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A TENTATIVE RECONSTRUCTION

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## THE PRE-HISTORY AND RELATIONSHIPS OF THE PHARISEES, SADDUCEES AND ESSENES: A TENTATIVE RECONSTRUCTION

THIS article, the last of a series of four in recent issues of *Revue de Qumrân*, has been prompted in particular by four considerations:

(i) the age of the *Enoch* manuscripts from Qumran shows that the earliest part of this literature, with its many Essene traits, goes back behind the Hellenizing crisis of the second century B.C., which has usually been supposed to be the period of origin of the three Jewish schools;

(ii) the *Book of Dreams*, the fourth of the five books making up *1 Enoch* (*1 En.* 83-90), which was written about 164 B.C., says that a sort of proto-Essene movement preceded the emergence of the Essene party proper, and dates its rise in a way which (when related to other Essene chronological texts) points to about 251 B.C.;

(iii) the now common representation of the Sadducean movement as more conservative in outlook than the Pharisaic (so SCHÜRER, JEREMIAS, ZEITLIN, HENGEL, LE MOYNE, etc. by contrast with TCHERIKOVER and most older authors) conflicts both with the testimony of ancient literature and with the analogy of later biblicist movements in Judaism and Christianity; and

(iv) the hypothesis of M<sup>lle</sup> JAUBERT that the Essene movement, at least in its calendar, was also more conservative than the Pharisaic, can be shown to be very unlikely, both from the character of its calendar, as compared with other ancient calendars, and from the general tendencies of the Essene movement.

These considerations suggest that the motives and relationships of the three schools, though so often discussed before, need to be re-examined, as far as the limited evidence permits; and that their antecedents need to be sought in a period before, not during, the Hellenizing crisis of 175 B.C. onwards, and so in different conditions

from those which then prevailed. The narrative of the emergence of the three schools needs to be retold, and, since they were schools of piety, the main emphasis needs to be laid not on political or sociological factors, but on religious ones.

Before going further, however, we must pause to establish the above four points, partly on the basis of the earlier articles. The last of the four points was fully argued in the article *The Earliest Enoch Literature and its Calendar* (*Revue de Qumrân*, no. 39, pp. 365-403), and the first and third were dealt with there to some extent, while the second was argued in the article *The Significance of the Calendar for Interpreting Essene Chronology and Eschatology* (*Revue de Qumrân*, no. 38, May 1980, pp. 167-202).

A) With regard to the first point, the pioneering work of J. T. MILIK was drawn upon, as showing that the oldest Qumran manuscripts of the *Astronomical Book* (1 *Enoch* 72-82) dates from the late third or early second century B.C., and the oldest of the *Book of Watchers* (1 *En.* 1-36) from the first half of the second century B.C. The actual composition of the two books would be likely to be earlier still, and the article went on to argue that it is to be placed in the second half of the third century B.C., the earliest parts having probably been written (and the calendar contained in them devised) right at the beginning of that period, though not sooner. It was also shown that the two books reflect nine characteristic Essene concerns (the Essene calendar; the jubilee year; Essene sabbatarianism; predestination; Essene angelology; Essene eschatology; opposition to magic and divination; asceticism; pacifism) and carry these back to the early date when the books were composed. Since it can be demonstrated from the Septuagint Pentateuch and *Ecclesiasticus* that literature of a Pharisaic tendency goes back equally far, (1) and since the absence of Sadducean literature can be no more significant in this period than it is later, the likelihood is that the tendencies manifested as three rival parties after the Hellenizing crisis of 175-152 B.C. were already present as distinct schools of thought (proto-Pharisaic, proto-

(1) The Septuagint Pentateuch (mid third century B.C.) introduces angels where neither the text nor the context of the Massoretic or Samaritan Pentateuch strictly requires it to (Septuagint: *Gen.* 6, 2; *Ex.* 4, 24; *Dt.* 32, 8.43; 33, 2), which a Sadducean translation would not do; and it endorses the Pharisaic dating of the Sheaf and Pentecost (Septuagint: *Lev.* 23, 11.15f.), contrary to the views of both the other two schools. Ben Sira and his grandson the Greek translator of his book (circa 180 B.C. onwards), who presumably belong to the same school of thought as each other, believe in angels and a future life (*Ecclus.* 7, 17 Greek; 44, 16; 46, 20; 48, 9-11.21 Greek; 49, 14), unlike the Sadducees, and accept a lunar calendar (*Ecclus.* 43, 6f; 50, 6 Hebrew text), unlike the Essenes.

Sadducean and proto-Essene) three quarters of a century earlier. That was a time when Palestine had been under Greek rule for the previous 80 years or so, during which Hellenism had been busily at work, though without causing the confrontations which it was later to provoke, when it adopted aggressive policies.

B) With regard to the second point, the article *The Significance of the Calendar* showed how important, in the schematic chronology of the Essenes, was the period of 70 year-weeks, or 490 years. Now, the period of Israel's blindness described in *1 En.* 89-90, during which she is ruled over by a succession of 70 angelic shepherds, could be another example of the period of 70 year-weeks, or 490 years; and since it begins during the monarchy and ends with the contemporaneous rise of Judas Maccabaeus and of the Essene party, which the Essenes dated 390 years after the beginning of the Exile (*Damascus Document* I, 5-9), it evidently is such another example. (2) This means that the period of blindness starts 100 years before the Exile, and if the Exile is dated from the second deportation (at the end of the reign of Jehoiachin), and biblical chronology is taken at its face-value, it starts about the year of the accession of the wicked king Manasseh. (3) The general scheme

(2) The average length of an angel-reign could not be less than 6 years, otherwise the period of blindness would not begin until after the end of the monarchy, nor more than 9 years, otherwise it would begin before the translation of Elijah, which actually precedes it (*1 En.* 89, 52.54). In this limited range of possibilities, 7 is much the most probable figure—one which was sacred to the Essenes.

(3) The singling out of Manasseh in this way is probably due not only to his general godlessness, which caused the Old Testament writers to attribute the judgment of the Exile to his sins (*2 Kings* 23, 26; 24, 3; *Jer.* 15, 4), but to the fact that he set up an abomination of desolation in the Temple (*2 Kings* 21, 7; *2 Chron.* 33, 7), a profanation so recently repeated by Antiochus Epiphanes, and to his violation of some of the characteristic concerns of early Essenism, listed above. For Manasseh practised magic and divination (*2 Kings* 21, 6; *2 Chron.* 33, 6), and it is quite possible that the Essenes ascribed to him the abolition of the jubilee year as well. The Pharisees believed that the jubilee year had not been observed since the Exile, and *Siphra*, the old halakic midrash on *Leviticus*, fixes the time of its cessation at the carrying away of the northern tribes by the Assyrians (*Be-Har* 2, 3). If the Essenes shared this belief, it would mean, on the basis of their chronology, that the last jubilee year to be celebrated (before the Essenes revived it) was celebrated by the good king Hezekiah in Anno Mundi 3234, that the carrying away of the northern tribes followed in A.M. 3236/7, and that the first jubilee year to be disregarded fell in the reign of Manasseh, A.M. 3283. This would leave two more jubilee years before the return from the Exile, one in A.M. 3332, during the reign of the good king Josiah but before the discovery of the Book of the Law in his 18th year, and the other in A.M. 3381, during the Exile itself. By the time of the return, therefore, though it fell in a jubilee year (A.M. 3430), the pattern of neglect would have seemed to the Essene chronologists, looking back, to have been well established. For the general Essene chronology, on which these figures are based, see the article *The Significance of the Calendar*.

of the 70 shepherd-reigns was set out on pp. 182-184 of the article cited, but what is of chief concern to us here is that after 58 of the 70 reigns the blindness of the nation begins (but only begins) to be alleviated:

"And I saw until that 23 [more] had undertaken the pasturing and completed in their several periods 58 times. But behold lambs were borne by those white sheep, and they began to open their eyes and to see, and to cry to the sheep. Yea, they cried to them, but they did not hearken to what they said to them, but were exceedingly deaf, and their eyes were very exceedingly blinded" (1 En. 90, 5-7, CHARLES'S translation).

Since the *Book of Dreams*, of which 1 En. 89-90 forms part, is a work of clear Essene affiliation, found at Qumran, this passage means that, with the commencement of the 59th reign, the forerunners of the Essenes appear upon the stage of history. The murderous Gentiles continue their oppression during the 12 reigns which are left, and one of the enlightened lambs is among their victims: "The ravens flew upon those lambs, and took one of those lambs" (1 En. 90, 8). This is generally understood to refer to the pious high priest Onias III, murdered by the Syrians at the instigation of his Hellenizing successor Menelaus, and it indicates that Onias III was an Essene sympathiser. Help, however, is at hand, with the rise of Judas Maccabaeus, and at his rise the blindness of the nation comes to an end, presumably denoting the definite emergence of the Essene party: "I saw till there sprouted a great horn on one of those sheep, and their eyes were opened. And it looked at them and their eyes opened" (1 En. 90, 9f.). The Gentiles fight against Judas, but unsuccessfully, and he is still unsubdued when God intervenes in judgment and the recording angel reports to him "the destruction which those 12 last shepherds had wrought" (1 En. 90, 17). The last 12 of the 70 angel-reigns have consequently come to an end soon after the rise of Judas in 167 B.C., with which the emergence of the Essene party co-incides. The proto-Essene movement, however (or 'pre-Essene', as MILIK calls it), has already been in existence from the beginning of those 12 reigns, and since each reign lasts a year-week, it must have commenced in or around 251 B.C.

Though this date is found in the *Book of Dreams* alone, the period of 390 years, from the beginning of the Exile to the rise of the Essenes, on which it depends, is reflected in various texts—not only in the *Damascus Document* but in *Greek Testament of Levi* 17 (4) and probably in *Epistle of Jeremy* 3 (5).

(4) See pp. 179-181 of the article *The Significance of the Calendar*.

(5) The *Epistle of Jeremy* (appended to *Baruch*) is not unmistakably a work from the Essene school, but, as a pseudonymous text under the name of a

C) As regards the third point, it is often overlooked that a distinction needs to be drawn between conservative movements and reforming movements. Traditionalist movements are the ones which are most characteristically conservative, and the upholders of tradition were the Pharisees, not the Sadducees, who rejected tradition and claimed to follow Scripture alone (see JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities* XIII, x, 6, 296-98; XVIII, i, 3f., 12-16). In this the Sadducees anticipated later biblicist movements, such as the Karaite movement in eighth-century Judaism and the Protestant Reformation in sixteenth-century Christianity, both of which were reforming movements, regarded in their time not as conservative but as radical. (6)

It is true, of course, that in returning to Scripture these movements aimed to return to an earlier and purer era of the faith than that represented by the tradition which had developed since

canonical prophet, it easily could be, and a fragmentary Greek MS. of it, dating from about 100 B.C., has been found at Qumran. This is published in M. BAILLET, J. T. MILIK and R. DE VAUX, *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert of Jordan*, III (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1962, p. 143). In verse 3, the *Epistle* says that the Babylonian Captivity will last for 7 generations: "So when you are come to Babylon, you will remain there many years, and for a long season, even for 7 generations: and after that I will bring you out peaceably from thence." This perplexing statement, apparently so contradictory to Jeremiah's 70 years (*Jer.* 25, 11f; 29, 10; cp. *Dan.* 9, 2; 2 *Chron.* 36, 21), is interpreted by C. J. BALL as a reference to the date of composition (in R. H. CHARLES, ed., *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1913, vol. 1, pp. 596f., 599f.); though why the author should think of the date of composition of his epistle as the end of the Babylonian Captivity is not explained. If, however, the author was an Essene, he might well have thought of the rise of the Essenes as the end of a sort of spiritual captivity of Israel (just as LUTHER, long afterwards, thought of the Protestant Reformation as the end of a Babylonian Captivity of the Christian church), or else as the end of a more literal captivity, that of Gentile rule—which is, indeed, how their rise is thought of in the *Book of Dreams* (see p. 183 of the article *The Significance of the Calendar*). Now, in note 47 of the article *The Earliest Enoch Literature and its Calendar*, it was pointed out that, when measuring time by generations, the Essenes appear to have used an idealised generation of 49 years, equivalent to a jubilee; while, in the article *The Significance of the Calendar* (p. 194), it was argued that they rounded up periods of 7 jubilees from 343 to 350 years. 7 generations after the beginning of the Babylonian Captivity would therefore mean 350 years afterwards; and though this is 40 years short of 390 years, the addition of another generation would slightly exceed the necessary total, so the author stops short at 7, and covers the remaining part of a generation by his words "after that (*meta touto*) I will bring you out peaceably from thence."

(6) In Islam, one might compare the work of Abu Hanifa, an early reformer who, in the view of some writers, considered it necessary to use his personal judgment on the meaning of the Koran and not to depend on tradition (thus, W. M. PATTON, in HASTINGS's *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. 12, p. 114f.). Abu Hanifa was a contemporary of Anan, the founder of Karaism, and had a direct influence upon him.

and by which it had been overlaid; and it is also true that in many matters they were doubtless successful in their attempt to do so. Nevertheless, they could only succeed by boldly discarding much that had come to be generally accepted, and in some cases generally accepted for a very long time, and the conservatives were necessarily those who opposed this policy, not those who promoted it. Moreover, since the meaning of Scripture is not always self-evident, the protagonists of biblicist movements have always been liable to disagree among themselves as to the teaching of the Bible on various matters. This was a marked characteristic both of the Karaites and of the Protestant Reformers, and precisely the same seems to have been true of the Sadducees. For, after telling us that the Pharisees "show respect and deference to their elders, nor do they rashly presume to contradict their proposals", JOSEPHUS goes on to say that the Sadducees, by way of contrast, "own no observance of any sort apart from the Laws; in fact, they reckon it a virtue to dispute with the teachers of the path of wisdom that they pursue" (*Antiquities* XVIII, 1, 3f., 12.16, FELDMAN'S LOEB translation). There may be a hint here of the Sadducees' roughness of manner (*War* II, VIII, 14, 166), but the main distinction which JOSEPHUS is making between the Pharisaic and Sadducean manner of disputing is that the Pharisees were always ready to defer to any tradition which could be quoted from earlier generations, while the Sadducees were not. Consequently, the only expositions which became traditional among the Sadducees were those which proceeded from biblical statements of unmistakable meaning, from the Sadducean scepticism about angels, predestination and the life to come, or from a desire to contradict the traditional expositions of the Pharisees. (7)

The one point on which the Sadducees do look very traditional, their rejection of the life to come, may in fact have been due not to traditional teaching, i.e. the agnosticism of much of the Old Testament on this subject (still echoed in *Tobit* 3, 6.10-13; 13, 2; *Baruch* 2, 17, and even in *Ecclus.* 17, 27f; 41, 3f.), though it was no doubt defended on those grounds, but to the same cause as some other Sadducean peculiarities which do not look nearly as traditional, such as their denial of predestination (see JOSEPHUS, *War* II, VIII, 14, 162-65; *Antiquities* XIII, v, 9, 171-73) and of the

(7) For comprehensive surveys of the disagreements between the Sadducees and the Pharisees, see H. L. STRACK and P. BILLERBECK, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch* (Munich, Beck, 1954-56 reprint), excursus 14; Jean LE MOYNE, *Les Sadducéens* (Études Bibliques, Paris, Gabalda, 1972), pp. 165-317.



existence of angels (see *Acts* 23, 8f.). (8) This other cause would be the prevailing intellectual influence at the time when the Sadducean movement arose. For if, as now seems likely, the Sadducean movement, like the other two, goes back to the third and not to the second century B.C., it goes back to a time when Greek wisdom was already highly influential, without having yet become highly controversial. It would be natural for any reforming movement of that era to try to fortify itself from the resources of Greek wisdom, and in denying the existence of spirits, the future life and divine predestination the Sadducees were doing just what the Epicureans had been doing since the late fourth century B.C., while the strong assertions to the contrary made by the Essenes parallel those made by the Stoics from about the beginning of the third century B.C. onwards. (9) In drawing on such sources, the Sadducees were introducing a reductionist element into their thinking, and the Essenes a speculative element, which were really alien to biblicist principles. Yet this again is a common characteristic of biblicist movements, which, being anti-

(8) Those who hold that the Sadducees were conservative are apt to suggest that the Sadducees only denied the developments of angelology found among the Essenes and Pharisees, not the existence of angels as such. There is no basis in the sources for this conjecture. Since the Sadducees certainly denied the survival of the human spirit after the death of the body, as affirmed by the Essenes and Pharisees (see JOSEPHUS, *War* II, viii, 11, 154-58; II, viii, 14, 163-65; *Antiquities* xviii, 1, 3-5, 14-18), it is entirely congruous that they should also have denied the purely spiritual existence of angels. Such a denial must have involved them in some strange exegesis of Scripture (even of the Pentateuch), but if their exegesis as a whole was reforming not conservative, this is not so surprising. The Sadducees were not pure literalists, as is sometimes supposed, and according to HIPPOLYTUS (*Refutation* IX, 29), whose knowledge of Judaism is exceptionally good, they expounded passages about the resurrection in an equally unnatural way, as referring to the children that one leaves behind on earth when one dies. The same chapter of HIPPOLYTUS is the source of the idea (supported also by ORIGEN, *Commentary on Matthew* XVII, 35f.) that the Sadducees, like the Samaritans, accepted no part of the Old Testament except the Pentateuch. However, since there is not any suggestion of this in Jewish literature, and since HIPPOLYTUS completely identifies the Sadducees with the Samaritans, locating them at Samaria, it may be that after the destruction of the Jerusalem temple some of the Sadducees fled to Samaria and conformed to Samaritan beliefs.

(9) On the existence of spirits (*daimonia*) and the immortality of the human spirit, Stoic teaching owed something to PLATO and Epicurean to ARISTOTLE; but it was in Stoicism and Epicureanism that these teachings were combined with assertions or denials of divine predestination and providence. —JOSEPHUS compares *Pharisaism* with Stoicism (*Life* 2, 12), and elsewhere compares Essenism with *Pythagoreanism* (*Antiquities* XV, x, 4, 371), and though these comparisons are not inept, the Stoic parallels are even more pronounced in Essenism, as HIPPOLYTUS recognises (*Refutation* IX, 27).



traditional in outlook, are prone to enlist the aid of reductionism or speculation, as being likewise anti-traditional. (10)

D) Regarding the last of the four points with which we began, the supposed conservatism of the Essenes, the article *The Earliest Enoch Literature and its Calendar* pointed out that the Essene movement is clearly stated in its own writings to be not a conservative but a reforming movement, like the Sadducean. In particular, the *Book of Dreams* in *1 Enoch* states that, prior to the appearance of the Essene party and the movement which led up to it during the preceding 12 angel-reigns, i.e. the preceding 84 years, the nation had been involved in blindness and apostasy since the period of the monarchy (*1 En.* 89, 54ff.). The Essenes attempted to go back to the purer age before the long reign of error began, but they were dependent for their knowledge of the purer age on the Old Testament and the speculations of their own pseudonymous writings, attributed to worthies of that age. Essenism was therefore unmistakably a reforming movement, and the article argued that the Essene calendar shows all the marks of being one of the Essene reforms.

The Essenes resembled the Sadducees not only in being reformers but in regarding themselves, or their priestly leaders, as Zadokites. It is now generally agreed that the title 'Sadducee' is derived from the name 'Zadok', and this conclusion has sometimes been used as a reason for regarding the Sadducees as conservative, meaning that they were the heirs of the family of Zadok, who held the high priesthood until the deposing of Jeshua-Jason in 172 B.C. We now know, however, that the Essenes also made Zadokite claims (*Rule of the Community* V, 2.9; *Damascus Document* III, 21-IV, 4), and they cannot both have been the heirs. The direct heir was Onias III's son Onias, who fled to Egypt and founded the temple of Leontopolis (see JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities* XIII, III, 1-3, 62-73, etc.); and if the Sadducees' claim to Zadokite descent had been at all strong, they would not have won over the Maccabean high priests, as they did in the time of John Hyrcanus and thenceforward, but would have been regarded as a threat to the dynasty's position, since the Maccabees were of the course of Jehoiarib (*1 Macc.* 2, 1; 14, 29; JOSEPHUS, *Life* I, 1-5), not of the course of Jedaiah, as the family of Zadok was (*Ezra* 2, 36; *Neh.* 7, 39). Judas, when he cleansed the Temple, appointed 'blameless priests'

(10) Thus, the original Karaism of Anan had a strong speculative element in it, as did the Protestantism of the Anabaptists. On the other hand, reductionism also quickly developed in Karaism, and the reductionist tendency of ZWINGLI in early Protestantism was often to recur, in varied and sometimes very exaggerated forms, in later Protestant history.

(1 *Macc.* 4, 42), but not a new high priest, leaving the non-Zadokite Menelaus at least nominally in office; and the Ḥasidim, or 'pious', after Menelaus's death, were prepared to welcome Alcimus (Jakim) as high priest (1 *Macc.* 7, 12-14), though he was not, so JOSEPHUS says, of the family of Zadok (*Antiquities* XII, ix, 7, 387; XX, x, 3, 235); (11) and both these facts suggest that, after Onias's flight to Egypt, there were no close relatives of the family remaining in Palestine. It is possible that Sadducean views had had some supporters among the Zadokite high priests, but such views do not seem to have characterised the family, for the Essenes looked back to Onias III, murdered by the Syrians at the instigation of Menelaus, as a predecessor of theirs (1 *En.* 90, 8), the Pharisees looked back in the same way to Simon II (*Mishnah, Aboth* I, 2f.), and since Jeshua-Jason was the pioneer of Hellenizing syncretism, (12) this means that the latest Zadokite high priest who can have favoured the Sadducees was Onias II, back in the third century B.C. All in

(11) Alcimus does indeed boast, in 2 *Macc.* 14, 7, that the high priesthood was his 'ancestral glory', but this may merely mean that he had a better claim than his predecessor Menelaus, who was not even of the course of Jedaiah. 2 *Maccabees* tells us that Menelaus's brother Simon, the captain of the Temple, and so Menelaus himself, was 'of the tribe/course of Benjamin' (2 *Macc.* 3, 4; 4, 23). This reading is not impossible, as is sometimes supposed, since in the Septuagint of 1 *Chr.* 24, 9 the sixth of the 24 priestly courses is indeed called Benjamin (= Heb. *Mijamin*). However, the Old Latin and Armenian of 2 *Maccabees*, which are independent translations from the Greek, give the name as Bilgah, the fifteenth of the 24 courses, and this reading is now generally preferred, on the grounds that *phule* is an unusual term for a priestly course, and that it is therefore easy to see how a scribe, taking it in the ordinary sense of 'tribe', and knowing that the only one of the twelve tribes beginning with B was Benjamin, might have altered Bilgah to Benjamin accordingly. A further reason for accepting the reading Bilgah is suggested by a fact which puzzled the rabbis. From an early date, the course of Bilgah had been prohibited from officiating in the Temple, the preceding course of Jeshebeab doing an extra week's duty instead; and the generally accepted explanation of this was that Miriam, a daughter of Bilgah (i.e. a daughter of some priest of that course), had apostatised, married an officer of the Greek kings, and blasphemed the altar—which seemed an inadequate reason for penalizing the whole course (*Mishnah, Sukkah* V, 8; *Tosephta, Sukkah* IV, 28; *Jer., Sukkah* V, 8; *Bab., Sukkah* 56 b). If, however, her father was the high priest Menelaus, she was not just some priest's daughter, as the rabbis supposed, and her misdeed was only the most flagrant incident in the whole syncretising campaign which her father directed. No other course was penalized in the same way, which may indicate that the other two Hellenizing high priests, not only the Zadokite Jeshua-Jason but also Alcimus, belonged to the usual course of Jedaiah, as suggested above.

(12) Though, as Abigador TCHERIKOVER plausibly argues, Jeshua-Jason was more cautious in his Hellenizing than his successor Menelaus, and did not directly violate the Temple or its worship (*Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews*, English translation, Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society of America, 1959, pp. 165-67), he must have known and intended the syncretism which would result from making Jerusalem into a Greek *polis*. So the judgment passed upon him by 2 *Macc.* 4, 13f. is not unjust. See also note 50.

all, it seems improbable that the Sadducees were stressing their genealogy or even the known views of the Zadokite family in calling themselves Zadokites. More likely, they used the title in the same way as the Essenes, in the passages from the *Rule of the Community* and the *Damascus Document* cited above, with conscious reference to the way the 'sons of Zadok' are described in *Ezk.* 44, 15; 48, 11, and as meaning those priests who were faithful to God. (13) If so, conservatism was not at issue.

### *The True Traditionalists* the pharisees

JOSEPHUS, when he tells us that the Sadducees were not traditionalists, tells us equally plainly that the Pharisees were (*Antiquities* XIII, x, 6, 297; XVIII, 1, 3, 12; also XVII, 11, 4, 41; *Life* 38f., 191.198). This means that the Pharisaic habit of mind was characteristically conservative, even though it is easy to quote examples of Pharisaic traditions which cannot go back to the biblical period, and which must therefore, when first put forward, have been innovations. There is a good discussion of these innovations by G. F. MOORE in his *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era*. (14) It was such innovations that would have provoked the biblicist reforms of the Sadducees and Essenes. Yet, with regard to biblical exegesis, whenever the exegesis of the Pharisees is not *obviously* artificial, and is not *merely* an application of Scripture to changing conditions, it is probably older, and is more likely to be original, than that of the other two schools, simply in virtue of the fact that the Pharisees were traditionalists, and that traditionalists are essentially conservative.

If later biblicist reforms throw light on Sadduceeism and Essenism, so do later traditionalist movements on Pharisaism. The innovations which the Pharisees made are not at all surprising when compared with those made by traditionalist churches or parties in Christianity and (to some extent) Islam. In such circles, tradition does not simply perform its essential task of transmitting and applying the teaching of Scripture, but readily

(13) For a careful discussion of all the Qumran references to the sons of Zadok, see Jacob LIVER, *The 'Sons of Zadok the Priests' in the Dead Sea Sect*, in *Revue de Qumrân*, no. 21 (Feb. 1967). He distinguishes between the sons of Zadok and the other priests at Qumran, and also between the literal and figurative sons of Zadok. This is perhaps over-elaborate, but it recognises both that the Qumran community were led by priests, and also that they applied the name 'sons of Zadok' to those priests in a sense which was not merely genealogical.

(14) Cambridge Mass., Harvard University Press, 1927-1930, vol. 1, pp. 33, 259f.

develops a life of its own; for it tends to *add* to Scripture where Scripture is restrained, and to *adapt* Scripture, not just to changing conditions but to the weakness of the flesh; and these developments are liable, in time, to become sacrosanct, and to resist attempts to test and correct them by Scripture, simply because tradition itself, of which they are now part, is so highly respected.

The characteristic *additions* which Pharisaic tradition makes to Scripture are its preventative measures—the “making of a fence around the Law” so as “to keep a man far from transgression” (*Mishnah, Aboth* I, 1, *Berakoth* I, 1). Examples are the festal observance of the eves of festivals, not just the festivals themselves (*Judith* 8, 6; *Mishnah, Taanith* IV, 2, *Hagigah* III, 7); the eating of even common food, not just sacred food, in conditions of ceremonial cleanness (*Tosephta, Demai* II, 2); and the reduction of the 40 stripes of *Deut.* 25, 3 to 39 stripes, lest the prescribed maximum should be accidentally exceeded (2 *Cor.* 11, 24; JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities* IV, viii, 21, 238; *Mishnah, Makkoth* III, 10.14). The characteristic *adaptations* of Scripture which Pharisaic tradition contains are admitted to “make void the Law” but only because “it is time to work for the Lord” (*Mishnah, Berakoth* IX, 5), i.e. because of the exigence of the times. A good example is the *prozbol*, an attested declaration that a particular loan would *not* be remitted in the sabbatical year in accordance with *Deut.* 15, 1-11, which the *Mishnah* tells us was instituted by Hillel when he saw the people refusing to make loans (*Mishnah, Shebiith* X, 3; *Gittin* IV, 3). The *Mishnah* calls this “a precaution for the general good”, but the trouble is that (like the rules about korban and substitute oaths, condemned by Jesus in *Mk.* 7, 9-13 and *Matt.* 23, 16-22 respectively as being inconsistent with divine commandments in the Pentateuch) the *prozbal* strikes at the root of the law in question. Hillel, of course, is well known for his greater leniency than Shammai, but there are other similar adaptations on which no difference between the schools of Hillel and Shammai is known, namely, devices for avoiding the infliction of the death penalty for certain capital offences (*Mishnah, Sanhedrin* VII, 8; VIII, 1-5; XI, 1); and there is one on which they certainly both agreed, the *erub* (*Mishnah, Erubin* I, 2; VI, 4.6), a contrivance by which the Pharisees evaded the stringency of their own exegesis of the sabbath laws. There is no reason to doubt that the contemporary problems which Hillel attempted to meet by the *prozbol* were real, and it could be that in the other two instances also the Pharisees were reacting to serious contemporary problems. It is unlikely, however, that the problems were *merely* contemporary, if those which prompted the *prozbol* are anything to judge by; moreover, the measures taken to meet the problems were in each

case permanent; and this means that to say "it is time to work for the Lord" was really a pretence—the laws were not just being suspended but effectively abolished.

With exceptions of these kinds, which themselves in due course became traditional, the Pharisees devoted almost all their attention to handing down and elaborating the traditional understanding of the Pentateuch. If one adds certain traditional customs, which the Pharisees also maintained, this understanding, or interpretation, constitutes the oral 'Law' which, according to the oldest traditions in the *Mishnah*, those of *Aboth* I, was received by Moses from Sinai, and committed by Moses to Joshua, by Joshua to the Elders (i.e. those of *Josh.* 24, 31; *Judg.* 2, 7), by the Elders to the Prophets, by the Prophets to the men of the Great Synagogue, and by the last of the men of the Great Synagogue, Simon the Just, to named Pharisaic teachers. The interpretation did of course undergo development in successive generations, as conditions changed and new questions were posed to the text; moreover, it was no doubt subtly, if not more patently, affected by the innovations described above; then again, the Pharisaic concentration on the laws of tithing and cleanness, discussed below, led to an imbalance which was afterwards to draw piercing criticism from Jesus (*Lk.* 11, 39-42); and the probable result of all this is to make the exegesis of the Pentateuch which we find in the rabbinical literature very different from what can well have existed in the time of Ezra. And yet the difference was not intentional. It had been brought about by men whose intention was to defend and adapt as necessary—but above all to transmit—the traditional interpretation, and on a good many points and in a good many respects they doubtless continued to do just that.

One of the indications that the Pharisees were more conservative than the other two schools is the support that they gave to the traditional customs mentioned in the previous paragraph. Some of these customs have no known connection with Pharisaism except that the Pharisees supported them, but were very popular, and were probably of ancient origin. An example is the water-libation at the Feast of Tabernacles. The *Mishnah* states that on one occasion a priest showed his contempt for this non-scriptural addition to the ritual of the feast by pouring the water over his feet instead of on the altar, whereupon the people pelted him with citrons (*Sukkah* IV, 9). The *Tosephta* (*Tos. Sukkah* III, 16) and a baraita in the *Babylonian Talmud* (*Sukkah* 48b) say that he was a Sadducee (or 'Boethusian', another name for a Sadducee), and JOSEPHUS confirms this by telling us that the militantly Sadducean high priest Alexander Jannaeus, who was in office from 103 to 76 B.C., was on one occasion pelted by the people with citrons

when he was standing at the altar during the Feast of Tabernacles (*Antiquities* XIII, xiii, 5, 372). Clearly, the Sadducees despised the popular custom, and, since it is not mentioned in the descriptions of the ritual of the feast in *Jubilees* 16, 20-31; 32, 4-30, detailed though they are, one may surmise that the Essenes also viewed it critically. Only the conservatives, i.e. the Pharisees, insisted that it be maintained.

Another indication that the Pharisees were more conservative than the other two schools lies in their unremitting controversy with 'the people of the land', i.e. the negligent (*Mishnah*, *Demai* II, 2f.; *Hagigah* II, 7; *Horayoth* III, 8; *Tohoroth* VIII, 2, etc.; cp. *Jn.* 7, 49). This is a plank in the controversial platform of the Pharisees which does not seem to be found in that of the other two schools. The inference is that the Pharisees originated simply as a revival of zeal, against negligence, and not as the champions of controversial opinions, and that it was only the later rise of reform movements, challenging their conventional views, which made them one school of thought among three.

A third indication that the Pharisees were more conservative than the other two schools lies in their response to changing conditions. A large part of Pharisaic tradition is concerned with the application of the Pentateuch to questions which the latter does not directly answer—for example, the multitudinous applications of the command to rest on the sabbath, detailed in *Mishnah*, *Shabbath*. The Pentateuch, particularly from the time of Ezra onwards, was the basis of national law, and it was often the courts that had to make this application. Unless there was to be manifest injustice, the legal precedents of what would today be called 'case law' had to be memorised or recorded for use in other similar cases, as by the Pharisees they were, in their tradition. The Sadducees and Essenes, however, seem to have abolished this procedure, the Sadducees leaving each court to make its own decision on most matters, and the Essenes giving the court guidance mainly through their writings, which were often pseudonymous and retrojected their answers to modern questions into remote antiquity (cp. the sabbath regulations of *Jubilees* 2, 29f; 50, 8-13, supposedly by Moses). The Pharisaic procedure, being the natural one, must also be presumed to be the original one, and the Sadducean and Essene procedures must be accounted polemical reactions against it.

A fourth indication that the Pharisees were more conservative than the other two schools is that they were much the largest of the three in membership. In almost any religious or intellectual movement, the traditionalists tend to have the largest following. Now, in the first century, according to both PHILO (*Quod Omnis Probus Liber Sit* 75) and JOSEPHUS (*Antiquities* XVIII, 1, 5, 20),



the Essenes numbered upwards of 4,000. The Pharisees, however, in the latter part of the previous century already numbered 6,000 (JOSEPHUS, *Ant.* XVII, II, 4, 42), while the Sadducees seem to have been the smallest school of all (*Ant.* XIII, x, 6, 298; XVIII, I, 4, 17).

A final indication that the Pharisees were the conservatives is that they had the masses on their side (*Ant.* XIII, x, 5f., 288-298; XIII, xv, 5, 401f; XVIII, I, 3f., 15-17). The religious allegiance of a nation is not easily transferred, and if the Pharisees possessed this, it is likely that they had done so since before the rivalry between the three schools came into the open, and that the reason they possessed it was that they, rather than the other two schools, were seen to be maintaining the views and practices which had long been customary. This is all the more likely in view of the Pharisees' relentless opposition to 'the people of the land' (the negligent), which would not otherwise have inclined the masses to favour them. It is sometimes wondered how a party which, in Herod's reign, consisted of only 6,000 heads of families could be said to have the support of the masses. However, what this doubtless means is that the 6,000 were actual 'associates'—members admitted into the Pharisaic societies after undertaking to observe not only the Mosaic Law, in accordance with the Pharisaic interpretation, and those additional customs which the Pharisees maintained, but also those preventative measures which the Pharisees had devised, notably the eating of even common food in conditions of ceremonial cleanness. The masses would not have committed themselves to all this (otherwise they too would have been Pharisees), but insofar as they observed the Mosaic Law, they observed it in accordance with the Pharisaic interpretation. It is significant that the *Mishnah* and *Tosephta* distinguish three sorts of Jews, not just the 'associates' (חברים) and the 'people(s) of the land' (עַמ הָאָרֶץ/עַמ הָאָרֶץ), but also the 'trustworthy' (נְאֻמִּים), an intermediate sort, observant of the Law, who could be trusted to have tithed their produce scrupulously, in accordance with the Pharisaic interpretation of the laws of tithing (*Mishnah*, *Demai* II, 2f; *Tosephta*, *Demai* II, 2). It is reasonable to assume that the 'trustworthy', since they undertook less, were much more numerous than the 'associates', and gave backbone to the popular support which the Pharisees enjoyed. There will be further discussion of these different groupings in what follows. (15)

(15) LOUIS FINKELSTEIN's sociological analysis, according to which the school of Hillel was drawn from the lower classes, could supply an additional reason why, at any rate from Hillel's time onwards, the masses supported the Pharisees; though it should be noted that, in FINKELSTEIN's view, the Essenes also were drawn from the lower classes, and the Pharisees of the school of Shammai from the middle and upper classes mainly (*The Pharisees: the Sociological Background of their Faith*, Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society of America, 1938, p. 4f., etc.).

*The Four Eras from Ezra to the Maccabees*

If, however, the Pharisaic movement was the conservative or traditionalist movement and the Sadducean and Essene movements were reforms, it follows that the Pharisaic movement began at an earlier era than the others. Yet we have seen that even these reforms go back well behind the Hellenizing crisis of 175 B.C. onwards (in which the Maccabees, with the support of the Ḥasidim, triumphed, and the three movements finally emerged as separate parties). The Hellenizing crisis is thus a third era. Moreover, we shall find below that the Pharisaic movement itself contrasts in various important respects with the work of Ezra, who opened the way for the later movements by making the Mosaic Law the returned exiles' rule of life, in separation from their syncretistic neighbours; and this means that Ezra belongs to an earlier era still. The upshot is a total of four eras, which may be entitled:

- (i) The Era of Separation to the Law: Ezra and the Scribes.
- (ii) The Era of Lay Revival: proto-Pharisaism.
- (iii) The Era of Priestly Reform: proto-Sadduceeism and proto-Essenism.
- (iv) The Era of Conflict: (a) between Ḥasidim and Hellenizers;  
(b) between Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes.

The justification for these titles, in so far as it is not already clear, will become apparent in what follows, as the four eras are in turn examined.

*The Era of Separation to the Law: Ezra and the Scribes*

The reason for the judgment of the Exile, so the books of the Prophets and the book of *Kings* teach, was the nation's inveterate disobedience to the Lord and her proneness to idolatrous syncretism. Against the background of this teaching, it is entirely understandable that the returned exiles should have concentrated on separation from the syncretistic and heathen peoples surrounding them and on obedience to the Book of the Law. Separation begins right from the time of Zerubbabel (*Ezra* 4, 3; 6, 21; *1 Esdras* 5, 70f; 7, 13), and it is not obscurely indicated that his refusal of Samaritan help in rebuilding the Temple is due to their mixed race and mixed religion (*Ezra* 4, 2f. 9f; *1 Esdras* 5, 69; cp. *2 Kings* 17, 24-41). There are also references, at the same early stage, to the Book of the Law (*Ezra* 3, 2; 6, 18; *1 Esdras* 5, 49; 7, 6.9).

Increased emphasis is placed upon separation with the coming of Ezra and Nehemiah (*Neh.* 9, 2; 10, 28), and especially upon abstaining from mixed marriages, in which even the high-priestly family had become involved (*Ezra* 9-10; *Neh.* 10, 30; 13, 4-9.23-30; *1 Esdras* 8, 68-9, 36). Whether Ezra and Nehemiah allowed genuine proselytes to be admitted to the congregation, in accordance with *Ex.* 12, 48f., is not clear: in their circumstances, they probably did not encourage the practice, nor perhaps was the neighbouring population much interested in it, but *Neh.* 13, 1-3 may imply that they tolerated it, though not, of course, in the forbidden cases of Ammonites and Moabites (cp. *Deut.* 23, 3-6).

Ezra and Nehemiah also placed greatly increased emphasis upon the Book of the Law (*Neh.* 8, 1-18; 9, 3; 10, 34-37; 13, 1-3; *1 Esdras* 9, 38-55), and it is in this connection that Ezra's title of *sôpher* or *sâphar*, 'scribe' (*Ezra* 7, 6ff; *Neh.* 8, 1ff; 12, 26.36; cp. *1 Esdras* 8, 3.25) is so significant, for he was scribe 'in the Law of Moses', scribe 'of the words of the commandments of the Lord and of his statutes to Israel', scribe 'of the Law of the God of heaven' (*Ezra* 7, 6.11f.21; *1 Esdras* 8, 3). Of this Law, Ezra the scribe was not simply a writer but a student and teacher, for he "had set his heart to seek (or 'search', *dârash*, cp. *Jn.* 5, 39; *Acts* 17, 11) the Law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments" (*Ezra* 7, 10; cp. *1 Esdras* 8, 7).

We consequently find him reading it to the people (*Neh.* 8, 1ff; 9, 3; 13, 1; *1 Esdras* 9, 38-55), (16) and the people conforming their lives to the specific commandments contained in it (*Neh.* 8, 14-18; 10, 29-39; 13, 1-3). The Book of the Law had now become in a new sense a book to be studied, for the Exile had apparently replaced Hebrew by Aramaic as the normal language of the Jews (*Neh.* 8, 7-9), and had thus for the first time made the language of the Pentateuch a learned tongue.

In the Near East of Exilic and pre-Exilic times, where literacy was not general, the scribe was respected because he was an educated man, and he had an important role at the royal court, where other significant tasks besides writing would frequently fall to him (as we see from the books of *Kings* and *Chronicles*). Whether Ezra had fulfilled such a role at the Persian court, and in this way had acquired both his title and the favour that he enjoyed from the king, we cannot be certain; but what does seem certain is that, before Ezra's time, 'scribe' did not usually refer to those responsible for copying and teaching the Mosaic Law, as it was

(16) Indeed, in *1 Esdras* (*Esdras A* of the Septuagint) Ezra is often, though not always, called *anagnostes*, 'reader', instead of *grammateus*, 'scribe' (*1 Esd.* 8, 8f; 9, 39.42.49; contrast 8, 3.25).

to do from Ezra's time onwards (only in *Jer.* 8, 8, unless the 'scribes' of *1 Chron.* 24, 6; *2 Chron.* 34, 13 had performed such tasks).

Nevertheless, even without the title of 'scribe', the duty of teaching the Law had from ancient times rested upon the priests and Levites (*Lev.* 10, 10f; *Deut.* 24, 8; 33, 10; *Hos.* 4, 6; *Jer.* 18, 18), and this continued to be the case in the Exilic and early post-Exilic period (*Ezk.* 7, 26; 44, 23; *Hag.* 2, 11; *Mal.* 2, 5-7), so it is no surprise that Ezra also is repeatedly stated to be a priest (*Ezra* 7, 1-5.11f.21; 10, 10.16; *Neh.* 8, 2.9; 12, 26; *1 Esdras* 8, 1f.8f.19; 9, 16.39f.42.49). It was doubtless because of their expertise in the Law that priests and Levites were included among the judges in the nation's central appeal-court (*Deut.* 17, 8-13; *2 Chron.* 19, 8-11), though it should be noted that lay judges also were included, and that the 'elders' or 'senior men' who judged lesser cases locally seem regularly to have been laymen (*Deut.* 19, 12; 21, 19f; 22, 15-18; *Josh.* 20, 4; *Ruth* 4, 2.4.9.11; *1 Kings* 21, 8.11; *2 Kings* 10, 1.5). Nor were elders totally excluded from *teaching* the Law. Along with the priests, in *Deut.* 31, 9-13 they are entrusted with the Book of the Law and charged to read it to the people, and in *2 Chron.* 17, 7-9 Jehoshaphat is stated to have sent princes as well as Levites and priests to visit the cities of Judah, taking the Book of the Law with them and teaching. At the time of the return from the Exile, the elders and princes are still the lay leaders of the nation, with the tasks of ruling and judging (*Ezra* 5, 5.9; 6, 7f.14; 9, 1f; 10, 8.14; *Neh.* 9, 38; 12, 31f; *1 Esdras* 6, 5.8.27; 7, 8; 8, 69; 9, 4), but it is significant that Ezra is now explicitly empowered by the king to appoint as judges men who will judge "according to the wisdom of thy God which is in thy hand" (*Ezra* 7, 25; cp. verse 14; *1 Esdras* 8, 23).

This virtual identification of the Book of the Law with the Wisdom of God is something which reappears in later Wisdom literature (*Ecclus.* 24, 23; *Baruch* 4, 1; cp. also *Ecclus.* 19, 20; 21, 11; 34, 8); but the linking of a scribe with wisdom is something found also in contemporary Wisdom literature. For the Aramaic fragments of the *Words of Ahikar*, a book of proverbs and parables discovered among the Elephantine papyri of the fifth century B.C., describe Ahikar as "a wise and learned scribe". There is no reason to think that Ahikar was a priest (according to *Tobit* 1, 1-5.21 he was of the tribe of Naphtali), and the wise men of the Wisdom literature are characteristically laymen. Solomon, the pre-eminently wise man of *Proverbs*, *Ecclesiastes* and *Wisdom* (as well as of *Kings* and *Chronicles*), was of course a layman, and so was Daniel (*Dan.* 1, 3), in whose book wisdom is such an important theme (*Dan.* 1, 4.17.20; 2, 12-14.18.20f.23f.27.30.48; 4, 6.18; 5, 7f. 11.14f.). Solomon and Daniel are not indeed called 'scribes', like

Ahikar, but, like Ahikar (grand vizier to the king of Assyria), their sphere is the royal court, which was also the sphere of the pre-exilic scribe. (17) Up to the time of Ezra, the teacher of the Law is still the priest, and it is natural that Ezra, the first of the new succession of scribes should be a priest: nevertheless, the ground has now been prepared for laymen also to hold the office. The layman, by studying the Book of the Law, can likewise become a wise man and a scribe.

But if 'wise man' and 'scribe' are on the way to becoming identical, so also are 'scribe' and 'elder'. The one teaches the Law, the other judges according to it, but it is now clearly recognised that both need to study the Book of the Law for the purpose, and this has the effect of qualifying them for both tasks. In the *Mishnah*, and the rabbinical literature generally, the Pharisaic scholars are sometimes called *hakâmîm* 'wise men, sages', sometimes *sôpherîm* 'scribes', sometimes *zeqênîm* or *šâbîm* 'elders, senior men', and they perform the tasks both of teachers and of judges. But this virtual interchangeability of language is already to be found in the *Letter of Aristeas*, where it is 'elders' who are chosen to translate the Pentateuch into Greek, and especially in *Ecclesiasticus*, where *Ecclus.* 38, 24-39, 11 concerns wise 'scribes', *Ecclus.* 6, 34; 8, 8f; 25, 3-6 wise 'elders', and *Ecclus.* 3, 29; 18, 27-29; 27, 11f; 37, 22-26 'wise men' as such, without any sharp distinction between them. Ben Sira already has his *beth midrash* in which to expound, like the later rabbi (*Ecclus.* 51, 23); he lays the same emphasis as the later rabbi upon tradition (*Ecclus.* 8, 8f.); and the main difference that one notes is that his book is true Wisdom literature, as much interested in proverbs as in the exposition of the Law. (18) Nevertheless, his links are not only with later times but with earlier, for his identification of wise man, scribe and elder with each other, like his identification of the Book of the Law with the Wisdom of God (noted above), has its roots in the period of Ezra.

### *The Era of Lay Revival: proto-Pharisaism*

If one may assume, with the balance of recent opinion, that the biblical order for the coming of Ezra and Nehemiah is historically

(17) On the early connection between wise men and scribes, see, for example, Harry RANSTON, *The Old Testament Wisdom Books and their Teaching* (London, Epworth Press, 1930), p. 13. Another example of the wise layman at the royal court is Zerubbabel in *1 Esdras* 3.

(18) Ben Sira was not the last of his line, for the chief recorded sayings of the succession of rabbis who link his period with that of Hillel and Shammai are their proverbs collected in *Mishnah*, *Aboth* I. With Hillel and Shammai, however, the balance swings over sharply to exposition of the Law. For a wide-ranging discussion of Ben Sira as a scribe, see Helge STADELMANN, *Ben Sira als Schriftgelehrter* (Tübingen, Mohr, 1980).

correct, Ezra coming first, but their ministry then overlapping, in the mid fifth century B.C., it is easy to see how the presence of an energetic and like-minded governor such as Nehemiah must have facilitated Ezra's work. However, just as there had been a period of decline in the half century between the death of the earlier governor Zerubbabel, who had pursued similar policies, and the coming of Ezra, so the death of Ezra and Nehemiah was evidently followed by a further period of decline. The next known governor after Nehemiah, Bagoas, seems from JOSEPHUS's account to have been a man of a very different character (*Antiquities* XI, vii, 1, 297-301), and under his rule the intrigues of the high-priestly family, though earlier checked by Ezra and Nehemiah, begin afresh.

Source

Ezra, of course, had not been high priest, though he was a distant relative, being a descendant of Seraiah, one of the last high priests before the Exile (*Ezra* 7, 1-5; *1 Esdras* 8, 1f.); and his firm action against the mixed marriages of the high-priestly family, backed up by Nehemiah (*Ezra* 10, 18f; *Neh.* 13, 4-9.28f; *1 Esdras* 9, 18-20), may well have been resented. As FINKELSTEIN points out (*The Pharisees, ut supra*, pp. 556f., 561f.), it was very natural for the high-priestly family to conform to the widespread custom of inter-marriage between the aristocracy of one nation and another, and this explains their unions with the neighbouring aristocracy of Ammon and Samaria (*Neh.* 13, 4-9.28f.), though leagues with the Ammonites were in fact forbidden (*Deut.* 23, 3-6) and the Samaritans were at that period probably still syncretists. (19) After the death of Ezra and Nehemiah, such unions were in due course resumed, and it was one such in the latter part of the fourth century B.C., between the high priest's brother and a Samaritan princess, which seems to have led to the building of the Samaritan temple (see JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities* XI, vii, 2, 302f; XI, viii, 2, 306-09); while the Tobiads, the descendants of another such union in the mid third century B.C., between the high priest's sister and an Ammonite prince, were to collaborate with the Hellenizing high priests of the following century in attempting to introduce into Jewry Hellenistic syncretism (*Ant.* XII, iv, 2, 160; XII, v, 1, 239f.).

Examples set in such quarters cannot have failed to find imitators in the nation at large, and to have outraged the supporters of Ezra's policy of separation. His policy had been aimed mainly against syncretism, and that syncretistic worship did survive the

(19) One may infer this from Nehemiah's unhesitating continuance of Zerubbabel's policy towards the Samaritans. The pure Yahwism of the later Samaritans may have been a reaction to a Hellenizing crisis that they had in the first half of the second century B.C., at the same time as the Jews (see JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities* XII, v, 5, 257-264).



Exile, or revive after it, not just in distant outposts like Elephantine but in Judaea, is evident from *Zech.* 10, 2; 13, 2f; so the danger was by no means a merely theoretical one. However, intermarriage was not the only offence which the chief priests committed. Malachi, a prophet probably contemporary with Ezra and Nehemiah, had charged the priests in general (not excluding, presumably, the chief priests) with negligence in their cultic duties (*Mal.* 1, 6-14) and with failure to fulfil the priestly duty of teaching the Law (*Mal.* 2, 1-9). The teaching of the Law was, of course, the other main item in Ezra's programme, and it may be significant that the Levites seem to have assisted him in it, but not the priests (*Ezra* 8, 7; cp. 9, 4; *1 Esdras* 9, 48f.). If so, after Ezra's death the priests probably relapsed into their former negligence, and the teaching of the Law must then have been carried on by the Levites almost unaided. As compared with the priests, however, the Levites were very few in number (*Ezra* 2, 40-42; *Neh.* 7, 43-45; *1 Esdras* 5, 26-28). Moreover, the Levites were dependent for their maintenance on tithe (*Num.* 18, 21-32), and both Malachi and Nehemiah had been troubled to find them not receiving it—a situation which Nehemiah had temporarily rectified (*Mal.* 3, 7-12; *Neh.* 13, 10-14). Nevertheless, the Levites lost it again later, and it went instead to the priests—a state of affairs reflected not only in the rabbinical literature but also in *Jubilees* 13, 25-26; 32, 2-15; even the Essenes do not attempt to reform this old abuse until Qumran *Temple Scroll* LX, which was probably written about the same time as John Hyrcanus was abolishing the declaration that one had given one's tithe to the Levite, because it was no longer true (*Mishnah, Maaser Sheni* V, 15; *Sotah* IX, 10; cp. *Deut.* 26, 12-13). If, then, after Nehemiah's death there was a return to the former negligence, this must have thrown into jeopardy the whole work of teaching the Law; and, since the policy of separation was also threatened, all that Ezra had achieved must have looked like coming to an end.

How long this crisis took to develop we cannot be absolutely certain, but that it did develop will soon become fairly clear, and it probably took less than a century to do so: from about 430 B.C., when we last hear of Nehemiah (Ezra having left the stage somewhat sooner), till about 340 B.C., are the outside limits of the period in which it must have occurred. Some time in the 330s, we read of Manasses the brother of the high priest Jaddua marrying a Samaritan princess. This in itself can have been nothing extraordinary, but what is extraordinary is that the lay 'elders' of Jerusalem opposed his action with such vigour that he was forced out of the country, and that his brother, the high priest, took their side. The result, then, was that he left for his bride's

country, accompanied by many other priests and Israelites who had contracted similar marriages (and who thereby had doubtless incurred similar displeasure from the elders), and that his father-in-law Sanballat obtained the permission of Alexander the Great to build for him the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim (see JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities* XI, VII, 2, 302f; XI, VIII, 2, 306-09). That Samaritan tradition should contain no record of these events, which do the Samaritans no great credit, is not surprising, especially as Samaritan tradition comes to us only through much later writings than the histories of JOSEPHUS; and the suspicion which was formerly cast on JOSEPHUS's dating, because a Sanballat was also a Samaritan adversary of Nehemiah, is now seen to be gratuitous, with the discovery of other evidence that several rulers of Samaria bore this name. (20) If, however, JOSEPHUS's account is accepted, it means that, at a date before the 330s, something had happened to cause the lay elders to supplant both priests and Levites as the great upholders of the Law and of separation, and to make them the most influential religious force in the nation.

We saw on p. 20 that the possibility of this happening first arose in the time of Ezra, through the convergence of the roles of wise man, scribe and elder, in their common devotion to, and dependence upon, the Book of the Law. In Ezra's lifetime the possibility had not become a reality, because he himself was a priest, and the Levites actively supported him. If, however, after his death the priests who remained were largely negligent, and the few Levites were in a position of vulnerable weakness, because of their dependence on tithe, someone else had to take the lead in teaching the Law. The elder, because of his important position in society as a judge, was in the best position to do so. The wise man and scribe of the royal court had now lost their importance, but the wise man or scribe of the law-court was well placed to succeed them.

It is to this period that rabbinical tradition assigns the 'Great Synagogue', or great assembly (*kenèsèth haggedôlâh*), which, in the succession of those who have transmitted the (oral) Law through history in *Mishnah*, *Aboth* I, stands between the period of the Prophets and that of the named Pharisaic teachers of the last two centuries B.C., and spans about 250 years. Whether the Great Synagogue was a single assembly or a succession of assemblies has been much discussed, though the length of time involved

(20) See especially J. D. PURVIS, *The Samaritan Pentateuch and the Origin of the Samaritan Sect* (Cambridge Mass., Harvard University Press, 1968), pp. 10-12, 99-105.

definitely suggests the latter. (21) However, the first of its meetings must have been the most significant, because the Great Synagogue seems to have been a meeting of lay elders, concerned for the teaching of the Law, and nothing of the kind had ever been seen before.

That this was the character of the body appears from its three great utterances: "Be deliberate in judgment, raise up many disciples, and make a fence around the Law" (*Mishnah, Aboth* I, 1). The first utterance shows that its members were elders, having the responsibilities of judges; the second utterance shows that they were determined to be teachers; and the third utterance shows (among other things) that their concern was for the Law. This was precisely what the situation demanded. With the priests unwilling, and the Levites unable, to carry on Ezra's work, a great assembly of lay elders came together and resolved to step into the breach. The basic tradition about the Great Synagogue (sometimes reckoned a mere fable) is therefore entirely credible, and though many legends afterwards gathered about it, its real existence is something which the Jews could never forget.

The fact that the Great Synagogue was the fruit of a lay revival not only tells us what the state of the contemporary priesthood was but also who the heirs of the Great Synagogue were. The Pharisees certainly regarded themselves as its heirs, and their right to do so is proved by the fact that the Pharisaic movement was a movement led by laymen, whereas the Sadducean and Essene movements were led by priests. The leaders of the Pharisees were always lay elders, like the men of the Great Synagogue; the Pharisaic elders regularly gathered pupils, again like the men of the Great Synagogue; and, as to the third of the Great Synagogue's maxims, we have already seen, on p. 13, how characteristic it was of Pharisaism to make a fence around the Law. The Sadducean and Essene teachers also gathered pupils; and the Essenes also used certain preventative measures to fence the Law—eating even their common meals in ceremonial cleanness (see JOSEPHUS, *War* II, VIII, 5, 129-131) and taking the precaution of starting the sabbath rest a little early (*Damascus Document* X,

(21) In answer to this, it is pointed out that rabbinical tradition regularly confuses the high priest Simon the Just, the last of the members of the Great Synagogue according to *Mishnah, Aboth* I, 2, with his namesake Simon I, a near-contemporary of Alexander the Great, and that the Pharisaic chronology of *Seder 'Olam Rabbah* reduces the period of Persian rule so much that the last of the Prophets are also near-contemporaries of Alexander. However, the tradition about the Great Synagogue, if it is worth anything, must be much older than the Pharisaic chronology, which probably only dates from the late 1st century B.C. (see the article *Daniel 9 and the Date of Messiah's Coming*, in *Revue de Qumrân*, no. 40, Dec. 1981, pp. 524, 528, 530).

14-17); but, though it was natural that these reformers of Pharisaism should retain some of its features, lay leadership was something which they did not retain, and which only the Pharisees continued to practise.

The fencing of the Law by the men of the Great Synagogue was an excess of zeal on their part very natural in those reacting against indifference to the Law in high places. Indeed, they were reacting against indifference to the Law in all sectors of society. The lay elders, qualified to be chosen as judges, were an educated and respected class, quite distinct from the ordinary manual worker, and even from the farmer and craftsman, as Ben Sira was later to point out in a vivid passage (*Ecclus.* 38, 24-39, 11); they were men of substance, with 'opportunity for leisure', and they would not have hesitated to condemn negligence in the keeping of the Law among agriculturalists, for example in neglecting to pay tithes, any more than among members of the family of the high priests, for example in contracting forbidden marriages. Hillel was afterwards to endorse Ben Sira's words (*Mishnah, Aboth* II, 6).

It is probable, therefore, that the undying polemic of the Pharisees against the negligent, those whom they called 'the people(s) of the land' ('*am* ('*ammey*) *ha'areš*), goes back to the origins of the movement in this early period. It was perfectly possible for the high priest to be '*am ha'areš*' no less than a peasant (*Mishnah, Horayoth* III, 8), for the expression merely refers to negligence about keeping the Law. Originally the expression had had no pejorative sense, simply referring to the inhabitants of Palestine, whether the Israelites or their predecessors, and it had continued to be used in this way by Exilic and Post-Exilic writers (*Ezk.* 7, 27; 12, 19; 22, 29, etc.; *Dan.* 9, 6; *Hag.* 2, 4; *Zech.* 7, 5). In *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*, however, it is confined to the syncretistic and heathen peoples of Palestine, such as the Samaritans, Ammonites and Philistines, against whom the policy of separation was directed, and has very negative overtones (*Ezra* 4, 4; 10, 2.11; *Neh.* 10, 30f.). It becomes almost interchangeable, though not quite, with 'the peoples of the lands', i.e. the heathen abroad (*Ezra* 9, 1f.11; *Neh.* 9, 30; 10, 28). The Pharisees, however, by a highly significant further development, extended and ultimately transferred the expression to negligent Jews. Over against these, they formed societies of Jews pledged to observe the Law, and to observe in addition those preventative measures with which the men of the Great Synagogue, in their zeal, had fenced the Law about.

The members of the Pharisaic societies were called 'associates' (*ḥabêrîm*), and they pledged themselves to do two things in particular: to respect the law of tithing, by buying and eating only

tithed food, and to eat even their common food in ceremonial cleanness. The first of these was a simple matter of obedience to the Law: to do otherwise would be a profanation of what was sacred, and would, in addition, penalize the teaching Levites. The second was a preventative measure, which extended the prohibition against eating unclean animals in *Lev.* 11 and *Deut.* 14, 3-21, and the prohibition against eating sacred foods when unclean in *Lev.* 7, 19-21, to cover all aspects of common meals as well as sacred. This was the basis of the Pharisaic practice of hand-washing before meals, which afterwards brought them into controversy with Jesus (*Mk.* 7, 1-23). As FINKELSTEIN lucidly explains, in a chapter on 'The Origin of the Pharisees', such regulations restricted whom one ate with and whom one traded with, and sharply separated the 'associates' from the 'people of the land'. (22) The restrictive requirements for becoming an 'associate', and the undertakings accordingly made at admission, are set out in *Mishnah*, *Demai* II and *Tosephta*, *Demai* II-III.

The antiquity of the societies of 'associates', and of the rules governing them, is shown by a dispute between the schools of Hillel and Shammai about the application of the latter in a particular case (*Mishnah*, *Demai* VI, 6); by the fact that one of them—the eating of even common food in ceremonial cleanness—was observed also by the Essenes (see p. 24), and presumably goes back to the time before the two parties openly separated in the mid second century B.C.; but especially by the fact that the 'associates' and the Pharisees seem to have been the same people, and that basic rules defining what a Pharisee or associate was could hardly be changed—certainly not without provoking internecine controversies and divisions on the matter, of which there is no trace. Their better known name of 'Pharisees' (*perūshīm*) is first found in the high priesthood of Jonathan Maccabaeus,

(22) *The Pharisees (ut supra)*, ch. 5. For a fuller account of the societies formed by the 'associates', see Joachim JEREMIAS, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus* (English translation, London, S.C.M., 1969), ch. 11. It is sometimes denied that the 'associates' and the Pharisees are the same people, and it is true that the Essenes inherited some of the features of their societies, but otherwise the grounds for making a distinction are weak, and everyone admits that there is a large measure of overlap. Religious groups often refer to themselves by names not used of them by others; and the strong tone of approval in which the rabbinical literature always speaks of the associates makes it unlikely that they included members of rival parties. When the Pharisees in the gospels boast of their scrupulousness in tithing, refuse to eat with tax-gatherers and sinners, and insist on the washing of hands before eating (*Mk.* 2, 16; 7, 3; *Lk.* 18, 12), they are expressing the principles of the associates, and Jesus himself refers to the preoccupation of the Pharisees with the associates' two great concerns of tithing and ceremonial cleanness (*Lk.* 11, 39-42).

152-142 B.C. (see JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities* XIII, v, 9, 171-73), when the open rift with the Sadducees and Essenes had made distinguishing names necessary. However, no name could have been more appropriate, since it means 'the separated ones'. This is the necessary complement of the name 'associates': they were closely 'associated' with each other, and sharply 'separated' from the 'people of the land'.

The original members of the societies, to judge from the second maxim of the Great Synagogue 'Raise up many disciples', were the elders and their pupils, training to be elders themselves. However, to raise up further scribes or elders was only a part of Ezra's teaching-programme, and as this was the age of the development of the synagogue, the elders doubtless took advantage of the institution to teach the people at large. The great multiplication of synagogues during the remaining centuries B.C. bears witness to the enormous influence that their teaching had. The synagogue, quite naturally, became also their law-court, in place of the earlier open-air law-court in the 'gate' of the city, and this is why we read in the New Testament of punishments inflicted in the synagogue (*Matt.* 23, 34; *Mk.* 13, 9; *Acts* 22, 19; 26, 11; cp. *Susanna* 28 LXX) and of excommunication from the synagogue (*Jn.* 9, 22; 12, 42; 16, 2).

Two ominous effects of the rules of the societies must be noted. First, they concentrated men's minds primarily on externals, in a way which was to lead to one of Jesus's chief complaints against the Pharisees (*Matt.* 23, 23-28). Secondly, they resulted in two levels of religious observance among pious Jews. The *Mishnah* and *Tosephta*, in dealing with these rules, distinguish those who undertake to be 'trustworthy' (ne'emānim) and those who undertake to be 'associates' (ḥabêrîm): *Mishnah*, *Demai* II, 2f; *Tos.*, *Demai* II, 2. The former are those who undertake to pay tithes scrupulously (in accordance with the Pharisaic interpretation of the tithing laws). The latter are those who, in addition, undertake to eat all their meals in ceremonial cleanness. The former were only undertaking observance of the Mosaic Law, whereas the latter were undertaking the observance of a preventative measure also. It was the latter requirement, and all that it implied, which kept the number of the Pharisees (or associates) small, whereas the former requirement made an appeal to the consciences of all godly men. The Maccabees, who, as we shall see, were not themselves among the Ḥasidim, or 'pious', may very well have been among the 'trustworthy'. So may those observant Jews of the time of the birth of Jesus, Zacharias and Elizabeth, Simeon and Anna (*Lk.* 1, 5ff; 2, 25-38). But the additional requirement for becoming an 'associate' had a sectarian tendency, and contained within it



the seeds of the later sectarian conflicts with the Sadducees (who wanted no non-biblical regulations) and with the Essenes (who wanted different ones).

A word more must be said about those to whom these early Pharisees, and Ezra himself, were opposed. Some writers have regarded them as men of liberal minds and lofty ideals, exempt from narrow nationalism, and responsible for some of the chief treasures of ancient Jewish literature. The tendency of all we have been saying has been to reject this view as absurd. The most extreme expression of it is found in Morton SMITH's *Palestinian Parties and Politics that Shaped the Old Testament*, (23) which treats the Old Testament evidence with considerable freedom, and tries to explain the whole of Jewish history from the Return almost to the beginning of the Christian era as a struggle between two great parties, the separatists and the 'assimilationists'; but a more moderate expression of the same view is contained, for example, in source N. H. SNAITH's *The Jews from Cyrus to Herod*. (24) Much of SMITH's evidence is spurious: he argues for the prevalence of assimilationism from Jewish intermarriage with aliens (which was bound to occur under foreign rule, but did not necessarily imply religious approval), from the existence of shrines at Tabor, Carmel, Hermon, Hebron and Mamre (all of which were outside post-Exilic Jewish territory until a late period) and from the fact that the Samaritans often described themselves as Jews (which does not mean that the Jews regarded them as such). (25) However, it is on the supposed literary remains of the assimilationists that the case breaks down most completely.

SNAITH appeals to 'Third Isaiah' (*Is.* 56-66), which may well be too early for his purpose, and which he has to admit contains strongly separatist passages. Both writers appeal to *Ruth* and *Jonah*, the first of which may again be too early, and only describes intermarriage with Moabites under conditions of isolation from other Israelites, which made it inevitable (compare Joseph's and Moses's 'mixed' marriages in the *Pentateuch*). *Jonah* is a more plausible instance, but the common idea that the book is criticising the prophet for being a narrow nationalist is not entirely credible in view of *Jon.* 1, 11f., and the interpretation of D. E. HART-DAVIES (26) has much to be said for it. SMITH appeals to *Proverbs*, *Job*, *Ecclesiastes* and *Song of Songs*, though only for trivial reasons,

(23) *Lectures on the History of Religions*, N.S. 9, New York, Columbia University Press, 1971.

(24) Wallington, Religious Education Press, 1963, pp. 74-78.

(25) *op. cit.*, pp. 86f., 92, 189f.

(26) *Jonah: Prophet and Patriot* (London, Thynne & Jarvis, 1925). He argues that the prophet sees Assyria not just as a foreign nation but as a terrible threat to his own people.

and problems of dating are in some cases involved. He also appeals to *Esther*, the *Pentateuch*, *Judith* and *Tobit*. (27) *Esther* is regarded by SNAITH, on the contrary, as a narrowly nationalistic book, but is presumably invoked by SMITH because of Esther's marriage, in exile, to a heathen king. However, it must be noted that Esther has no choice whether or not she join the *king's harem* (*Est.* 2, 2f.8), though, having been taken into it, she naturally aspires to be *queen*. The final editors of the *Pentateuch* SMITH holds to be assimilationists from as late as the fourth century B.C., who make the concession of requiring Gentiles to become proselytes by circumcision (cp. *Gen.* 34, 13-24; *Ex.* 12, 43-49, etc.); his approach to *Judith* is similar. SNAITH, on the other hand, holds the final editors of the *Pentateuch* to be separatists, and certainly the 'concession' of requiring circumcision was no small one, for the requirement formed a middle wall of partition in the ancient world. The anomaly that *Judith* allows an Ammonite to become a proselyte (*Judith* 14, 10; contrast *Deut.* 23, 3-6) is better regarded as a concession by separatists than by assimilationists, for a similar concession is once found in the *Mishnah* (*Yadaim* IV, 4; contrast *Yebamoth* VIII, 3). As for *Tobit*, this also speaks of 'proselytes' (*Tob.* 1, 8); the name Tobiah, which it uses, was Jewish as well as Ammonite (*2 Chron.* 17, 8; *Ezra* 2, 60; *Zech.* 6, 10.14); and the northern setting of both books, which SMITH emphasises, only serves their authors as an occasion to assert, with the Chronicler, that pious people even from the north show allegiance to Jerusalem, and travel to Jerusalem for worship, not to any northern shrine (*Judith* 4, 1-15; 5, 19; 9, 13; 16, 18-20; *Tob.* 1, 4-8; 13, 7-18; 14, 4-7).

Among these various works, it is particularly inept to describe *Tobit* and *Judith* as assimilationist, since they seem to have been written in deliberate opposition to assimilationism, or at least in sharp reaction against it. Not only do they insist that worship be offered at Jerusalem, but they are strongly opposed to inter-marriage, holding that marriage should be within one's own nation and even within one's own tribe and kindred (*Tob.* 4, 12f; cp. 1, 9; *Judith* 8, 2), thus extending the particular rules of *Num.* 36 about the marriage of female heirs to marriages in general. Such stringency is probably a direct reaction against the laxity of the assimilationists. *Tobit* and *Judith* are books of Pharisaic outlook, (28) even giving explicit expression to the two formal under-

(27) See SNAITH, *loc. cit.*, and SMITH, *op. cit.*, pp. 157-163, 173ff. for these appeals to literature.

(28) Thus, *Tobit* supports the existence of angels (*Tob.* 5, 4.16.21, etc.) and *Judith* teaches the reality of future judgment (*Judith* 16, 17), in harmony with Pharisaic beliefs and at variance with Sadducean (cp. *Acts* 23, 8f; JOSEPHUS,

takings of the 'associates', to be scrupulous about tithing (*Tob.* 1, 6-8; *Judith* 11, 13) and to eat their common food in ceremonial purity (*Tob.* 2, 5; *Judith* 12, 5-9); (29) and, since the Pharisaism reflected is of a primitive character, it would probably be right to regard the two works as being (along with the Septuagint Pentateuch and *Ecclesiasticus*) the earliest Pharisaic writings that we possess, giving us a unique insight into this zealous, anti-assimilationist movement at an early stage—in the case of *Tobit*, possibly as early as the Persian period. (30)

Thus, the supposed literary achievements of the assimilationists, when examined, crumble to dust, and the possibility has to be faced that, at least in the Persian period, the assimilationists were as bankrupt intellectually as they seem to have been spiritually.

*War*, II, viii, 14, 163-65; *Antiquities* XVIII, 1, 3, 14). Neither book can be Essene, since they both show a lack of concern for exact history and chronology very uncharacteristic of the Essenes. Moreover, the book of *Tobit* follows a lunar calendar like that of the Pharisees, making Dystrus (Adar) 7 a working day (*Tob.* 2, 12), whereas in the Essene solar calendar it was a sabbath. As for *Judith*, it treats Fridays as feasts (*Judith* 8, 6; cp. *Mishnah*, *Taanith* IV, 2; *Hagigah* III, 7) and allows an Ammonite to become a proselyte (see above), whereas the Essenes had their great fast of the Day of Atonement on a Friday, and adhered to the rule excluding Ammonites from the congregation (Qumran *Florilegium* 4Q 174).

(29) *Tobit* cannot in fact eat in ceremonial purity on this occasion, but 'with mourning', for he has just touched a corpse, and uncleanness from the dead, in accordance with *Num.* 19, lasts seven days. However, his intentions are shown by the fact that he performs ablutions before his meal none the less, and ignores the fact that he will have to touch the corpse again directly afterwards (*Tob.* 2, 7-9).

(30) Thus, the concept of the future life in *Tobit* is undeveloped (*Tob.* 3, 6.10-13; 13, 2), by contrast with the Pharisees's later stress on resurrection (*Acts* 23, 6-9, etc.); while in *Judith* the washing of hands before praying or eating has not yet been substituted for immersion, as had already happened by the time of the *Letter of Aristeas*, circa 145-125 B.C. (*Judith* 12, 5-9; *Ep. Ar.* 305). *Tobit* is probably earlier than *Judith*, since *Judith* has a more developed concept of the life to come (*Judith* 16, 17); and the exceptional antiquity of *Tobit* is confirmed by the fact that it is one of only three deutero-canonical books found at Qumran (the other two being the *Epistle of Jeremy* and *Ecclesiasticus*); that it makes direct reference to the ancient *Words of Ahikar*; that its affinities are Persian rather than Greek; and that it contains, along with its Pharisaic features, one or two Essene traits, suggesting that it dates from before the beginning of the open rivalry between the two parties in the mid second century B.C., and probably from before the distinct emergence of the proto-Essene movement and its literature a hundred years earlier. See the article *The Earliest Essene Literature and its Calendar* (*ut supra*), p. 389. Incidentally, the Aramaic and Hebrew fragments of *Tobit* from Qumran confirm the superiority of the recension of the book represented by Codex Sinaiticus and the Old Latin (to which all references here are made). See J. T. MILIK, *Ten Years of Discovery in the Wilderness of Judaea* (English translation, London, S.C.M., 1963), p. 31f.

*The Era of Priestly Reform: proto-Sadduceeism and proto-Essenism*

If the Pharisaic movement arose not later than 340 B.C., as we have argued, it arose in the Persian period, and though it was afterwards to be influenced by Hellenism in various ways, the date of its origin, and its conservative character—as a revival rather than a reform—meant that Hellenistic influence would be superficial rather than fundamental. The book of *Tobit*, which we have just been discussing, and which has good claim to be regarded as the oldest piece of uncanonical Jewish literature apart from the *Words of Ahikar*, shows Pharisaism as a religion emphasising the Mosaic Law (*Tob.* 1, 8; 3, 4f; 4, 5; 6, 13; 7, 12f.) and separation from foreigners in matters of worship, food and marriage (*Tob.* 1, 4-8.10-13; 4, 12f.), much in the manner of *Ezra*; insisting not only on ceremonial duties but on moral, especially kindness to the poor and the neglected dead (*Tob.* 1, 3.16-19; 2, 3-8; 4, 3-19, etc.); and setting its hope upon the future intervention of God (*Tob.* 13, 1-14, 7, etc.). These concerns are all of native growth, and do not call for any explanation from non-Jewish influence. Only the developed angelology and demonology of the book, especially the demon Asmodeus (from the Persian Aēshma daēva) and the magic used against him, show outside influence, though the influence here is Persian, not Greek. (31) The chief new developments that one finds in *Judith* are a greater asceticism (*Judith* 8, 4-6; 10, 3; 16, 22) and a reliance on God to intervene not just in the future but in present calamities (*Judith* 8, 11ff.), perhaps prompted by the Antiochene persecution; together with the concept of retribution in the life to come (*Judith* 16, 17). The last of these features could owe something to Hellenism, but the rest are entirely native products. A little earlier than *Judith*, perhaps, comes *Ecclesiasticus*. This too shows a developing conception of the future life, especially in the Greek translation (32) (though the earlier agnosticism still recurs in *Ecclus.* 17, 27f; 41, 3f.), but on the whole, as we saw on pp. 19-20, the author stands firmly in the footsteps of *Ezra*, and his attitude to Greek wisdom, in so far as he reflects it, is to maintain that the old is better.

However, though the conservative Pharisees had little interest in Greek wisdom, it needs not be assumed that all Jews before the Hellenizing crisis of 175-152 B.C. were of this outlook, or that to take an interest in it was previously anything very controversial. Martin HENGEL shows that, from the middle of the third century

(31) See D. C. SIMPSON in R. H. CHARLES, ed., *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament (ut supra)*, vol. 1, p. 193, and J. H. MOULTON there cited.

(32) For references, see note 1.

B.C., Hellenistic influence is to be found even in Judaea, but that the first sign of a reaction against it is in *Ecclesiasticus*, about seventy years later. (33) In the mid third century B.C., the conquest of the country by Alexander the Great was already about eighty years past, and it was currently under the rule of the Hellenistic Ptolemies of Egypt; so Hellenism had had time to make itself felt. Interestingly, we know of two other developments in the mid third century B.C. One was the marriage of the sister of the high priest Onias II to Tobias, an Ammonite prince (see JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities* XII, iv, 2, 160) and the other was the rise of the proto-Essene movement which, as we saw on p. 6, is dated by the *Book of Dreams* in 1 *Enoch* about 251 B.C. The marriage cannot be dated so precisely, but TCHERIKOVER has shown that Onias II probably began his long pontificate as early as the mid third century B.C., (34) and since the age of marriage for women was young, and the lady may have been married in her uncle Manasses's pontificate and not in her brother's, a date around or slightly before the middle of the third century B.C. is most probable.

The attitude of the priesthood, and especially of the high-priestly family, to the proto-Pharisaic lay revival is only scantily documented, but the fact that they were condemned as *'am ha-areš* for their mixed marriages and neglect of teaching must have caused widespread resentment. Individual high priests of devout disposition no doubt sympathised with the revival—we have seen that the high priest Jaddua sided with the protesting elders against his own brother, and all that JOSEPHUS tells us about Jaddua is to his credit; added to which, he was afterwards respected by the Essenes, no doubt because of his stand against mixed marriages, of which they were such ardent opponents. (35) Moreover, the

(33) *Judaism and Hellenism* (English translation, London, S.C.M., 1974), vol. 1, pp. 59ff., 248f.

(34) *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews* (ut supra), pp. 126-130. TCHERIKOVER in fact dates the marriage rather unnecessarily early, placing the birth of Joseph, the son of the marriage, between 270 and 260 B.C. Though Joseph "was kept by his age from going" to Egypt at the birth of Ptolemy V's son in 187-186 B.C. (JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities* XII, iv, 7, 196), this need not mean that he was born before 250 B.C. He would then have gone on his youthful embassy to Egypt not much before 230 B.C. (which would mean that Onias's payment of tribute to Egypt had been *erratic* since 242 B.C., not that it had then ceased completely, as TCHERIKOVER supposes—otherwise the crisis in relations would indeed have arisen sooner); and he would have farmed the taxes of Palestine for the Ptolemies between 230 B.C. and the conquest of Palestine by the Seleucids of Syria in 198 B.C. JOSEPHUS says that he farmed the taxes for 22 years (*Antiquities* XII, iv, 10, 224), though he does not say whether this was an unbroken period.

(35) For the Essene attitude to mixed marriages, see especially *Jubilees* 30, 7-17. Their attitude to Jaddua is shown by the title of the *Book of Jaddua*, found with other Essene writings in a cave near Jericho about 800 A.D., and known to the Karaite writer KIRKISANI.

high priest Simon II (circa 200 B.C.), to whom the Pharisees afterwards looked back as the last of the men of the Great Synagogue and a predecessor of theirs (*Mishnah, Aboth* I, 2), and whom Ben Sira admired so greatly (*Ecclus.* 50, 1-21), must have been a Pharisaic sympathiser. On the whole, however, the high-priestly family of the period probably conformed to Pharisaic views because these were the traditional views, because they were maintained by the men learned in the Law (the elder-scribes), and because the elder-scribes were a very influential element in society, rather than out of strong personal conviction. It seems unlikely that the chief priests, generally speaking, observed many of the preventative measures of the Pharisees, or were actual 'associates' in the lay-led Pharisaic societies: this was probably unusual, though it may have been somewhat more common among the ordinary priests.

The marriage of the high priest's sister to an Ammonite prince in the mid third century B.C. is a noteworthy fact from various points of view. For one thing, it did not apparently cause the public outcry caused by the marriage of the high priest's brother to a Samaritan princess about 85 years previously. It is true that there were more restrictions on the marriages of priests than on the marriages of priests' daughters, but when the bride was a member of the high-priestly family (especially as that family had such a record), one would expect there to have been great indignation from the scribes. What is equally surprising is that the descendants of this marriage, the Tobiads, were permitted to live undisturbed in Jerusalem, and to exercise considerable public influence, down to the time of the Hellenizing crisis (cp. *2 Macc.* 3, 10-12; JOSEPHUS, *War* I, 1, 1, 31; *Antiquities* XII, iv, 2, 160-XII, iv, 11, 229; XII, v, 1, 239-241). No less surprisingly, one finds, so it seems, the pious high priest Simon II (a Pharisaic sympathiser) on friendly terms with them, and actively participating in the strife between the grandsons of the marriage (cp. *Ant.* XII, iv, 11, 229), and his equally pious successor Onias III (an Essene sympathiser) at least allowing one of them to keep money in the Temple treasury (*2 Macc.* 3, 10-12), though perhaps by sufferance, because he was "a man in very high place", rather than gladly. Even if one allows for the fact that the Tobiad family were usually in a strong political position because of support from the Ptolemies, the Hellenistic rulers of Egypt, or the Seleucids, the Hellenistic rulers of Syria (as the case might be), the absence of influential religious opposition to the marriage or its descendants remains striking.

The only plausible explanation would seem to be that, when the marriage was in contemplation, the scribes insisted that the Ammonite prince should become a proselyte and be circumcised. However nominal his conversion, he and his descendants would



thereafter have technically been Jews, as indeed JOSEPHUS represents them as being (note especially *Antiquities* XII, iv, 2, 161-65; XII, iv, 6, 187-89; XII, iv, 10, 224). We have seen that the early Pharisaic work *Judith* speaks of an Ammonite becoming a proselyte, which shows that this is perfectly credible: "And when Achior (the leader of all the children of Ammon) saw all the things that the God of Israel had done, he believed in God exceedingly, and circumcised the flesh of his foreskin, and was joined unto the house of Israel, unto this day" (*Judith* 14, 10; cp. 5, 5).

But to admit such a convert was, of course, contrary to the Mosaic Law (*Deut.* 23, 3-6). The argument by which the scribes justified this can only be guessed at, but, if one may judge from the argument successfully used by Rabbi Joshua against Rabban Gamaliel II in the *Mishnah* in support of admitting such a convert on a much later occasion, it was: "Are the Ammonites and the Moabites still where they were? Long ago Sennacherib, king of Assyria, came up and put all the nations in confusion... And they permitted him (Judah the Ammonite) to come into the congregation" (*Yadaim* IV, 4; see also *Tosephta*, *Yadaim* II, 17-18).

Now, it cannot be supposed that any scribes of the mid third century B.C. who were disposed to be critical of the leaders of their class would have readily accepted such an open departure from the plain meaning of Scripture, supported by such a hypothetical argument. Gamaliel still found it difficult to do so centuries later. Consequently, it may be:

(a) this marriage that precipitated the emergence of the proto-Essene movement about 251 B.C. We know from the Qumran *Florilegium* 4 Q 174 that the Essenes were opposed to the admission of Ammonites as proselytes: "Thy sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established... That is the house where there shall never more enter... the Ammonite and the Moabite and bastard and alien and sojourner for ever, for my holy ones are there." (36)

The Essenes therefore viewed the Ammonites as Gentiles who could never become anything but Gentiles, and their attitude to intermarriage with Gentiles was extremely severe. Even a lay-woman who marries a Gentile is to be burned (like the priest's daughter who plays the harlot in *Lev.* 21, 9), according to *Jubilees* 30, 7: how much more the sister of the high priest!

(b) though it may have been this marriage which precipitated the emergence of the proto-Essene movement, there are sure to

(36) The translation is that of J. M. ALLEGRO and A. A. ANDERSON in *Discoveries in the Judean Desert of Jordan* V (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1968), which they edited.

have been other pre-disposing causes. One of them, no doubt, was the fact that for ninety or more years the effective religious leaders of the nation had been laymen. It must have been difficult for priests to feel that this was appropriate, and those priests who were 'associates' in the Pharisaic societies (as the Essenes show signs of having been, since they maintained the associates' practice of eating their ordinary food in ceremonial purity) (37) must often have wished that they could take the leadership in those societies. This is what the 'sons of Zadok' were able to do when they started forming their own societies after 251 B.C.;

(c) another pre-disposing cause must have been the influence of Hellenism. We saw above (p. 31f.) that by the mid third century B.C. Hellenistic influence had penetrated into Judaea, but had not yet aroused serious controversy. The main intellectual effect of Hellenism would be to encourage an enquiring and critical attitude of mind, calculated to result in a scrutiny and reform of the *status quo*. Since Pharisaism had by this time not only added various preventative measures to the Mosaic Law, but had started suspending laws (for example, by admitting Ammonites as proselytes), it had begun to invite a reform on biblical principles. The proto-Essene movement doubtless saw itself as the agent of this reform; though in the event it carried reform through somewhat unevenly, not rejecting the principle of preventative measures, and sometimes reinterpreting laws in a manner less convincing than the Pharisaic, but at least restoring laws which had fallen out of use (like the jubilee year) or been deliberately suspended (like the one above).

Hellenism seems to have affected the proto-Essene movement in other ways as well. The early Essene reform of the calendar shows some tokens of the influence of Greek science and mathematics, Essene eschatological speculations have perhaps drawn a few hints from Greek mythology, (38) and, as was noted on p. 9, the Essene insistence on the existence of spirits, on the future life and on divine predestination suggests that it may have been affected by Stoic philosophy.

The beginnings of Sadduceeism, since the movement has left no literary remains, (39) are much more difficult to date with any

(37) See p. 24 above.

(38) On these two matters, see the article *The Earliest Enoch Literature and its Calendar* (ut supra), pp. 371, 384.

(39) *Ecclesiastes*, *Ecclesiasticus* and *1 Maccabees* have been supposed by some to be of Sadducean authorship (so Kaufmann KOHLER, in his article *Sadducees* in the *Jewish Encyclopedia*). But the first is too early, and they all conflict with Sadducean views. *Ecclesiastes* affirms future personal judgment

certainty. Their claim to follow Scripture alone (see p. 7) may, indeed, have made the Sadducees cautious about writing anything else. Solomon ZEITLIN, very arbitrarily, makes the high priest Jeshua the son of Jozadak the first Sadducee (and his lay colleague Zerubbabel the first Pharisee). (40) At the opposite extreme, Abigador TCHERIKOVER makes the high priest John Hyrcanus the first Sadducee, when he broke with the Pharisees towards the end of his pontificate, about 110 B.C. (428 years later)! (41) This very late date is excluded if we believe JOSEPHUS, who first mentions the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes as three distinct parties in the pontificate of Jonathan Maccabaeus, from 152 to 142 B.C. (*Antiquities* XIII, v, 9, 171-73); and JOSEPHUS is supported, at any rate as regards the Essenes and Pharisees, by the archaeological evidence that the settlement at Qumran began about 140-130 B.C., (42) by the evidence of the *Book of Dreams* (see p. 6) and by the succession of named Pharisaic teachers, beginning in the first half of the second century B.C. (43) As regards the Sadducees themselves, JOSEPHUS is supported by the rabbinical tradition that the Sadducees and Boethusians arose as a result of the defection of two pupils of the proto-Pharisee Antigonus of Soko, i.e. in or around the second quarter of the second century B.C. (*Aboth of Rabbi Nathan* 5:2). However, by the same token the very early date is excluded as well. The names of the three parties never occur before the time of Jonathan Maccabaeus: even in the time of his brother Judas we hear only of the Ḥasidim (*1 Macc.* 2, 42; 7, 13-17; *2 Macc.* 14, 6). And though there was, as we have seen, a proto-Pharisaic and proto-Essene movement preceding the public emergence of the respective parties by a century or two, to suggest that, in the case of the (hypothetical) proto-Sadducean movement, it had been at work for nearly four centuries before emerging as a distinct and organized party, is incredible.

(*Eccles.* 11, 9; 12, 14), which the Sadducees denied. *1 Maccabees* supports the existence of angels (*1 Macc.* 7, 41), which the Sadducees denied, and ends its narrative, no doubt significantly, at the beginning of the pontificate of John Hyrcanus, before his breach with the Pharisees. On *Ecclesiasticus*, see note 1. For the views of the Sadducees on future judgment and on angels, cp. *Acts* 23, 8f; JOSEPHUS, *War* II, VIII, 14, 165.

(40) *The Rise and Fall of the Judaean State* (Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society of America, 1962-67), vol. 1, p. 176f.

(41) *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews* (*ut supra*), p. 263f.

(42) See Emil SCHÜRER, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*, revised by G. VERMES, F. MILLAR and M. BLACK, vol. 2 (Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1979), p. 586f., or, for a slightly earlier dating, J. T. MILIK, *Ten Years of Discovery* (*ut supra*), pp. 49-51, 144.

(43) *Mishnah, Hagigah* II, 2; *Aboth* I, 3ff. Cp. Jacob NEUSNER, *The Rabbinic Traditions about the Pharisees before 70* (Leiden, Brill, 1971), vol. 3, p. 306f.

Another indication that the Sadducees go back before the time of John Hyrcanus lies in their points of agreement with the Samaritans, notably their date for the Sheaf and Pentecost and their denial of the resurrection. (44) A comparison of the script, spelling and textual tradition of the Samaritan Pentateuch with that of manuscripts found at Qumran has now revealed that the breach between Samaritans and Jews only reached its completion between the mid second and late first century B.C., when the Samaritans evidently became as exclusive towards the Jews as the Jews were towards the Samaritans. The crucial event in this period, which hardened the Samaritans' attitude, was probably the destruction of their temple on Mount Gerizim by John Hyrcanus about 120 B.C. (45) This was before he became a Sadducee (cp. JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities* XIII, ix, 1, 254-56; XIII, x, 5f, 288-298). If, however, he was the originator of Sadduceeism, it is inconceivable that the Samaritans should have adopted some of his novel principles after he had destroyed their temple, and equally inconceivable that he should have adopted principles of theirs, holding them in the abhorrence that he did. Whereas, if the Sadducees originated earlier, it is very intelligible that the Samaritan rivals to the Jerusalem priesthood should have sympathised with the Sadducees' dissenting views.

Conversely, another indication that the Sadducean movement arose *after the time of Jeshua* is the prominence of angels in the oracles of Zechariah, one of the two prophets who collaborated with Zerubbabel and Jeshua in their work (*Zech.* 1, 9.11-14.19; 2, 3; 3, 1.3.5f; 4, 1.4f; 5, 5.10; 6, 4f.).

If we are to narrow down the period of origin of the Sadducean movement more than this, we shall have to do so by detailing its points of similarity to Essenism:

(a) Both were reforming movements, appealing to Scripture in order to reform tradition (see pp. 7-12).

(b) Both were led by priests who called themselves 'sons of Zadok' (see pp. 10-12).

(c) As biblicist movements, they both probably objected to the admission of the Ammonite prince Tobias as a proselyte, and not the Essenes alone. One cannot be certain about this, since

(44) That the Samaritans agreed with the Sadducees on these and other points (though they later accepted the resurrection) see J. A. MONTGOMERY, *The Samaritans* (Philadelphia, Winston, 1907), p. 186f; J. E. H. THOMSON, *The Samaritans* (Edinburgh, Oliver & Boyd, 1919), p. 132f.

(45) See J. D. PURVIS, *The Samaritan Pentateuch and the Origin of the Samaritan Sect (ut supra)*, p. vii; R. PUMMER, *The Present State of Samaritan Studies*, part 1, in *Journal of Semitic Studies*, vol. 21 (1976), pp. 39-61.

the Sadducees were always characterised by wealth (see JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities* XIII, x, 6, 298; XVIII, i, 4, 17), which suggests that they may have been a reform not within the lower priesthood of the Pharisaic societies, like the Essenes, but within the higher priesthood surrounding the actual high-priestly family. However, none of the high priests themselves are known to have been Sadducees before the conversion of John Hyrcanus, (46) and since we have seen (p. 11 and note 11) that it was quite possible before the Maccabean revolt for the captain of the Temple to be of a different family from the high priest, it may have been in the families surrounding the high-priestly family, rather than in that family itself, that the Sadducean reform arose. And since the Sadducees certainly objected to the Pharisaic suspension of some of the severe penalties imposed by the Pentateuch (discussed on p. 13), and repealed the Pharisaic decrees to this effect as soon as the high priest John Hyrcanus came over to their side and gave them the power (cp. JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities* XIII, x, 6, 293-98), it would only be consistent for them to have objected also to the Pharisaic suspension of the law excluding Ammonites.

(d) As priestly movements, primarily, the Sadducean as well as the Essene movement probably felt the impropriety of allowing the effective religious leadership of the nation to remain in lay hands.

(e) As reforming movements, the Sadducean as well as the Essene may have been predisposed in this direction by the influence of Hellenism. Moreover, just as the added speculative element in Essenism may have owed something to Hellenism, so may the added reductionist or sceptical element in Sadduceism. (47) For if the Essene insistence on the existence of spirits, on the life to come and on divine predestination is suggestive of the influence of Stoicism, the Sadducean denials on the same three topics are equally suggestive of the influence of Epicureanism. (48)

Assuming these various parallels are significant, it means that the proto-Sadducean movement arose at the same time (mid

(46) As we have seen (pp. 6, 11, 22, 32f.), Jaddua and Simon II were Pharisaic sympathisers, Onias III was an Essene sympathiser, and Jason, Menelaus and Alcimus were Hellenizing syncretists. Onias II can hardly have been a Sadducean sympathiser either, if he wanted his sister to marry an Ammonite, and made terms with the Pharisaic scribes to bring it about. On this showing, none of the high priests between the middle of the third century B.C. and John Hyrcanus was of Sadducean outlook, if one may assume that Jonathan and Simon Maccabaeus were not (see p. 42, 45-46).

(47) On the reductionist element in Sadduceism, see the article *The Earliest Enoch Literature and its Calendar* (ut supra), p. 400 and note 53.

(48) See p. 9.

third century B.C.) and under the same influences as the proto-Essene, but that it arose in different circles of the priesthood and under the influence of different schools of Hellenistic thought, which accounts for the different direction in which it moved.

*The Era of Conflict: (a) between Ḥasidim and Hellenizers*

The rise of two reforming schools of piety, under priestly scribes, did not at once result in an open division. More priests were perhaps now scribes than before, but the traditionalists maintained their numerical strength and, at first, their influence with the high-priestly family. The next high priest after Onias II was the pious Simon II, a pronounced Pharisaic sympathiser. A saying of his, fully in the spirit of the book of *Tobit*, is preserved in the *Mishnah*: "By three things is the world sustained: by the Law, by the Temple-service, and by deeds of loving-kindness" (*Aboth* I, 2).

The fact that there was no open division is shown by two pieces of evidence:

(i) That it was possible for his son, the similarly pious Onias III, to be an Essene-sympathiser instead, without any immediate disruption resulting. He is praised not only in the *Book of Dreams* (an Essene text) from *1 Enoch*, but in *2 Maccabees* (a work without Essene characteristics), which speaks of his 'godliness' and 'hatred of wickedness', because of which 'the Laws were kept very well', and calls him 'a zealot for the Laws', 'reverend in bearing, yet gentle in manner and well-spoken, and exercised from a child in all points of virtue' (*2 Macc.* 3, 1; 4, 2; 15, 12). All this is a work which, in defiance of the standard Essene calendar, makes Adar 13 a sabbath (*2 Macc.* 15, 1-5.36)! One should contrast the situation three quarters of a century later. Then, when the three schools of thought had become three distinct parties, the effect of the high priest John Hyrcanus going over from the Pharisees to the Sadducees appears to have been a rebellion (cp. JOSEPHUS, *War* I, 11, 8, 67; *Antiquities* XIII, x, 7, 299).

(ii) The other indication that there was no open division between the three schools as yet is that the names of the three parties, Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes, did not yet exist. All that we hear of are the Ḥasidim, or 'pious' (Gk. *Hasidaioi*). If, however, there were no distinguishing names in general use, there can have been no open division.

The Ḥasidim are first recorded as a distinct class or group within the nation at the time of the Maccabean rising. A company of them rallied to Mattathias and his friends in 167 B.C., soon after they began their revolt, and are described as "mighty men



of Israel, every one that offered himself willingly for the Law" (1 Macc. 2, 42). Later, in 162 B.C., they are identified by the Hellenizing high priest Alcimus with the warring party in revolt under the leadership of Judas Maccabaeus (2 Macc. 14, 6), though, when Alcimus arrives with the Syrian army, a company of scribes representing them seeks to make peace with him, as being 'a priest of the seed of Aaron', and are deceived by his hypocritical assurances, while the Maccabees remain suspicious (1 Macc. 7, 10-17). The Ḥasidim obviously took their title from the Hebrew Old Testament, where the *ḥasidim* of the Lord are the faithful and righteous, as contrasted with the proud and wicked (1 Sam. 2, 9; Ps. 31, 23; 37, 28; 52, 9; 97, 10), but the term is there used in a quite general way, whereas in the Maccabean literature it denotes a readily identifiable class or group. They are evidently distinct from the Maccabees, but are their main supporters; they are pious, and zealous for the Mosaic Law, and there are many scribes among them.

Seeing that we read of the Ḥasidim in the time of Judas but of the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes in the time of his successor Jonathan (see JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities* XIII, v, 9, 171-73), it is always recognised that there is a close relationship between the Ḥasidim and the three parties. Older writers usually saw the Ḥasidim as the forerunners of the Pharisees, but recently some have seen them as the forerunners of the Essenes (so ZEITLIN, MILIK, etc.) and others as forerunners of both parties (so JEREMIAS, HENGEL, etc.). (49) They certainly included the Essenes, since we know from 1 En. 90, 9f. that the enlightened ones, i.e. the Essenes, flocked to Judas's banner; but did they include others as well?

Since the Ḥasidim played so large a part in the Maccabean revolt, it is normally supposed that their title of 'the pious' relates to their opposition to the Hellenizers, but as it now appears that the three schools of thought go back well before the Hellenizing crisis into the third (if not fourth) century B.C., it follows that the original reason for the name, to whichever school or schools it relates, is likely to be somewhat different. Bearing in mind that all three schools, not excluding the Sadducees, were scrupulous in their observance of the Law (according to their own interpretation

(49) If the proposed derivation of the name 'Essenes' from 'Ḥasidim' or its Syriac equivalent could be established, that would settle the question, but there is increasing support for the alternative derivation from Aramaic 'YSRYN 'healers'. See Menahem MANSOOR's article *Essenes* in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, and the authorities there cited. 'Healers' corresponds to the name 'Therapeutae' given to a quasi-Essene community in PHILO's *De Vita Contemplativa*.

of it), (50) it seems more probable that the name implies a contrast not simply with the Hellenizers but with all the negligent, the 'people(s) of the land' whose non-observance of the Law always troubled the Pharisees so greatly, and of whom the Hellenizers were just conspicuous examples. In this case, the name *Hasidim* would probably have belonged primarily to the forerunners of the Pharisees, but would not have excluded either of the two reforming schools of thought which arose in their midst, since these too were observant of the Law, and these too became only at a later date separate, rival parties with names of their own.

The motives and policies of the Hellenizers have been examined by TCHERIKOVER with a thoroughness and perspicacity which leave little to be desired. (51) If, however, to the Pharisees (and the other *Hasidim*) they were just '*am ha-areš*, their only influence on the development of the three parties was probably to make the latter much more suspicious of Hellenism than their precursors were, or than they would themselves have been in other circumstances.

*The Era of Conflict: (b) between Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes*

It is clear from evidence of various sorts that a great change came over the Pharisaic, Sadducean and Essene movements in the second century B.C. So great was the change as to give rise to the common view that the three movements actually originated in that century. Yet this, as we have seen, was not the case. The three schools of thought and their characteristic opinions can be traced back much further, and the second-century changes hardly affected those opinions, except to develop and accentuate them—otherwise the changes were of a different kind. One of the major causes of change was, of course, the activity of the Hellenizing high priests, followed by the Antiochene persecution and the Maccabean revolt, but this was not the earliest or sole cause.

The earliest cause lay right outside the second century. It was simply the rise of the two reforming schools of thought alongside the Pharisaic in the mid third century B.C. Until that juncture, Pharisaism had been the sole important religious influence in the nation for at least 90 and perhaps nearer 180 years. One or more of the high priests had openly sided with it, and the rest had been prepared to follow its guidance. The appearance of two

(50) As TCHERIKOVER rightly emphasises (*Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews*, *ut supra*, pp. 262-65). The Philhellenism of the Sadducean high priests of the first century B.C. was a very different thing from the syncretistic Hellenism of the previous century.

(51) *Op. cit.*, especially pp. 152-234.

dissenting schools of thought did not immediately alter the situation, since no high priest immediately sided with either of them, but the possibility of this happening was now present.

The second influential development was the accession of the high priest Onias III, an Essene sympathiser. His father Simon II had been a Pharisaic sympathiser, and died not before the ascension of Seleucus IV to the throne of Syria in 187 B.C., according to JOSEPHUS (*Antiquities* XII, iv, 10f., 224-29). As was noted on p. 39, the Essene views of the new high priest do not seem to have caused any immediate disruption, and his exceptional piety may have made the Pharisees more tolerant of what, at the time, they probably expected to be no more than a temporary interlude in their long ascendancy. To the Essenes, however, this was the fulfilment of their hopes. In the event, both schools were disappointed. In 175 B.C., with the help of the new king of Syria, Antiochus Epiphanes, Onias was supplanted in the high priesthood by his brother Jeshua-Jason, and the new high priest was neither a Pharisee nor an Essene but a Hellenizing syncretist. None of the Essenes was ever to hold the high priesthood again, but almost the same was true of the Pharisees. There were to be two more Hellenizing high priests, and then a period of seven years without a high priest; and though the first two Maccabean high priests (their family having belonged, probably, to the 'trust-worthy', though not to the *Hasidim*) (52) may well have followed traditional views, as the third certainly did for a time, this respite for the Pharisees was only to last about 42 years. For around 110 B.C. the third Maccabean high priest, John Hyrcanus, went over to the Sadducees (cp. JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities* XIII, x, 5f., 288-298), and from then onwards the high priesthood was to be in Sadducean hands—however much hampered by Pharisaic opposition—more or less continuously. (53)

In retrospect, therefore, the Pharisees saw the death of Simon II and the accession of Onias III as a watershed. Up to then, the high priesthood had been effectively in Pharisaic hands, but after then it ceased to be. This is one of the reasons why, with Simon II, the long anonymity of the 'men of the Great Synagogue' comes to an end. After this, the chief upholders of the traditions have to be laymen. So, in chapter 1 of *Mishnah, Aboth*, Simon II hands on the (oral) Law not to Onias III (an Essene) but to Antigonus of Soko, and Antigonus hands it on to a line of named Pharisaic teachers, who have their own succession, independent of the succession of the high priests.

(52) See pp. 27, 40.

(53) See Joachim JEREMIAS, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus (ut supra)*, p. 229f.

The third development was the rise of the Hellenizing movement, begun by Jeshua-Jason and culminating, for the Essenes, in the murder of Onias III by the Syrians at the instigation of Jason's successor Menelaus. This murder, which is recorded in *2 Macc.* 4, 32-38 and is referred to in the *Book of Dreams* (see p. 6), occurred about 171 B.C. Up to that point, the Essenes could hope to see the rightful high priest restored, but when he was murdered, and his son fled to Egypt and established the temple at Leontopolis, making it impossible for him to return, their hopes were dashed. What steps they took as a result we do not know, but very likely it was now that they started withdrawing the members of their societies from their life among other Jews into separate, independent communities. At all events, the *Damascus Document*, which dates the rise of the Essenes 390 years after the beginning of the Exile, is probably pointing to this year and this event as the occasion of their rise. (54)

The fourth development was the raising of the standard of revolt against the persecuting Syrians by Mattathias Maccabaeus, and then by Judas his son, in 167 B.C. The Essenes rallied to Judas's standard (*1 Enoch* 90, 9f.), as did the Ḥasidim generally, and it is at this juncture that the rise of the Essenes is dated by the *Book of Dreams* (see p. 6). Clearly, it does not make much difference whether one dates the emergence of the Essenes as a distinct party at the beginning of their withdrawal into their own communities or at their joining of the Maccabean revolt four years later. In both ways they signalled their alienation from the Hellenizing high priests and their determination to stand by the Mosaic Law.

The fifth development was the rededication of the Temple by Judas Maccabaeus in 164 B.C. (*1 Macc.* 4, 36-61; *2 Macc.* 10, 1-8). This is spoken of with approval in *Greek Testament of Levi* 17, 10, and must have been one of the main purposes for which the Essenes and the other Ḥasidim supported Judas's campaign. Now that their religious goals were on the way to being achieved, we find the Ḥasidim ready to make peace with the new Syrian-sponsored high priest Alcimus in 162 B.C., provided he is willing to complete the process and grant 'justice'; though when he treacherously kills sixty of them, the rest take warning (*1 Macc.* 7, 10-18). On rededicating the Temple, Judas "chose blameless priests, such as had pleasure in the Law" (*1 Macc.* 4, 42), but we read nothing of him appointing a new high priest, for reasons discussed on p. 10-11. This meant that Menelaus was left nominally

(54) See the article *The Significance of the Calendar for Interpreting Essene Chronology and Eschatology* (ut supra), p. 180f.

in office until his death in 162 B.C., but whether he (or, except very briefly, his successor Alcimus) was allowed access to the sanctuary seems extremely doubtful, and this may indeed be the occasion when the priestly course of Bilgah, to which Menelaus apparently belonged, was prohibited from ministering in the Temple ever again (see note 11). After Alcimus's death in 159 B.C., there was a period of seven years without any high priest at all (cp. JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities* XX, x, 3, 237), and this may have been effectively the case for most of the previous five years as well, since 164 B.C. During that whole period, the 'blameless priests' chosen by Judas, who were doubtless chosen from all schools of thought among the Hasidim who supported him—Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes alike—were presumably able, to a considerable extent, to observe the law of worship according to their own varying understandings of it. A good deal of confusion must have resulted.

The sixth development was the appointment of Jonathan Maccabaeus as high priest in 152 B.C. (*1 Macc.* 10, 15-21). He was appointed by the Seleucid monarch of Syria, like his three predecessors, and he was already the secular ruler of the nation—an office which had been combined with the high priesthood for centuries. He was a priest of the course of Jehoiarib, not a member of the old high-priestly family, but we have seen (p. 10f.) that it is unlikely that any close relative of that family remained in the country. The confusion of the period without a high priest demanded that one be appointed, and Jonathan was the obvious choice. Yet, when he was appointed, his high priesthood was apparently rejected by the Essenes (*Greek Testament of Levi* 17, 11; *Qumran Habakkuk Commentary*, *passim*), (55) and it is in his pontificate that the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes are first recorded, under these names, as distinct religious parties (cp. JOSEPHUS, *Ant.* XIII, v, 9, 171-73). The 20 years between the death of Onias III and the rise of the Teacher of Righteousness, of which *Damascus Document* I, 9-12 speaks, during which the Essenes were without effective leadership, and so "were like blind men groping for the way", ended about 151 B.C., the year after Jonathan's pontificate began; (56) so it was probably under the Teacher's leadership that the Essenes made their protest and withdrew from participation in Temple worship until better days should come or the eschatological Temple should be built.

(55) That the 'Wicked Priest' of the *Habakkuk Commentary* is Jonathan rather than Simon Maccabaeus, or any later high priest, is plausibly argued by J. T. MILIK (*Ten Years of Discovery*, *ut supra*, pp. 64-73, 84-87). See also the new SCHÜRER, *ut supra*, vol. 2, p. 586f.

(56) This assumes that the preceding 390 years (*Damascus Document* I, 5-9) expired at the murder of Onias III, about 171 B.C., as is argued on p. 43 and in the article there cited.

The reason for the Essene protest is often supposed to be Jonathan's genealogy, as not being descended from Zadok like the old high-priestly family. (57) We have seen, however, that it is doubtful whether there were any close relatives of that family in the country, and that even the Essenes do not use 'sons of Zadok' in a strictly genealogical way (cp. pp. 10-12). The real reason for their protest, probably, was that Jonathan had not adopted Essene views, but had started governing the Temple and its worship on traditional (that is, Pharisaic) lines. The liberty that the Essenes had enjoyed there while there was no high priest was consequently at an end, and their hope that any new high priest would take his lead from Onias III, and not from Simon II and his predecessors, had been frustrated. The Essenes had their own rules about the sacrifices, of which the *Aramaic Testament of Levi* and the *Qumran Temple Scroll* give a detailed account, as well as their own festal calendar, so this was a very serious development.

The Pharisees, having discovered by experience that, if they once lost the high priesthood, it might be a long time before they regained it, and it might in the meantime get into the most unsuitable hands, had probably made up their minds that, in so far as they could influence the appointment (and the Syrian king would hardly have thought to appoint a high priest without Jewish prompting), any new high priest must be someone of traditional, Pharisaic views. If this determination of theirs became generally known, they doubtless had, as usual, the support of the majority of the nation, and Jonathan, a national hero, may even have been the popular choice. The Essenes, for their part, conscious of being a leaderless minority, but conscious also of having possessed the high priesthood immediately before the Hellenizing apostasy, were probably equally determined that the nation should continue without a high priest until a suitable Essene candidate should arise (which happened, just too late, in the person of the Teacher of Righteousness). There is likely to have been a measure of fanaticism in the Essene determination, because they held that (through Enoch and others) their calendar and their interpretation of the sacrificial laws had been divinely revealed,

(57) A passage in the *Tosephta* and *Talmuds* is interpreted by JEREMIAS as meaning that the Pharisees brought some such objection against the high priests of the Maccabean line (*Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus, ut supra*, p. 189). This, however, was long after the dynasty had antagonised the Pharisees by going over to the Sadducees. The only objection which we know to have been made by a Pharisee in the earlier period was that the mother of John Hyrcanus was reputed to have been once captured by the Syrians (cp. JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities* XIII, x, 5, 288-292), which, in the light of *Lev.* 21, 7.14, would have impaired his priestly descent from Jehoiarib, but would not have affected the question of descent from Zadok, to which he made no claim.



and it was unthinkable that a new high priest should abolish these. The Sadducees, knowing that they too were a minority, and having never held the high priesthood, probably, or claimed that their interpretation of the laws was due to special revelation, might have been inclined to view the situation more calmly, but for the ardent rivalry of the other two schools. As it was, they too entered the field as contenders, and their ambitions were at length gratified, though not for about another 42 years.

The Jews were not at this stage free to appoint their own high priest and simply have the decision confirmed by the Syrian king, as in the time of Jonathan's successor Simon (*1 Macc.* 13, 41f; 14, 35.38-41.47). However, they had not fought a war of liberation for fifteen years without determining to have some say in the matter. When, therefore, the appointment was made, the reaction must have been strong, both among the satisfied Pharisees, who looked forward to being the advisers of the new high priest, and among the dissatisfied Sadducees and Essenes, who could have no such expectations. The Sadducees continued in communion with the high priest, and became the great rivals of his favoured advisers, but the Essenes separated themselves from him, resolving to have no part in worship which they regarded as contrary to the true interpretation of the Law. From this time onwards, therefore, the breach between the three schools was open and irreconcilable, and they naturally acquired their distinctive party-names.

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