite priests, but they were not, so that the

Yahad originated with the Maccabean allegedly illegitimate high priests. This whole idea is unfounded, so it must be rejected. Michael Wise 2003 discussed above, approximately dated the Teacher of Righteousness to 100 BCE. It was mentioned that he was not the originator of the Yahad, but was prominent fairly early and helped it to grow.

With the penetration of Hellenism and the recognition that the high priests in Jerusalem were living unrighteous lives, dissatisfaction of the priestly establishment in Jerusalem became widespread, thus many zealous people were prone to sectarianism. Perhaps c. 120 BCE the movement began with the belief that the calendar of the Book of Jubilees was correct. Perhaps this document was composed c. 140 BCE. Perhaps the Book of Enoch was composed c. 150 BCE.

It is not known how the Yahad dwindled. This movement expected a great End Time war with Messianic deliverance for victory, which failed to occur, and this depressed the movement. It is also possible that some better educated members finally realized that the moon actually was used in the true calendar, and thus the sect disbanded. Both the Sadducean priests and the Pharisees accepted the use of the moon for the calendar.

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