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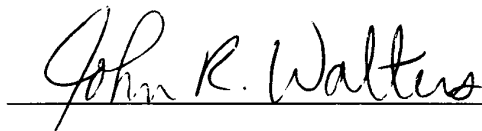
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The Teacher of Righteousness in the  
Dead Sea Scrolls

A thesis submitted to the  
Faculty of the Biblical Studies Division  
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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts in Biblical Studies

Approved:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John R. Walters". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

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by

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## I. Introduction

The accidental discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947 opened up a completely new world of biblical scholarship. The contents that the caves near the Dead Sea produced have proved to be the most important archaeological find of the twentieth century for biblical studies. The caves produced a nearly complete manuscript of the book of Isaiah. The discoveries also produced the Copper Scroll, the Temple Scroll, the Covenant of Damascus and other interesting texts, some of which are biblical or apocryphal.<sup>1</sup> Some of the most peculiar discoveries have been the peshers on Hosea, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk and the Psalms. They are peculiar in their “apocalyptic” interpretations of these texts. The commentaries point the biblical events to characters of the Qumran community and those major characters interacting with the Qumran residents. These major characters are referred to as the Teacher of Righteousness, the Wicked Priest, the Scoffer, the Liar and/or the Spouter of Lies. The most pressing issue raised by these references is simply their identities. In this study these characters will be evaluated in an attempt to find some clues as to the identity of the Teacher of Righteousness. Little is known of this person, and, therefore, to find out any data about him one must draw some connections between this character and the others, with primary focus given to the Wicked Priest.

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<sup>1</sup> Geza Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (London: Penguin Books, 1995), xiii-xxxv. All quotations from the Qumran Scrolls will be taken from this source unless otherwise noted.

## A. History of the Debate Over the Teacher of Righteousness

The history of the debate concerning the identity of the Teacher of Righteousness finds its way to the very beginnings of Qumran research. Within the texts from Qumran are mentioned several characters spoken of in a cryptic or poetic language. These references are to the Liar, the Scoffer, the Wicked Priest and the Teacher of Righteousness. The initial questions that arose out of scholarship were simply concerned with the identity of these characters. Their anonymous nature has caused many problems for students of the Qumran materials. Knowledge of these characters' identities would easily allow scholars more accurately to date the Scrolls. More accurate dating would then lead to a better knowledge of the history of the time in which the Scrolls were written. Also, knowledge of these characters' identities could have theological implications.<sup>2</sup> Their identities would shed light on the theological ferment of the region at that time.<sup>3</sup>

The early work on the Teacher of Righteousness<sup>4</sup> was primarily interested in his identity because of the references to his having been the leader of his followers to

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<sup>2</sup> Geza Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Qumran in Perspective* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), 198-221.

<sup>3</sup> The theological state of the region was in flux throughout the second and first centuries B.C.E. The primary issues were concerned with the position of High Priest and the ruling powers of the era which will be discussed in further detail in the following pages.

<sup>4</sup> Andre Dupont-Sommer drew some early comparisons of Jesus and the Teacher of Righteousness in *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A Preliminary Survey*, Trans. E. Margaret Rowley (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1952). Jean Carmignac in *Christ and the Teacher of Righteousness: The Evidence of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, Trans. Katharine Greenleaf Pedley (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1962), argued for Judah the Essene. H.H. Rowley suggested Onias III in *The Zadokite Fragments and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1952), and William H. Brownlee suggested that the Teacher of Righteousness was either the Pharisee Eleazar or the Essene prophet Judas in "The historical allusions of the Dead Sea Habakkuk Midrash." *Bulletin of the American Schools for Oriental Research* 126 (1952) : 10-20. Of these early attempts only Judah the Essene is still considered to be a candidate.

Qumran. Indications in the texts seem to say that the community probably interacted within the society at large. The text that deals with the withdrawal to Qumran is the Covenant of Damascus which states,

[Y]et for twenty years they were like blind men groping for the way. And God observed their deeds, that they sought Him with a whole heart, and He raised for them a Teacher of Righteousness to guide them in the way of His heart (CD I, 16-17).

It appears that a split occurred with the division leaving some in various locations throughout the region.<sup>5</sup> The split was probably over theological and doctrinal differences, but this is currently unclear. Those who retreated to Qumran believed in the Teacher of Righteousness and followed his instructions, which they believed to have been ordained by God.

The scholarly debates have led to nothing definite about the identity of the Teacher of Righteousness. Many theories have been raised,<sup>6</sup> but currently no suggestion has gained any consensus. For the most part scholars seem to be holding judgment on the issue until clearer data is available.<sup>7</sup> Over the past few years fewer attempts have been taken at naming these characters. This may be because sufficient data has not surfaced to sort out the options with finality.

## **B. Identity of the Members of the Qumran Community**

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<sup>5</sup> Michael Knibb, *The Qumran Community* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 7.

<sup>6</sup> These theories will be discussed in detail in part IV.

<sup>7</sup> James C. VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994), 161.

Several possibilities have been offered for the identity of the group of individuals who retreated to Qumran. An overwhelming majority of scholars identifies the community as a group of Essenes who broke from other Essenes due to doctrinal and theological differences.<sup>8</sup> Some of these may have been related to Jonathan's accession to the throne. However, a few other options are possible and deserve discussion.

One of several options for the identity of the Qumran community is that it was a splinter group of Sadducees. Like the Essenes, the Sadducees were a large and visible group during the era, and they were closely tied to the priesthood. However, certain aspects of this group make it difficult to place them at Qumran. There is little indication that they had any "sectarian organization" like that of the Qumran community.<sup>9</sup> Also, the Qumran community saw itself as "the Poor," which was not a characteristic self-description of the Sadducees. Also, this group was almost always the governing faction in Judaea. Conversely, the Qumran group considered itself to be in exile, disassociated from society at large. Finally, the Sadducees were the primary group in the Jerusalem Temple, but the Qumran group saw the Temple as "contaminated," and worship there was considered an "abomination." Given the differences, it is safe to suppose that the Sadducees were not the inhabitants of Qumran.

Another group possibly identified with Qumran is the Pharisees. Many similarities can be observed between the Pharisees and the sect at Qumran, but some fundamental differences turn the argument away from the Pharisees. One major problem

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<sup>8</sup> Knibb, *The Qumran Community*, 9.

<sup>9</sup> Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Qumran in Perspective*, 118-119.



with the theory is that the Pharisees were basically a lay organization. The Qumran community, however, placed ultimate authority in the hands of the priests. The Pharisees were also quite involved with the general public whereas the Qumran sect reserved its doctrines only for members admitted into the community. Finally, the Qumran sect was supposedly a celibate group. The Pharisees, on the other hand, encouraged procreation as a religious duty.

One other possible identity for those individuals residing at Qumran is the group referred to as Zealots. Some evidence could be taken to identify them as those at Qumran, but it seems quite speculative. One of the major arguments against their being at Qumran is that the Qumran community originated somewhere near the middle of the second century B.C.E. The Zealots probably did not form until approximately the year 6 C.E. Driver<sup>10</sup> and Roth<sup>11</sup> were the primary supporters of the Zealot theory, but their views have not been taken up by many in the scholarly world.

The Essenes are the likely candidates in the debate over who was residing at Qumran. They did live primarily on the outskirts of society, and they had extensive initiation rites for those wishing to join the sect, similar to the initiation rites in place at Qumran. They were extremely organized and deliberate about their way of life. In short, they have much in common with the inhabitants of Qumran during the period. Also, Josephus places them contemporaneous with the archaeological data for the dating of the

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<sup>10</sup> G.R. Driver, *The Judaean Scrolls: The Problem and a Solution* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1965).

<sup>11</sup> Cecil Roth, *The Historical Background of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1958).

Qumran community.<sup>12</sup> However, there do exist some discrepancies. Josephus, Pliny<sup>13</sup> and Philo<sup>14</sup> report a great deal about the Essenes. In their writings are found some differences concerning what they reported about the Essenes. For example, though Philo,<sup>15</sup> Pliny<sup>16</sup> and Josephus<sup>17</sup> all report that the Essenes were celibate, Josephus, in *Jewish War*, does report of married sectaries.<sup>18</sup> Also, Philo<sup>19</sup> and Josephus state that the Essenes were opposed to slavery, but in *War*, an earlier more detailed account, Josephus does not mention this aspect of Essenism. Again, Josephus reports that the last step in the Essene initiation procedure, at least for the Essenes with whom he is familiar, is the oath.<sup>20</sup> However, in the Scrolls the oath is the first step.

Contradictions can be seen internally as well. The Community Rule<sup>21</sup> reports of common ownership of property, whereas the Covenant of Damascus,<sup>22</sup> offers legislation for matters concerning private property. These discrepancies do cause problems, but

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<sup>12</sup> Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 13. 171-172.

<sup>13</sup> Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, 5.15.73.

<sup>14</sup> Philo, *Quod omnis probus liber sit*, 75-91.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 2. 161.

<sup>16</sup> Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, 5.17.4.

<sup>17</sup> Josephus, *Jewish War*, 2. 120-121.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 2. 161.

<sup>19</sup> Philo, *Quod omnis probus liber sit*, 78-79.

<sup>20</sup> Josephus, *Jewish War*, 2. 142.

<sup>21</sup> *The Community Rule*, 1QS VI, 19-21

<sup>22</sup> *The Covenant of Damascus*, CD XIV, 12-15.

there are two good reasons for the inconsistencies in Josephus' reports according to Vermes: "the varying reliability of the witnesses and the diversity of the readership addressed."<sup>23</sup> Also, in a community in existence over two hundred years it is likely that some procedures would change or even that a report simply could have been issued mistakenly.

The common belief among the academic community currently is that the Qumran community was an Essene sect. This being the case, it is important to note some of their characteristics. As mentioned, they were known for extreme order and discipline. They were preoccupied with purity. Celibacy and their avoidance of "oil" are attestations to this practice. They took ritual baths, and if a senior member was touched by a younger member the senior took a purifying bath immediately.

One of their basic rituals was to take a full bath before taking their meals. This represents their obsession with purity and in a way represents their piety. But their piety is more visible in their devotion to the law. Moses was seen as second only to God in the Essene communities. At the Sabbath services exposition was given on the law. Their meals were even pietistic and quite ritualistic. Full baths were taken for purification before entering the sanctity of the table fellowship. Priests offered prayers before and after the meals. These rituals, as rigorous as some seem, show the easy comparison to the rituals of the Qumran community.

These similarities of the Qumran community with Essenism reveal the possibility that the two groups were one and the same. Evidence from Pliny, Philo and Josephus

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<sup>23</sup> Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Qumran in Perspective*, 128.

supports the possibility of the Essene theory in large measure. Pliny reports of an Essene village that corresponds closely to the location of the Qumran site.<sup>24</sup> Also, Josephus' report that the Essenes existed between the middle of the second century B.C.E. to the first Jewish war coincides very well with the archaeological dating for the community. Also, the reports from the scrolls themselves correspond to Greek and Latin reports concerning the Essenes.<sup>25</sup> This type of data along with the similarities that can be drawn between the Essenes and the Qumran inhabitants speaks strongly to the possibility that the two were one and the same.

### **C. Historical Sketch of the Community Setting in the Time Frame for the Teacher of Righteousness**

There is little doubt that the Qumran community existed in the period between the beginning of the second century B.C.E. and the end of the first century C.E. The events between these periods had serious implications for the community, the greatest being theological. The community's primary purposes for existence were apocalyptic. The group retreated to Qumran to avoid the turmoils of the day and to wait for God's vengeance. God would come to establish again His "Remnant,"<sup>26</sup> which the community considered itself to be. However, the conflict between the Teacher of Righteousness and the Wicked Priest indicates that the community had certain interactions with society.

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<sup>24</sup> Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, v. 3.

<sup>25</sup> Frank Moore Cross, *The Ancient Library of Qumran* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 66-67.

<sup>26</sup> Covenant of Damascus I, 3-5, CD II, 11-14.

Therefore, it is necessary to discuss the history of the time in which these two individuals would have lived. This time frame is roughly covered within the second century B.C.E. and possibly the beginning of the first century B.C.E.

The end of the third century B.C.E. was marked by a certain degree of freedom for the Jewish people. The Ptolemies of Egypt were the dynasty that controlled the region, but they allowed the High Priest, with the aid of his council, to govern the nation of Israel. However, with increased Hellenization Greek influence continued to make its mark. With the conquest of the Seleucids, or Syrian Greeks, in 200 B.C.E. the Jewish nation finally began to show signs of losing its own identity to foreign cultural influences.<sup>27</sup> It is unclear how much influence foreign control had on the nation, but the nation was obviously in danger of losing its autonomy and identity. However, Antiochus (III) the Great allowed the Jewish people to continue as a nation with its own religion. It was not until Antiochus IV Epiphanes, the son of Antiochus the Great, became king of the Seleucid empire that the nation of Israel would truly be in danger of losing its status and identity.<sup>28</sup>

Following his brother Seleucus IV Philopator, Antiochus IV Epiphanes took the Seleucid throne in 175 B.C.E. He ruled with an iron hand and a program of Hellenization. He forced his rule on the Jewish people who received little support from their governors. Antiochus' hellenizing program was taken up by the ruling parties of the nation. Antiochus forced the nation to take up Greek ways and customs. Without the

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<sup>27</sup> Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 24.

<sup>28</sup> Lawrence H. Schiffman, *From Text to Tradition: A History of Second Temple and Rabbinic Judaism* (Hoboken, New Jersey: Ktav Publishing House, Inc., 1991), 66.

support of its own ruling classes, the nation looked to be heading for a complete loss of identity.<sup>29</sup>

The Jewish governing authorities of the period conformed quite readily to the Seleucid desires. Few, if any, of the Jewish rulers stood strong for the nation of Israel and its theology over the Seleucid ruling powers of the day. One priest who quickly gave over his Jewish allegiance was the brother of the High Priest Onias III. This person, adopting the Greek name of Jason, set out to turn Jerusalem into a Hellenistic city. 2 Maccabees 4: 13-15 states:

There was such an extreme of Hellenization and increase in the adoption of foreign ways because of the surpassing wickedness of Jason, who was ungodly and no high priest, that the priests were no longer intent upon their service at the altar. Despising the sanctuary and neglecting the sacrifices, they hastened to take part in the unlawful proceeding in the wrestling arena after the call to the discus, disdainful of the honors prized by their fathers and putting the highest value upon Greek forms of prestige.

Jason seemed to meet with little resistance, and his successors, Menelaus and Alcimus, took the High Priesthood continuing in Jason's ways.<sup>30</sup> These changes would go unchecked until 167 B.C.E.

Antiochus IV Epiphanes continued his subversion of Jewish culture and religion, even looting the Temple in 169 B.C.E. However, he finally moved too far when in 167 B.C.E. he decreed that Judaism was unlawful and that those who continued in any Jewish practices would be executed. With this order he even rededicated the Jerusalem Temple

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<sup>29</sup> Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 25.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

to the Greek god Zeus.<sup>31</sup> At this point Antiochus' audacity had reached its limits, causing a violent resistance from the opponents of Hellenism. The revolt was begun by the priest Mattathias with his sons Judas, Jonathan and Simon Maccabeus being the primary leaders. The revolt was obviously supported by traditionalist Jews and the Asidaeans or Hasidim, known also as "the Pious."

Judas Maccabeus was the initial successor to the helm of the revolt after his father's death in approximately 166 B.C.E. He took the conflict from limited guerrilla warfare into organized revolt, winning some important battles. He continued as the leader of the revolt until his death in 160 B.C.E. This was brought on by two battles. The first against the Syrian general Nicanor was won by Judas, resulting in a treaty between the Romans and the Jews. However, the treaty did not prevent Demetrius I, the successor to Antiochus IV, from attacking Judas with his general Bacchides. At Elasa Judas fell in battle in 160 B.C.E.<sup>32</sup>

With the death of Judas Maccabeus, his brother Jonathan took over the command of the revolt. He led from the death of Judas until 143 B.C.E., when he was executed by Trypho, usurper of the Seleucid throne, in the same year. During his reign Jonathan was unusual in that he was appointed as High Priest in, or near, 152 B.C.E by Alexander Balas, ruler of the Seleucid kingdom between 158 and 145 B.C.E. At Jonathan's death his brother Simon took up the leadership of the revolt in 143 B.C.E. In 142 B.C.E.

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<sup>31</sup> Samuel Sandmel, *Judaism and Christian Beginnings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 28.

<sup>32</sup> Uriel Rappaport, "Judas Maccabeus," In *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, Editor-in-chief, David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 1097.

Judaea gained independence with Simon as its leader. He was appointed as independent ruler by Demetrius II, and in 140 B.C.E. he was “elected” as High Priest by a special community assembly wherein he governed for six years until 134 B.C.E.<sup>33</sup> With Simon the nation would see the beginning of the Hasmonaean Dynasty.<sup>34</sup>

Both Jonathan and Simon were zealous defenders of Judaism, and due to their efforts they were able to restore Jewish worship. In addition, and against great odds, they were able to overthrow the ruling Seleucids and liberate Judaea.<sup>35</sup> This liberation gave autonomy to the nation of Israel. It meant a return to a certain freedom of worship and fostered religious and societal changes. Freedom of worship was primary for the Jews, but issues within the priesthood were to be problematic.

It is into this history that the Qumran community must be interjected. There is little doubt that the freedom of worship, which the victories of the Maccabees allowed, was a positive note for the community. What apparently worried them the most were the problems within the priesthood. With the deaths of Onias III and his brother Jason the Zadokite line of the priesthood lost its monopoly. Onias IV, the next in line for the position of High Priest, was prevented from taking the office because Menelaus had been illegally appointed as High Priest by Antiochus IV.<sup>36</sup> In bold defiance of Jewish law, which permits only one sanctuary, Onias IV set up a Jewish sanctuary in Egypt in the

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<sup>33</sup> Helmut Koester, *Introduction to the New Testament: History, Culture and Religion of the Hellenistic Age*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980), 215.

<sup>34</sup> Sandmel, 99.

<sup>35</sup> Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 25.

<sup>36</sup> Schiffman, *From Text to Tradition*, 72-74.



year 170 B.C.E. with the blessing of Ptolemy Philometor. This act caused frustrations and anger on the part of conservative Jews and revealed the turmoil within the priesthood.<sup>37</sup>

With Onias' rejection by the priesthood in Judaea the position was in a prime condition for positive changes, especially after the Maccabean victories. However, more problems were to occur, and no one was appointed to the position of High Priest until Jonathan Maccabeus took the office. There were problems with Jonathan taking the position. Jonathan was a priest, but he was not of the Zadokite line, which was against the Jewish tradition. Also, he was appointed by Alexander Balas who did not have the authority to make this appointment. After Jonathan's death in 143 B.C.E. his brother Simon continued the Maccabean efforts and was appointed as High Priest. However, the same types of problems existed with Simon as High Priest. After Simon's death in 134 B.C.E. John Hyrcanus took the position, and a continuing string of Hasmonean High Priests ruled Jerusalem in the order of Judah Aristobulus (104-103), Alexander Jannaeus (103-76), Salome Alexandra (76-67), and Hyrcanus II/Aristobulus II (63-43).<sup>38</sup> The conquest of Judaea by the Roman Pompey in 63 B.C.E. changed the whole complexion of the Jerusalem priesthood.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Qumran in Perspective*, 140.

<sup>38</sup> Salome Alexandra, the mother of these two, failed to name a successor. They fought over the leadership, both eventually turning to Rome for assistance. They turned to Pompey who sided with neither and took Jerusalem in 63 B.C.E., eliminating the Hasmonean dynasty.

<sup>39</sup> Schiffman, *From Text to Tradition*, 99.

**D. Implications for Qumran Research with the Identity of the Teacher of Righteousness**

The knowledge of the identity of the Teacher of Righteousness in the Dead Sea Scrolls has many implications. First of all, knowing the Teacher's identity could possibly confirm that he was the author of certain texts of the Scrolls. This knowledge would open up the study of the texts in significant ways. Knowing the identity of the Teacher of Righteousness would offer much more insight into the meaning of the texts, especially the hymns that the Teacher of Righteousness possibly composed. Secondly, more knowledge about the Teacher of Righteousness would give a better understanding of the particular historical era. If it could be determined that the Teacher was a significant figure of history, outside of his significance to his own community, more could be known about the primary actors of the age. If the Teacher were the rightful successor as High Priest during the time that the Maccabees took that position, a greater understanding of the priesthood would be gained. Given this possibility, the understanding would shed light on the attitudes toward the priesthood not only by the Qumran community but by those faithful Jews not involved with the Qumran community.

## II. The Wicked Priest

The primary passages in the Dead Sea scrolls that deal with the Wicked Priest almost always occur in direct conjunction with the Teacher of Righteousness. The passages mentioning both are mainly found in the pesher of biblical books. The most valuable, or at least the one which mentions the two characters the most, is the pesher on Habakkuk. It contains the most references and is surely the best source for study since it is not as fragmentary as the other peshers. The pesher on Habakkuk, therefore, will draw the most attention. However, the peshers of Nahum and the Psalms also deserve serious evaluation.

It should be obvious that one source is missing from the above list. The Covenant of Damascus oddly has no reference to the Wicked Priest. This document, which offers a good deal about the community's history, does not mention the Wicked Priest even though he seems to be one of the main reasons that the community was at Qumran. The fact that the Covenant of Damascus does not mention the Wicked Priest may be a clue that he did not interact with the community until it had already assembled itself at Qumran.<sup>40</sup> The community possibly located at Qumran because of the political state of the region and was persecuted by the Wicked Priest after it had established itself. If this is the case, however, it is very odd that the Wicked Priest would have been concerned about a small splinter group assembled in the desert. If Vermes is correct in dating the text of the pesher to near 100 B.C.E., then surely the author was familiar with the events

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<sup>40</sup> William H. Brownlee, "The Wicked Priest, the Man of Lies, and the Righteous Teacher: the problem of identity," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 73 (1982) : 3-4.

that occurred between the Wicked Priest and the Teacher of Righteousness.<sup>41</sup>

Consequently, this dating makes the issue more confusing.

## A. Survey of Applicable Passages in the Dead Sea Scrolls

### 1. The Nahum Peshier (4Q169)

#### 4Q169, I, 4-5

Nahum 2: 12a - The lion tears enough for its cubs and it chokes prey for its lionesses.

[Interpreted, this] concerns the furious young lion who strikes by means of his great men, and by means of the men of his council.

The commentary on Nahum offers only one instance where the Wicked Priest receives attention. In fact, the Wicked Priest is not called by name. The reference is to the “furious young lion.” This is problematic because it is unclear whether or not this terminology is intended to name the Wicked Priest. Throughout the Qumran texts a strong relationship can be drawn between the “furious young lion” and the Wicked Priest, but to say that the two are one and the same is a bit beyond honest scholarship.<sup>42</sup>

The text of Nahum 2: 12a can be considered significant only if the “furious young lion” can be accurately applied as another title for the Wicked Priest. If the reference is to the Wicked Priest, it is peculiar that the writer would not make this clear. In the Habakkuk peshier the term Wicked Priest is used without hesitation. Therefore, these peshiers are probably from different hands. It is possible that the writer of the Nahum

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<sup>41</sup> Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 95.

<sup>42</sup>The relationship between the Wicked Priest and the Teacher of Righteousness is drawn from the similar characteristics related from the peshiers. Because of a similar relationship throughout the scrolls it appears that the two terms are referring to one individual. However, this postulate is not absolute.

peshar is simply trying to make the commentary agree with the biblical text. Since the Nahum text refers to a lion, the author may be using the label, “furious young lion,” for the Wicked Priest named as such in the Habakkuk peshar. It seems to make the prophecy fit more appropriately to a specific individual, in particular a young commander.

If the above can be legitimately applied, then the commentary tells a good deal about the Wicked Priest. The interpretation reveals that the Wicked Priest had “great men” and a “council.” This information adds to the idea that the Wicked Priest was of a very lofty political standing, most likely as High Priest. If he were not a High Priest, would he have these kinds of resources at his disposal? Also, the text states that the individual “strikes” with these people who are at his command. This term reveals that this person had the authority to attack and impose punishment. This kind of power would direct the reader back to the High Priest, or at least a militaristic claimant to the seat of Jewish power.

#### **4Q169, I, 6-8**

Nahum 2: 12b - [And chokes prey for its lionesses; and it fills] its caves [with prey] and its dens with victims.

Interpreted, this concerns the furious young lion [who executes revenge] on those who seek smooth things and hangs men alive, . . . formerly in Israel. Because of a man hanged alive on [the] tree, He proclaims, ‘Behold I am against [you, says the Lord of Hosts’].

This is the only other reference to the “furious young lion” in the Nahum commentary. Its text adds more to the claim that the individual was in a position of

extremely high power. The point that is somewhat peculiar is that this person has attacked “those who seek smooth things.”<sup>43</sup> In the Covenant of Damascus it is obvious that these people are disdained by those at Qumran, or at least have doctrine and/or behavior that the Qumran community feels are unacceptable. Column I of the Covenant of Damascus, drawing from Isaiah 30:10, seems to suggest that these are the same individuals who followed the Liar/Scoffer. From this it is noteworthy that if the reference is to the Wicked Priest, then he is chasing two groups who appear completely opposite. Because someone holding the office of High Priest would have faced attacks from many factions in such a volatile era, it would make sense that the Wicked Priest would face opposition from two groups who were antithetical to one another. Therefore, this text also hints at the high position of the person in question. However, the problem still exists as to whether or not the terms Wicked Priest and “furious young lion” can be used interchangeably. More textual and historical work may eventually confirm or disprove this possibility.

The dating of the texts is of little help in more closely defining the time frame for the Wicked Priest. The dating for the Nahum peshar is the second half of the first century B.C.E.<sup>44</sup> This leaves a span of well over one hundred years between the origins of the Qumran community and the writing of the peshar. Therefore, many possible candidates existed through this time span. An earlier dating would help to narrow the time frame

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<sup>43</sup> It is unknown who the referent is for this terminology. It is possibly a reference to the Pharisees. The only thing definite is that they were foes of the individuals at Qumran.

<sup>44</sup> Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 336.

allowing for certain candidates to be eliminated. Also, understanding any redactional work or scribal influence would aid in the study.

## **2. The Psalms Peshar (4Q171)**

### **4Q171, I, 1-2**

Psalm 37: 32-33 - The wicked watches out for the righteous and seeks [to slay him. The Lord will not abandon him into his hand or] let him be condemned when he is tried.

Interpreted, this concerns the Wicked [Priest] who [watched the Teacher of Righteousness] that he might put him to death [because of the ordinance] and the law which he sent to him. But God will not abandon him and will not let him be condemned when he is] tried. And[God] will pay him his reward by delivering him into the hand of the violent of the nations, that they may execute upon him [judgment].

The commentary on the Psalms contains only this one reference to the Wicked Priest. The interpretation of the passage is important because it reveals not only the conflict between the Wicked Priest and the Teacher of Righteousness but also the severity of the conflict. The Wicked Priest was apparently to the point in the conflict with the Teacher of Righteousness that he desired the death of the Teacher. This degree of conflict shows how decidedly the Wicked Priest must have pursued the Teacher. One would think that a High Priest, if that is the case, would have higher priorities to deal with than trying to put to death a leader of a small faction of individuals who had retreated to a monastic type of setting. What was it about this Teacher of Righteousness that would require a high ranking official to give him such attention? If the interpretations of the texts that mention the disputes between the Teacher and the Wicked Priest can be believed, then the Teacher of Righteousness almost had to have been someone of great

importance and influence before he led the group to Qumran.<sup>45</sup> Even at Qumran, where it appears that he and his group would have been of little cause for concern, he was pursued. Therefore, the fear of the Wicked Priest could have been that the Teacher of Righteousness was forming and training a group to oppose him. It is noted throughout the War Rule that the community was a militaristic group.<sup>46</sup> The Wicked Priest possibly wanted to put this kind of activity down before it could ever gain strength. It appears from the Qumran literature that he was in some ways successful.<sup>47</sup>

The passage from 4Q171 makes a reference to an ordinance. The interpreter states that an ordinance was sent to or by the Teacher of Righteousness, and it was concerning this ordinance that the Wicked Priest wanted him dead. What the ordinance was is unknown, but it was probably sent by the Teacher of Righteousness to the Wicked Priest. Knowing what the ordinance contained, and knowing the sender and receiver would surely help identify both characters. It was possibly an interpretation of the law indicting the Wicked Priest. Did the Teacher possibly prophesy or teach against the activities of the High Priest in a similar fashion as the biblical prophets? If this is the case and if he also preached that those following him were the true “Remnant,” this teaching would surely infuriate and concern a High Priest. If the Teacher of Righteousness sent the ordinance to the Wicked Priest, what words could he have spoken

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<sup>45</sup> Michael Fishbane and Emmanuel Tov, eds., *Sha'arei Talmon: Studies in the Bible, Qumran, and the Ancient Near East Presented to Shemaryahu Talmon* (Winona Lakes, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1992), 303.

<sup>46</sup> The War Rule mentions preparations for war and the process of war. However, it is unclear that physical battles are intended. It is possible that the texts are referring to spiritual battles or are possibly figurative for the community's plight at the “end of days.”

<sup>47</sup> See 1QpHab XI, 1-8.



to engage the Wicked Priest in such a manner? The evidence is simply too vague to understand the conflict fully, and the suggestions made are simply based on speculation. Numerous are the possibilities as to the reason why the Wicked Priest would have wanted to kill the Teacher of Righteousness.

### **3. The Habakkuk Peshar (1QpHab)**

#### **1QpHab, I, 13-14**

Habakkuk 1: 4c - [For the wicked encompass] the righteous.

[The wicked is the Wicked Priest, and the righteous] is the Teacher of Righteousness. . .

This first reference in Habakkuk to the Wicked Priest does very little to reveal anything about the nature and/or character of this person. The author has simply stated in his interpretation that these two people, the Teacher of Righteousness and the Wicked Priest, are the ones to whom the terms ‘righteous’ and “wicked’ refer. It is possible that more information was given, but unfortunately part of the text is missing. The value of the text is to add some weight to the previous argument in Nahum. The term “wicked” appears, which the peshar relates directly to the Wicked Priest. In similar fashion the term “righteous” is related directly to the Teacher of Righteousness. Is this author the individual who first gave the Teacher of Righteousness and the Wicked Priest these labels? If this is the case, there is the possibility that the Nahum commentary might be operating in a similar fashion with the term “lion.” The author may be inventing the labels as he finds terms from the text of Habakkuk that suit his purposes. The problem with this theory is that it is thought that the Covenant of Damascus was written around

100 B.C.E., and, therefore, would predate the Nahum commentary.<sup>48</sup> Therefore, the labels would have already been given.

### 1QpHab, VII, 4-14

Habakkuk 2: 5-6 - Moreover, the arrogant man seizes wealth without halting. He widens his gullet like Hell and like Death he has never enough. All the nations are gathered to him and all the peoples are assembled to him. Will they not all of them taunt him and jeer at him saying, 'Woe to him who amasses that which is not his! How long will he load himself up with pledges?'

Interpreted, this concerns the Wicked Priest who was called by the name of truth when he first arose. But when he ruled over Israel his heart became proud, and he forsook God and betrayed the precepts for the sake of riches. He robbed and amassed the riches of the men of violence who rebelled against God, and he took the wealth of the peoples, heaping sinful iniquity upon himself. And he lived in the ways of abominations amidst every unclean defilement.

This commentary from Habakkuk carries a great deal of weight in the discussion of the Wicked Priest. Several observations can be made that reveal certain important aspects about this person. The most important observation is that the Wicked Priest was "called by the name of truth when he first arose." This shows that at one point the Wicked Priest was initially received with great hope. The use of "truth" by the interpreter most likely shows that this person was seen as one who in the service of God would help the political situation of the day, but even more so he was probably seen to have had the imprimatur of the Qumran community. At some point, however, he changed his ways, serving evil in the eyes of the community. The fact that he was referred to as the Wicked Priest itself is very telling as to the community's view of this person.

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<sup>48</sup>Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 95.

The second sentence reveals a great deal more about the person of the Wicked Priest. It states very pointedly that he ruled over the nation of Israel. He apparently used the position for evil means, at least as he was viewed through the eyes of the Qumran community. Like many of the kings from Israel's history, the Wicked Priest "became proud and betrayed God . . . for the sake of riches."<sup>49</sup> From the interpretation, then, the Wicked Priest was in a position to rule the nation. He was also in a position to have access to great riches, which obviously were not his to withdraw at will. These riches were probably the nation's reserves. The mentioning of the riches in this interpretation is revealing. If the Wicked Priest had been a high enough ranking official to have access to the nation's monetary holdings, then it could be argued that he must have been in or near the highest position. If the interpretation is accurate historically, then this commentary adds to the possibility that the Wicked Priest was a High Priest. From the point that his heart changed he lived like many of the previous kings of Israel.

### **1QpHab, IX, 6-12**

Habakkuk 2: 8b - Because of the blood of men and the violence done to the land, to the city, and to all its inhabitants.

Interpreted, this concerns the Wicked Priest whom God delivered into the hands of his enemies because of the iniquity committed against the Teacher of Righteousness and the men of his Council, that he might be humbled by means of a destroying scourge, in bitterness of soul, because he had done wickedly to His elect.

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<sup>49</sup>The obligations of the priesthood were, and are seen very seriously in Jewish communities. The Qumran community would have been no different. Any type of offense against the Mosaic Covenant by the priesthood would have had serious ramifications and would have invoked hostility from Qumran.

The commentary continues the story of the Wicked Priest. From his rise to high standing in the previous section he is at this point about to reap what he has sown. The interpreter is sure that the Wicked Priest was killed or at least taken captive and taken out of his position by an enemy, probably by national or international powers. One would expect that the reason for this was that he did not rule well, that he stole from the nation, or that he betrayed the national interest. However, it is striking that the purported reason that God allowed him to be taken by his enemies was as punishment for the way he had treated the Teacher of Righteousness.

The more plausible situation for the demise of the Wicked Priest is that the community did interpret history in view of its own setting and beliefs. The Wicked Priest most likely fell to a more powerful regime. Therefore, his manner of leadership weakened his base of power and led directly to his downfall. Many High Priests of the era may have been deposed in such a manner.

### **1QpHab XI, 3-9**

Habakkuk 2: 15 - Woe to him who causes his neighbours to drink; who pours out his venom to make them drunk that he may gaze on their feasts.

Interpreted, this concerns the Wicked Priest who pursued the Teacher of Righteousness to the house of his exile that he might confuse him with his venomous fury. And at the time appointed for rest, for the Day of Atonement, he appeared before them to confuse them, and to cause them to stumble on the Day of Fasting, their Sabbath of repose.

The interpretation of Habakkuk 2: 15 continues the interaction between the Teacher of Righteousness and the Wicked Priest. The interpretation offers two primary issues for consideration. The first has to do with the term “exile.” Most of the literature

seems to point to the idea that the Qumran community arrived at that location of its own accord. It appears that it desired somewhat of a monastic community and chose to move to Qumran in self-imposed exile. The better assumption is that the community traveled to Qumran as an act of judgment against the Jerusalem regime and to offer an atoning sacrifice in its purity under adversity. It chose to avoid the impending doom at God's hand by going to Qumran. The use of "exile" is probably an interpreter's polemic.

The second major point from the interpretation is that the author states that the Wicked Priest "pursued the Teacher of Righteousness to the house of his exile . . . ." Two possibilities explain the interpretation. It could have been that the Wicked Priest sent his servants, possibly armed, and ranking officials to deal with the community. The other possibility is that the "Wicked Priest" went himself. The passage intimates that the Teacher of Righteousness was very important, a person of high visibility, to gain such attention from a High Priest. Both possibilities carry weight for the historical search for each character, but the data is insufficient to choose one or the other.

One other point should be made concerning this pesher. The author states that the events occurred on the Day of Atonement. This has significance for several reasons. It is not likely but possible that the community was observing a different Day of Atonement than the rest of the nation.<sup>50</sup> If the day was the Day of Atonement for the whole nation, then a character issue is introduced. The Wicked Priest has chosen this day against what should have been proper religious practice. Therefore, he has reached the point where the

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<sup>50</sup>The Qumran community observed a different calendar than the rest of Palestine. It was based on the solar year. The rest of the nation observed the lunar calendar. Therefore, Jewish holy days probably fell on different dates.

sacred days of the nation are not even sacred to him anymore. If this is the case, it shows the depth of disregard for his own religion in the pursuit of his political ends.

### 1QpHab XXII, 1-10

Habakkuk 2: 17 - [For the violence done to Lebanon shall overwhelm you, and the destruction of the beasts] shall terrify you, because of the blood of men and the violence done to the land, the city, and all its inhabitants.

Interpreted, this saying concerns the Wicked Priest, inasmuch as he shall be paid the reward which he himself tendered to the Poor. For Lebanon is the Council of the Community; and the beasts are the Simple of Judah who keep the Law. As he himself plotted the destruction of the Poor, so will God condemn him to destruction. And as for that which He said, Because of the blood of the city and the violence done to the land: interpreted, the city is Jerusalem where the Wicked Priest committed abominable deeds and defiled the Temple of God. The violence done to the land: these are the cities of Judah where he robbed the Poor of their possessions.

The primary importance of this pesher comes in the second half. The author reports that the city mentioned in the text of Habakkuk is a reference to Jerusalem. This was the place where the Wicked Priest “committed abominable deeds and defiled the Temple of God.” The significance of Jerusalem is immeasurable. Obviously, Jerusalem was the Holy City in which the High Priest resided. It was the location for the Temple which was the center of worship for the nation. Placing the Wicked Priest in Jerusalem and in the Temple is extremely significant and important for the argument that he was the High Priest. How he defiled the Temple is unsure. It is possible that his defiling of the Temple was only considered as such by the extremely conservative and nomistic Qumran community. However, if he had access to the Temple at all he must have been an extremely high ranking religious official.<sup>51</sup> His disregard for the Temple enhances the

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<sup>51</sup> Brownlee, “The Wicked Priest,” 4.

negatives that have already been discussed about his character. His association with the Temple, however, is strong support for the contention that he is the High Priest.<sup>52</sup> If this is demonstrable, then the chronology becomes the only significant problem to determine. It must be remembered, though, that the Qumran materials may be inaccurate and written more for the community's religious purposes than as accurate history.

### **B. Association of the Wicked Priest with the Teacher of Righteousness**

The Wicked Priest and the Teacher of Righteousness had an unusual relationship, to say the least. It is strange that a High Priest would bother with the leader of a small religious group retreating to a secluded location. This information implies that the Teacher of Righteousness may have been a major figure in the Jewish political and religious scene. The text of certain peshers do claim that he was a priest, and, therefore, he may have been a colleague of the High Priest.<sup>53</sup> This association makes it likely that the Wicked Priest and the Teacher of Righteousness shared aspirations that brought them into conflict. The conflict, as can be seen by the interactions of the two throughout the scrolls, was tumultuous. This type of activity would have been characteristic between two ranking officials in debates over religious ideas. However, at this point in Qumran research evidence is lacking to be able to honestly say that both of these individuals were high ranking officials.

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<sup>52</sup> The Temple was considered sacred in Jewish communities. Though Qumran established itself outside of Jerusalem it still felt strongly about priestly practices concerning the Temple. A High Priest who conducted himself improperly within the Temple would have been derided by the Qumran community, especially since they were a priestly organization.

<sup>53</sup> Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 29.

### C. Possible Identity

If the texts from the Qumran community are reliable, then it is obvious that the Wicked Priest was involved in a serious and violent feud with the Teacher of Righteousness. However, even if the texts are reporting history, it is certain that a particular bias is behind the writing of the texts. The best approach is to look for an individual who would have appeared evil in the eyes of the community.

Several candidates for the position of Wicked Priest exist with particular individuals appearing much more likely than others. One of the first that needs to be mentioned is Onias III. He ascended to the office of High Priest around 190 B.C.E., succeeding his father Simon II. He held the office until approximately 175 B.C.E. when he was overthrown by Jason, his brother. From the beginning of his ministry Onias III faced a great deal of opposition. His primary adversary was Simon, the brother of Menelaus.<sup>54</sup> The interesting interchange between these two individuals appears similar to the problems between the Wicked Priest and the Teacher of Righteousness. This raises the question of whether or not these two actually were the Wicked Priest and the Teacher of Righteousness. Little is known about this Simon, therefore, it is possible that he was the enigmatic figure who led the group at Qumran.

Though the situation mentioned above seems possible, it is not a focus of the scholarly community. One of the primary problems is that the time frame is quite early.

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<sup>54</sup> Uriel Rappaport, "Onias," In *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, Editor-in-chief, David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 23-24.



It appears that Onias III would have already been dethroned when the Teacher of Righteousness would have taken on his task. However, making this statement demands that the dating in the Covenant of Damascus is trustworthy, and there are problems with accuracy that must be considered.<sup>55</sup> Also, a presupposition is that the Wicked Priest gained this title because he was not of Zadokite lineage or because of his evil deeds in power. Therefore, he did not qualify for the position. Onias III, on the other hand, was the rightful successor to the position of High Priest. If this understanding from the Qumran texts is correct, then Onias III can be eliminated from the pool of candidates as the Wicked Priest.

As mentioned above, Jason overthrew Onias III. He accomplished this by buying the priesthood from Antiochus IV. This underhanded manner in which he was appointed as High Priest would make him a good candidate as the person labeled as Wicked Priest. Jason held the position for approximately three years, roughly 175 B.C.E. to 171 B.C.E., during which time he did make changes. It is possible that the Teacher of Righteousness disapproved of these changes and, therefore, rebelled with his group of followers. However, the short time in which Jason ruled is problematic. Three years does not seem to be a long enough time span for the events between the Teacher of Righteousness and the Wicked Priest to have occurred. Jason does fit the time frame that is reported from the Covenant of Damascus. He would have been in the position of High Priest at the approximate time when the Teacher was taking the lead of the Qumran group.

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<sup>55</sup> The numbers from the Covenant of Damascus probably should not be taken as literal figures. The reporting of numbers such as these at the time was not always concerned with strict accuracy. The numbers may represent approximate figures or they could possibly stand for a number of generations, which was normally forty years.

A problem for naming Jason as the Wicked Priest is that the Scrolls report that the Wicked Priest was seen favorably by the nation in his early service. Jason, on the other hand, gained access to the position by illegitimate means, apparently buying the High Priesthood from Antiochus IV Epiphanes.<sup>56</sup> Therefore, there would have been no point in his short ministry that was seen favorably. Not only did he illegally gain the position, but he was not of the Zadokite lineage. Another problem is that Jason left Jerusalem when he lost his position to Menelaus in 171 B.C.E.<sup>57</sup> The Scrolls seem to present the interchange between the Wicked Priest and the Teacher of Righteousness over a longer period of time. Also, archaeology has placed the period of the Teacher of Righteousness roughly twenty years later.<sup>58</sup>

The suggestion presented by A. S. van der Woude<sup>59</sup> deserves attention. He has suggested that the term Wicked Priest does not refer to a particular individual but to whomever was the High Priest at the current date of the community's writings. This would mean that certain references in the Qumran texts would refer to a different High Priest depending on when they were written or, for the peshers, how they were interpreted.

The primary problem with van der Woude's theory is that consensus states that the term Wicked Priest was used to refer to one individual. The texts seem very clear on

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<sup>56</sup> Schiffman, *From Text to Tradition*, 73.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 74.

<sup>58</sup> Roland de Vaux, *Archaeology and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), 138.

<sup>59</sup> A.S. van der Woude, "Wicked Priest or wicked priests?: reflections on the identification of the Wicked Priest in the Habakkuk commentary," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 33 (1982): 349.

this position. The personal interactions reported between the Wicked Priest and the Teacher of Righteousness simply do not lend themselves to van der Woude's idea. His theory would seem to require that the term Teacher of Righteousness was also used to denote different individuals serving a particular office. This position is also unlikely, and therefore, van der Woude's suggestion, though not impossible, is improbable.

Jonathan Maccabeus is perhaps the primary candidate for the Wicked Priest. After the Maccabean victories he was appointed to the position of High Priest in 152 B.C.E. However, he took the position against the Jewish law. The office of High Priest required a person of Zadokite lineage. Jonathan did not meet this requirement and therefore some had problems with his acceptance of the position. It is very possible that the community at Qumran referred to him as the Wicked Priest because of this fact. For them his acceptance of the position was possibly one of the greatest offenses against the priests in exile.<sup>60</sup> They would have taken Jonathan's ascension to the position of High Priest as an affront. Also, Jonathan was appointed by Alexander Balas, a pretender to the throne who did not have proper authority to make the appointment of Jonathan.

Jonathan's brother Simon Maccabeus is probably the second best guess as the Wicked Priest. He, like his brother, was not of Zadokite lineage. Therefore, the community would have frowned upon his position as High Priest for some of the same reasons mentioned for Jonathan. Both of these individuals fit closely to the appropriate time frame as well. Archaeology and paleography place the community's origins to at

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<sup>60</sup> James H. Charlesworth, ed., *Jesus and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 143.

least 150 B.C.E. and possibly even earlier.<sup>61</sup> Therefore, both are possible candidates as the Wicked Priest.<sup>62</sup>

It would appear absurd to name Jesus as the Wicked Priest. However, this is the case presented by Barbara Thiering in several different works, the first being *Redating the Teacher of Righteousness*.<sup>63</sup> She names John the Baptist as the Teacher of Righteousness and assumes that Jesus subverted his teaching and diverted attention to his own faulty teaching. Thiering bases her theory on certain characteristics of John the Baptist and the possibility that he spent time at Qumran. However, her theory has gained little attention in the scholarly world because the characteristics of Jesus do not coincide with those of the Wicked Priest. More importantly her dating scheme does not hold up to the scholarly consensus that places the Wicked Priest in the second century B.C.E.

Scholarship is still unsure of the identity of the Wicked Priest. The two most probable candidates are Jonathan Maccabeus and Simon Maccabeus.<sup>64</sup> Because the archaeological and paleographical data take the community back to around 150 B.C.E or earlier, Jonathan becomes the better candidate between the two. He began his ministry at the end of a seven year period in which the nation had no High Priest. Therefore, he is the better candidate to have had conflict over the position of High Priest. Also, he was not of Zadokite lineage and, therefore, would not have been supported by the Qumran

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<sup>61</sup> Davies, *Qumran* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1983), 54.

<sup>62</sup> The High Priest of the “Intersacerdotium” will be presented as the Teacher of Righteousness. If correct, then Jonathan is the better candidate for the Wicked Priest.

<sup>63</sup> Barbara Thiering, *Redating the Teacher of Righteousness* (Sydney: Theological Explorations, 1979).

<sup>64</sup> James VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today*, 103.

community. In addition, if the Teacher of Righteousness moved to Qumran over debates concerning the position of High Priest, Jonathan is the better candidate for the Wicked Priest.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> The validity of this argument almost requires that the Teacher of Righteousness was the person who should have been the High Priest between 159 and 152 B.C.E.

### III. The Man of Lies and the Scoffer

The Man of Lies (Liar, Spouter of Lies) and the Scoffer deserve some attention. Their identity would surely help in the quest of the Teacher of Righteousness. One problem that must be solved initially, however, is whether or not the two names are different labels for only one individual. Also the term Precept appears that could be referring to the same individual as well. This intermingling of terms confuses the issue, making it difficult to be sure what individual is being referenced.<sup>66</sup> The Man of Lies formed a schismatic group that was in opposition to the Teacher of Righteousness and his followers. The two apparently split from one larger group with the Man of Lies being labeled the less virtuous. The polemical nature of the community must be taken into account on this issue.

#### 1. The Covenant of Damascus (CD)

The term Scoffer appears only twice in the Covenant of Damascus. This individual's introduction appears near the beginning of the Exhortations section.<sup>67</sup> Unfortunately, the reference gives little evidence of this person's identity. It states:

And he (the Teacher of Righteousness) made known to the latter generations that which God had done to the latter generation, the congregation of traitors, to those who departed from the way. This was the time of which it is written, *Like a stubborn heifer thus was Israel stubborn* (Hosea 4:16), when the Scoffer arose who shed over Israel the waters of lies. He caused them to wander in a pathless wilderness, laying low the everlasting heights, abolishing the ways of righteousness and

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<sup>66</sup> The texts that mention these individuals relate similar characteristics about them. It is most likely that the terms are all referring to one person. However, this idea is not completely without question.

<sup>67</sup> Covenant of Damascus I, 1 VIII, 35.

removing the boundary with which the forefathers had marked out their inheritance (CD I, 11-17).

It is obvious that he led certain individuals in improper ways, but the text does not make itself clear as to its reference. It can not be determined if the text relates to the current community, to the nation of Israel or even to an era in the distant past of Israel's history. It is even more difficult to determine the time frame in which the Scoffer was doing his so-called evil work. Therefore, this verse taken alone does little for shedding light on the person of the Scoffer.

The second reference is more clear. The Covenant of Damascus states:

And thus shall it be for all among the first and the last who reject (the precepts), who set idols upon their hearts and walk in the stubbornness of their hearts: they shall have no share in the house of the Law. They shall be judged in the same manner as their companions were judged who deserted to the Scoffer. For they have spoken wrongly against the precepts of righteousness, and have despised the Covenant and the Pact - the New Covenant - which they made in the land of Damascus. Neither they nor their kin shall have any part in the house of the Law (CD VIII, 8-13).

The text states that these deserting individuals, the community members who rebelled, will be judged in the same way as their "companions" were judged. This statement helps to determine the time frame of the Scoffer and his followers. It is not a complete time frame, but since these people were named as companions a close relationship is set up. It seems clear from this text that the two groups knew each other and had much interaction. However, the term "companions" is problematic because it may or may not refer to the friendly nature between the groups. It is more probable that it is used to associate two groups who rebelled against the Qumran group and the Teacher of Righteousness, in particular, previous followers of the Teacher of Righteousness who left with the Scoffer.

Nevertheless, this text can somewhat safely be said to be speaking of the two groups in a time frame of close proximity.

A second point to note is the fact that the text states that they “despised the Covenant and the Pact - the New Covenant - which they made in the land of Damascus.” The term Damascus is extremely significant for possibly placing the two communities historically and geographically. The term Damascus seems to have been used by the Qumran community at times to refer to itself. If this is the case, then the above quote could easily mean that those who followed the Scoffer were actually with the members of Qumran at that site. If they actually made this Pact at the Qumran establishment, then a very significant point is to be noted, namely that the split did not occur between the two groups until after all of the members of the group had established themselves at Qumran. Therefore, those who followed the Scoffer followed the Teacher of Righteousness in the beginning. It was not until sometime after reaching Qumran that the Scoffer led some away.

To this point the Covenant of Damascus has solely used the term Scoffer. The next reference uses the label of the Liar to refer to the individual who disputed the Teacher of Righteousness. The Covenant of Damascus reports,

From the day of the gathering in of the Teacher of the Community until the end of all the men of war who deserted to the Liar there shall pass about forty years. And during that age the wrath of God shall be kindled against Israel; as He said, There shall be no king, no prince, no judge, no man to rebuke with justice. But those who turn from the sin of Jacob, who keep the Covenant of God, shall then speak each man to his fellow, to justify each man his brother, that their step may take the way of God (CD VIII, 14-18).



This text is of special significance because it refers to the death of the Teacher of Righteousness. Actually the “gathering in” of the Teacher of Righteousness has caused some debate as to its meaning.<sup>68</sup> It seems safe, however, to assume that this is a reference to the death of the Teacher. The text is not completely clear about the death of the Liar either. It refers to the “end” of all of those who followed the Liar. If his followers have all died, it is fairly safe to conclude that he has died as well. The inference seems to be that the group had continued for a long period of time. More importantly the Qumran community’s restoration as the Remnant seems to be tied up with the Liar and his followers. However, the text does not explicitly state that the end of the Liar’s followers is the apocalypse that the Qumran community expected.<sup>69</sup>

The second sentence lends some assistance for determining the implications of the termination of the Liar’s group. It speaks of the wrath of God to fall upon Israel. The apocalypse expected by the community was normally expressed as the “age of wrath.”<sup>70</sup> Therefore, a possible connection can be established, but it is based on the assumption that the event of the wrath of God in this instance is the same as the age of wrath. The mentioning of the forty years is a reference that seems to bring the two events closer

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<sup>68</sup> Ben Zion Wacholder, “Does Qumran record the death of the Moreh?: the meaning of he’aseph in Damascus Covenant XIX, 35, XX, 14,” *Revue de Qumran* 13 (1988) : 323-330. Wacholder has argued this point from his exegesis of the Covenant of Damascus. He tries to argue that the Hebrew only implies 14 instances of 81 where death is implied. However, Fitzmyer refutes Wacholder’s theory upholding the point that the “gathering in of the Teacher” does refer to his death. See the article by Joseph Fitzmyer, “The gathering in of the community’s Teacher,” *Maarav* 8 (1992) : 223-228.

<sup>69</sup> Philip R. Davies, “The Teacher of Righteousness and the ‘end of days,’” *Revue de Qumran* 13 (1988) : 316.

<sup>70</sup> Davies, *Qumran*, 78. The “age of wrath” has been suggested as the exile itself. However, Davies believes it to be fairly accurate reporting from the Covenant of Damascus. Therefore, the dating is placed in the early part of the second century B.C.E.

together. The community expected a forty year period from the time of the Teacher's death to the restoration period of the community. If this is the case then the verse does point to the community's final triumph.

One other important issue is the simple fact the term Liar is used where previously the term Scoffer had been used. This suggests a possible change in author has occurred, or that a redactor was compiling works in order to form the Covenant of Damascus. Therefore, better paleographical data and possibly AMS spectroscopy on the different sections could lead to greater discoveries and better understanding of the texts.<sup>71</sup>

## **2. The Isaiah Peshet (4Q162)**

### **4Q162, 2-9**

Isaiah 5: 11-14 - Woe to those who rise early in the morning to run after strong drink, to those who linger in the evening until wine inflames them. They have zither and harp and timbrel and flute and wine at their feasts, but they do not regard the work of the Lord or see the deeds of His hand. Therefore my people go into exile for want of knowledge, and their noblemen die of hunger and their multitude is parched with thirst. Therefore hell has widened its gullet and opened its mouth beyond measure, and the nobility of Jerusalem and her multitude go down, her tumult and he who rejoices in her.

Interpretation - These are the Scoffers in Jerusalem who have despised the Law of the Lord and scorned the word of the Holy One of Israel. Therefore the wrath of the Lord was kindled against His people. He stretched out His hand against them and smote them; the mountains trembled and their corpses were like sweepings in the middle of the streets.

The interpretation of the Isaiah pericope is valuable for two basic points. The first is simply that the term here is plural and therefore, the Scoffer alone is not indicated. He may be included in this group, but that observation can not be confidently stated.

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<sup>71</sup> VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today*, 17-18.

The second point to note is that nearly the whole interpretation is a biblical quote from Isaiah 5: 24-25. It is ironic that an interpretation about the community's current situation could proceed in this manner. Both text and interpretation are many years previous. Therefore, this may show a certain primacy of the Isaiah Scroll for the Qumran community.

### 3. The Micah Peshar (1Q14)

#### 1Q14, 1-5

Micah 1: 5-6 - [All this is] for the transgression [of Jacob and for the sins of the House of Israel. What is the transgression of Jacob?] Is it not [Samaria? And what is the high place of Judah? Is it not Jerusalem? I will make of Samaria a ruin in the fields, and of Jerusalem a plantation of vines].

Interpreted, this concerns the Spouter of Lies [who led the] Simple [astray].

This text does not offer a great deal about the interaction between the community and the Scoffer. In fact, the reference is to the Spouter of Lies, which is assumed to be another title for the Scoffer.<sup>72</sup> However, it does continue to reveal the community's view of the person in question. The community appears to be stating that it is the true Israel and that the Scoffer has led some away from their inheritance. The interpretation does not seem to apply to the text in any rational way, and therefore, it is difficult for the modern reader to understand the conflict in any way.

The most interesting point of the text is that the interpretation refers to the ones who followed the Scoffer as the "Simple." This term is strange because it seems apologetic for those who followed this Scoffer. The community speaks of the Scoffer in

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<sup>72</sup> Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Qumran in Perspective*, 143.

a very direct and often scathing manner. Yet the term Simple seems to allow a portion of grace. The Qumran community may have mourned greatly over this loss. The term could be saying that this group did not understand and had less critical capacity than those who followed the Teacher of Righteousness. Since the commentary was written by the community it possibly reveals some of its theology with this term. The term would seem to say that these “Simple” were not able to make their own informed decisions. However, given what is known about the community’s eschatology this could be an opportunity for it to subtly speak of its superiority. In this manner it is more likely that the term is simply used as a term of condescension and therefore, has nothing to do with the judgment of these individuals. However, it has a great deal to do with the community’s view concerning their choice.

#### **4. The Habakkuk Peshar (1QpHab)**

##### **1 QpHab I, 16 - II, 4**

Habakkuk 1: 5 - [Behold the nations and see, marvel and be astonished; for I accomplish a deed in your days, but you will not believe it when]

[Interpreted, this concerns] those who were unfaithful together with the Liar, in that they [did] not [listen to the word received by] the Teacher of Righteousness from the mouth of God. And it concerns the unfaithful of the New [Covenant] in that they have not believed in the Covenant of God [and have profaned] His holy Name.

The interpretation does not offer much more for the identity of the Liar.

However, the text does speak to the previously mentioned possibility that the split in the community occurred after the group went to Qumran. Those who broke away with the Liar had heard the word of the Teacher of Righteousness. The text gives the impression

that these individuals did not just break in a different direction, but that the division was based on the belief of the “unfaithful” that the Teacher of Righteousness was not teaching “righteousness.” The passage intimates that the split was not an amicable one. The interpretation gives the impression that these people were evil, at least in the eyes of the Qumran community, and against the will of God. Given the polemical nature of the author, it is difficult to determine what is fact. The primary value of the present text, however, in the quest for the Teacher of Righteousness is simply that it continues to show the malevolent way in which the community viewed the Liar’s group.

### **1 QpHab IV, 9-12**

Habakkuk 1: 13b - O traitors, why do you stare and stay silent when the wicked swallows up one more righteous than he?

Interpreted, this concerns the House of Absalom and the members of its council who were silent at the time of the chastisement of the Teacher of Righteousness and gave him no help against the Liar who flouted the Law in the midst of their whole [congregation].

It is peculiar that this text, which follows the allusion to the Liar leading others astray, does not mention the split between the Teacher of Righteousness and the Liar. Its interpretations seem to be disjointed. They do not follow any logical line of historical reasoning. However, this is a common phenomenon in the Qumran peshers. This fact raises the serious question concerning what can be trusted from the peshers and used for historical data.

The text is extremely puzzling in mentioning that the Liar “flouted the Law in the middle of the whole congregation.” What is occurring between the Teacher of Righteousness and the Liar is unclear. Also, the term “congregation” is difficult. Does it

mean the Qumran community alone? The Qumran community alone, the Sanhedrin or possibly the nation of Israel itself are legitimate assumptions, but none can be confidently named. With the presence of the House of Absalom the term becomes even more difficult. Understanding more about the interaction between the Teacher and the Liar, and the presence of this other group would surely benefit the attempt to name historical figures.

It appears more clear from this text that the Teacher's community was at Qumran at the time this event took place and, therefore, that the Liar led his group away from Qumran where the split would have occurred. He possibly returned with his followers back to Jerusalem. However, the reference to the House of Absalom is problematic.<sup>73</sup> Throughout Jewish history the term had been a term of derision for those who opposed God's anointed. It appears that this term is used in similar fashion given its negative tone together with the fact that the House of Absalom is mentioned. This understanding is helpful, but it is very unclear as to the group referenced as the House of Absalom. Apparently it was a governing body in the religious community because the interpreter feels that this group should have come to the aid of the Teacher of Righteousness. Does the silence mean that the House of Absalom agreed with the Liar? If it could be known who the group was and what its position was, it might be possible to determine the status of the Teacher of Righteousness and possibly the Liar as well. Also, a great amount of light would be shed on the Liar because it appears that he is exercising some legal authority over the Teacher of Righteousness based on the presence of this House of

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<sup>73</sup> The House of Absalom was surely an assembly outside of Qumran. It is likely that the reference is to the Jerusalem regime itself.

Absalom. The interaction becomes more clear if the House of Absalom can be accurately understood as Jerusalem.

### **1QpHab X, 6-13**

Habakkuk 2: 12-13 - Woe to him who builds a city with blood and founds a town upon falsehood! Behold, is it not from the Lord of Hosts that the peoples shall labour for fire and the nations shall strive for naught?

Interpreted, this concerns the Spouter of Lies who led many astray that he might build his city of vanity with blood and raise a congregation on deceit, causing many thereby to perform a service of vanity for the sake of its glory, and to be pregnant with [works] of deceit, that their labour might be for nothing and that they might be punished with fire who vilified and outraged the elect of God.

This text from the Habakkuk commentary brings an interesting possibility into the discussion of the split within the Qumran community. The text mentions that the Spouter of Lies built his “city” by deceiving his congregation. The term “city” is problematic because it is unclear how it should be interpreted. It is possible that this term refers to a new community that the Spouter of Lies initiated. It could simply mean the particular group of people, or it could mean that he formed a community similar to the one at Qumran. Even more telling would be if the “city” were found to be a reference to Jerusalem. At this point archaeology has not revealed a similar find that could have been the Spouter’s community, which might point then to an established city such as Jerusalem. A greater issue would be to consider if this individual actually developed a true city of his believers.

The more probable explanation for the term is that the “city” referred to is to be understood as the group of people who followed the Spouter of Lies. However, since it

does not seem to be doubted that the split occurred the group must have relocated somewhere. Whether or not an actual city had been built is not as important an issue as being able to trace the steps of this group.

## 5. The Psalms Pesher (4Q171)

### 4Q171, I, 1 - II, 1

[Be si]lent before [the Lord and] long for him, and be not heated against the successful, the man who [achi]eves his plans.

Its interpretation concerns the Liar who has led astray many by his lying words so that they chose frivolous things and heeded not the interpreter of knowledge in order to...they shall perish by the sword and famine and plague.

It is extremely difficult to see how this verse can be interpreted as referring to the Liar. The other references to the Liar do make a connection with the evil things that this person did, at least as the Qumran community interpreted his activity. However, this pesher seems to have little basis for making the connection to the Liar. The interpretation must be conducted in the light of the dubious successes of this particular individual.

This pesher seems to say more about the community than it does about the Liar. It is possible that this verse shows that the community was intensely focused. It is not doubted that the community was very ascetic.<sup>74</sup> However, the interpretation of the Psalm seems to say that the community looked unfavorably on anything that might have relaxed observance. The interpreter made the connection between human successes and the Liar who was seen by the community as generally evil. This verse says that the Liar simply held different religious views. Based on inferences from this pesher, it is likely that any

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<sup>74</sup> Charlesworth, *Jesus and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 26.



difference was seen as severely in opposition to God and the Law. Human gain and deviation from Qumran theology were seen in a very negative light.

The term Liar appears in other places throughout the Qumran Scrolls, however, the remaining texts that do mention the Liar or Scoffer are mostly fragmentary and offer little to the discussion of this person. From what is gained from the texts, it is most likely that this person was simply a follower of the Teacher of Righteousness originally and later took a group in a different direction, possibly to Jerusalem.<sup>75</sup> Since no clues are given to his standing in the region or to the place where his group relocated, it appears that the person was simply a follower who later disagreed with the Teacher of Righteousness and persecuted him.

### C. Possible Identity

Only one serious suggestion has been made as to the identity of the Liar. Perhaps the reason for this is because scholars do not see the identity of the Man of Lies to be significant. Most of scholarship agrees with Gert Jeremias that this person was simply a follower of the Teacher of Righteousness who led a portion of the group in a different direction.<sup>76</sup> The consensus follows that this person was not a major historical figure and, therefore, would add little to knowledge of the history and theology of the nation of Israel during the time of Qumran's existence.

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<sup>75</sup> The referent of the "House of Absalom" is significant for understanding the person and position of the Man of Lies. If it is Jerusalem he would possibly be able to be characterized as a major political figure in Jewish history.

<sup>76</sup> Gert Jeremias, *Der Lehrer de Gerechtigkeit* (Gottingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1963).

William Brownlee has proposed the only significant attempt to name the Man of Lies, believing that he was John Hyrcanus.<sup>77</sup> Brownlee's suggestion was first proposed in 1952 where he argued that the term Man of Lies referred to a series of Wicked Priests, the first being John Hyrcanus, who ruled from 134-104 B.C.E. Therefore, what Brownlee has done is to see a connection between the Wicked Priest and the Man of Lies. He believed that the two terms were references to the same person. He did gain some support until Gert Jeremias popularized the view that the term Wicked Priest was used to name only one individual and that the Man of Lies was in no way a priestly ruler of the nation.<sup>78</sup> The Man of Lies was, according to Jeremias, a sectarian leader of the Essenes.<sup>79</sup> Therefore, with the convincing work of Jeremias Brownlee's theory quickly lost support. The fact that no other serious theories have surfaced reveals that scholarship is unsure of the identity of the Man of Lies.

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<sup>77</sup> Brownlee, "The Wicked Priest," 10.

<sup>78</sup> Jeremias, *Der Lehrer der Gerechtigkeit*, 1963.

<sup>79</sup> Brownlee, "The Wicked Priest," 10.

#### **IV. The Teacher of Righteousness**

The works that deserve the most attention are the Covenant of Damascus and the peshers that the community produced. Again, pesher Habakkuk draws the most attention because of its greater content and the fact that it is less fragmentary than the peshers of Micah, Hosea, Nahum and the Psalms. Because the community interpreted the biblical books in such an apocalyptic manner,<sup>80</sup> interpreting them as directly relating to the Qumran community, the original historical background of the biblical texts is of little concern. Therefore, the attempt here is to provide the appropriate historical setting for the community's interpretations of its biblical texts. The peshers can only be understood in the context of Qumran history and theology, and that context is incomplete.

##### **A. Survey of Applicable Passages in the Dead Sea Scrolls**

The Teacher of Righteousness appears in several different places throughout the Qumran scrolls. Arguably the most important references to him are found in the Covenant of Damascus because this document presents more of an historical story than the peshers, which interpret almost every text as prophetic literature. It is difficult from the peshers to determine how much of the text is historical and how much is the community's interjection of characters into situations where they may not always belong. The Covenant of Damascus appears to be more faithful to historical events than the peshers. This does not mean that the peshers do not have a great deal to offer. The value

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<sup>80</sup> Cross, *The Ancient Library of Qumran*, 92.

of each in the quest for the Teacher of Righteousness should be apparent in the analysis that follows.

### **1. The Covenant of Damascus (5Q12, 6Q15, 4Q265-273)**

The Covenant of Damascus refers to the Teacher of Righteousness at several points. They are not considered to be the earliest known references to the Teacher, but they are very valuable for understanding the Teacher of Righteousness and his community. The Covenant of Damascus is presented in two primary sections. The first section is an exhortation to the community by the writer who could possibly have been the Guardian of the community.<sup>81</sup> However, this theory is based primarily on his having been in a position of authority from which he could instruct the community.<sup>82</sup> The second section consists of certain statutes in which the community is instructed in manners of conduct.

The teaching in the Covenant of Damascus is concerned with the theology of the community. The writer encourages followers to remain faithful, and through his references to the history of Israel he believes that God rewards the faithful and punishes

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<sup>81</sup> The Guardian, also known as the "Master," held the highest position in the Qumran community. He taught the members of the community in the ways of the "Book of the Community Rule." He was to preside over assemblies and judge the spiritual progress of the members of the community. He is not considered to be the same person as the Teacher of Righteousness, but probably governed over the community possibly during but surely after the death of the Teacher of Righteousness.

<sup>82</sup> It is quite clear that the Covenant of Damascus was the product of redaction. Some of the material was not simply copied but was also updated. It is apparent that within the texts differences occur. Therefore, this must be taken into account in the exegesis of the texts. In particular, the understanding of the Teacher of Righteousness could have been seriously misconstrued due to scribal and redactional activity.

those not in accord with His plans.<sup>83</sup> The other primary section of the Covenant of Damascus deals with certain statutes of the community. This section is basically a list instructing the members of the community on how to conduct themselves. An example of a statute is, “Every man who vows another to destruction by the laws of the Gentiles shall himself be put to death” (CD IX, 1). The statutes reveal a nomistic orientation to the community.

The first reference to the Teacher of Righteousness in the Covenant of Damascus is found in the first few verses of column I of the text, which states:

And God observed their deeds, that they sought Him with a whole heart, and He raised for them a Teacher of Righteousness to guide them in the way of His heart. And he made known to the latter generations that which God had done to the latter generation, the congregation of traitors, to those who departed from the way (CD I, 11-14).

The author begins by reporting a short history of the community primarily focusing on its persecutions at the hands of others. It is apparent from the first two paragraphs that the community sees itself as “the Remnant”<sup>84</sup> who will function as God’s chosen people in the apocalyptic age. However, for twenty years this group was “like blind men groping for the way.” After this statement the Teacher of Righteousness is introduced into the community for the purpose of leading it “in the way of His heart.” Presumably the referent of “His” is the Lord and not the Teacher of Righteousness. Theologically, the difference would most likely be minimal. Since the Lord apparently sent the Teacher, then he would be trusted with God’s teaching, and it could be argued that the theology

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<sup>83</sup> Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 95-96.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, xxii, 43.

and instruction which the Teacher of Righteousness taught were faithful transmissions of the theology and instruction of God. The community certainly thought so, and, therefore, the proper understanding would help to understand better the community's view of the Teacher. However, it might be questioned that the Teacher of Righteousness possibly transmitted errant teaching. This understanding would be significant in the historical research of the Teacher of Righteousness because interpreted either way it would explain a great deal about his character.

The person to whom the above text refers is a very important concern. And for the historical search for the Teacher of Righteousness the theology is not as important as the person doing the speaking, that is, the person who is the referent of "His" in the above paragraph. It is known with little doubt that the Teacher of Righteousness was a primary and highly regarded leader of the community. Based on the texts of the Qumran scrolls it is apparent that he was their foremost leader. His leadership seems to have given the community its basic characteristics.<sup>85</sup>

The passage in column I of the Covenant of Damascus reveals several things about the Teacher of Righteousness besides offering a major interpretational point to argue. One thing that is assured is that the Teacher of Righteousness was an able leader of those at Qumran who followed his teaching and direction. The author reports that the group in question was following the ways of the Lord but that their observance was in some way misguided for lack of proper orientation. The Lord sent the Teacher in order to help this so called "Remnant" in the ways pleasing to God. It appears that they needed

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<sup>85</sup> James H. Charlesworth, ed., *John and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1990), 1-2.

guidance in the proper observance of Torah. The community sought exacting compliance, which the Teacher implemented after the twenty years of “groping for the way.”<sup>86</sup> An interesting point to note is that the community saw itself as graced by God through the guidance of the Teacher of Righteousness. Column I states, “And God observed their deeds, that they sought Him with a whole heart, and He raised for them a Teacher of Righteousness to guide them in the way of His heart.” The Teacher of Righteousness was not sent to end Torah observance but to refine the community’s understanding of and obedience to the Torah.

This first column in the Covenant of Damascus does mention certain times that must be analyzed. Many have argued that the numbers are not accurate,<sup>87</sup> but they do deserve some attention and should be considered seriously for the time frame of the Teacher of Righteousness. The first reference to particular dating in the Covenant of Damascus states that “He” (God) visited the “Remnant” 390 years after the fall of Judah to Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon (CD I, 6). Subtracting these years from 587 B.C.E., the time of Babylon’s conquest of Judah, leaves a date of 197 B.C.E. From that number another 20 years can be subtracted for the 20 years of “groping for the way” (CD I, 10), which arrives at 177 B.C.E. Another 40 years can then be subtracted for the 40 year ministry of the Teacher of Righteousness, who at the end of 40 years was “taken up,” which most scholars believe means he died.<sup>88</sup> If these dates are accurate and the 40 years

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<sup>86</sup> Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 28.

<sup>87</sup> Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Qumran in Perspective*, 147-148.

<sup>88</sup> Philip R. Davies, *The Damascus Covenant: An Interpretation of the “Damascus Document”* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1982), 180. Also see B. Wacholder, “Does Qumran record the death of the

and 390 years are literal and not figurative, then the time of the ministry of the Teacher of Righteousness can be placed between 177 B.C.E. and 137 B.C.E.

It would be convenient if the dates could be completely trusted. However, there are problems. The ancients are not considered to be punctilious reporters of history. Most of their events are seen from a religious viewpoint and are, therefore, reported with an attempt to theologize. Because of this phenomenon it is difficult to say that the dating can be considered as a straightforward rendering of history. Also, especially with the Qumran community it is quite obvious that the reports about their Teacher were polemical and eulogistic.<sup>89</sup> Therefore, they must be evaluated on that basis. The possibility that the numbers were reported accurately is not completely impossible, but the Qumran community would be likely to shape historical fact in conformity with its self-understanding and biblical convention.

The writer of the Covenant of Damascus was a very polemical and biased reporter.<sup>90</sup> It is possible that his reports are historical, but it is most likely that his attempt was to present the community in an extremely positive and even stylized fashion. Therefore, his reports concerning the Teacher of Righteousness are probably somewhat forced. The Teacher appears almost bigger than life in the Covenant of Damascus. The tone of heroism is constant in the reports concerning the Teacher of Righteousness. He is

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Moreh?," *Revue de Qumran* 13 (1988) : 323-330 and J. Fitzmyer, "The gathering in of the community's teacher," *Maarav* 8 (1992) : 223-228.

<sup>89</sup> Craig A. Evans and William F. Stinespring, eds., *Early Jewish and Christian Exegesis: Studies in Memory of William Hugh Brownlee* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 126.

<sup>90</sup> Cross, 90-91.



presented as blameless. It is therefore correct to be reserved and cautious about the accuracy of the writer of the Covenant of Damascus.

The Teacher of Righteousness is mentioned for the second time a few paragraphs later in the Covenant of Damascus.

And at Kadesh He said to them, Go up and possess the land. But they chose their own will and did not heed the voice of their Maker, the commands of their Teacher, but murmured in their tents; and the anger of God was kindled against their congregation (CDIII, 8-9).

Actually this reference is simply to the "Teacher." The text is based on a reference to Deuteronomy 9:23 which states, "Go up and possess the land which I have given you" (NASB). The reference is to the nation following Moses. Therefore, since the Covenant of Damascus only reports that they disobeyed the Teacher, and not the Teacher of Righteousness specifically, it would be easier to name this Teacher as Moses. Moses fits the qualifications, for the Deuteronomy text deals with the community's rebellion. However, with the apocalyptic and poetical interpretations of biblical texts by the community it is more likely that this reference is to their Teacher of Righteousness.

From a strictly historical perspective one would have to say that the reference in this section of the Covenant of Damascus is unclear. But the question needs to be asked from the community's point of view and with the realization of its polemical interpretations of texts. In order to make the commentary on Deuteronomy clear the author should have said that the nation following Moses did not listen to him. It seems that the text was understood and may not have needed any explanation as to who this "Teacher" was. But given the fact that the community had its own "Teacher" who was never given a name, one would expect the text to be more clear.

Given these previous questions, then, is it possible that the community saw the Teacher of Righteousness as like Moses? It seems clear that they viewed their Teacher in the same role as Moses. Given the community's apocalyptic interpretations of texts, perhaps they believed this person to be the end times prophet.<sup>91</sup> Regardless, what this passage can add to the discussion is that it does seem to continue to reveal the extremely high standing of the Teacher of Righteousness, that is, if the community is trying to make even the smallest connection with Moses.

The Teacher of Righteousness is not mentioned again in the Covenant of Damascus until the last paragraph of the exhortations section, column VIII, which states:

But all those who hold fast to these precepts, going and coming in accordance with the Law, who heed the voice of the Teacher . . . who have learned from the former judgements by which the members of the Community were judged; who have listened to the voice of the Teacher of Righteousness and have not despised the precepts of righteousness when they heard them; they shall rejoice and their hearts shall be strong, and they shall prevail over all the sons of the earth (CD VIII, 27-35).

It is again quite clear from the passage that the community sees itself as the elect people of God. The first sentence of the last paragraph is peculiar because, like the previous passage, the term "Teacher" is used instead of Teacher of Righteousness. However, in the same sentence it is reported that those who ". . . have listened to the Teacher of Righteousness. . . shall prevail over all the sons of the earth." Therefore, a problem exists in terminology. The author is composing his words in the present tense, and is, therefore, possibly referring to a living person. The problem, then, is regarding the possible interchange of "Teacher" for an unknown individual and the Teacher of Righteousness.

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<sup>91</sup> Philip R. Davies, "Communities at Qumran and the case of the missing' teacher'," *Revue de Qumran* 15 (1991) : 283.

This problem has more implications for the way the community saw its Teacher. A possibility is that more than one author is involved and/or that a redactor is weaving the Covenant of Damascus together confusing the understanding.<sup>92</sup>

It is possible that the author used these terms in several different ways. A very likely use may have simply been shorthand notation for people who shared similar roles. The Teacher of Righteousness seems to have functioned for the Qumran community in the same way as Moses had for the nation of Israel. Another possible interpretation, however, is that the author is associating the two, Moses and the Teacher of Righteousness, and is drawing a greater connection between them above and beyond their serving similar functions for their respective communities. Whether or not the author has intended anything by his apparent interchange of terms is unclear, but it is important for understanding the Teacher of Righteousness to determine if the interchange was intended.

The author has mentioned a “Teacher” and the Teacher of Righteousness in the same paragraph. This may be due to more than one author of the Covenant of Damascus. The text was composed around 100 B.C.E., but appears to be a document reworked by a redactor.<sup>93</sup> The author states that the individuals who will be the “Remnant” are those “who have learned from the former judgements.” These former judgments are probably the Law of Moses since the Law is mentioned previously in the paragraph. The author then states more about how to see “His salvation” by requiring the community to obey the Teacher of Righteousness. It seems that the way of salvation is by obeying the Law as

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<sup>92</sup> Davies, *Qumran*, 112.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

the Teacher of Righteousness interprets it. Since Moses was the Law giver is it more plausible that he is the one referred to as the “Teacher?” The Teacher of Righteousness interprets the Law but goes on to make even greater requirements for maintaining proper covenantal standing.<sup>94</sup> If this is the case why would the author not simply speak of Moses as the rest of the Hebrew Bible does? As mentioned, this may be due to a redactor and the drawing of connections between the Teacher of Righteousness that may or may not be valid. The Jewish people held their ancestry and nation in extremely high regard and, therefore, the community may have wanted to equate the two figures. However, its understanding of Moses is not completely clear. Therefore, the answer to this question still lies deep within the understanding of the Qumran community and its theology.

## **2. The Habakkuk Peshier (1QpHab)**

Of the peshiers from the Dead Sea Scrolls the Habakkuk peshier offers the most for historical research of the Qumran community. It is better preserved than any of the other peshiers, and it offers more verses. It deals with the Teacher of Righteousness in several instances. Its primacy for the study of the Teacher of Righteousness is not only because it has more material that is not as fragmentary, but it deals with the conflict between the Teacher and the Wicked Priest. The peshier on the Psalms also contains some interaction between these two characters, but the peshier on Habakkuk is the more detailed resource.

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<sup>94</sup> Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 105.

The peshar is dated to the late first century B.C.E. This is problematic because the peshar is far removed from the Teacher of Righteousness and the Wicked Priest.<sup>95</sup>

### 1QpHab I, 13-14

Habakkuk 1: 4 - [For the wicked encompasses] the righteous

[The wicked is the Wicked Priest, and the righteous] is the Teacher of Righteousness. . .

The first reference to the Teacher of Righteousness is quite limited. It relates from Habakkuk 1: 4 that wickedness will consume righteousness. The author relates this passage to his own time as the conflict between the Teacher of Righteousness and the Wicked Priest. The only apparent inference that can be gained from the text is that there is definitely a conflict between these two individuals. The author seems to be showing that at that point in time the Wicked Priest is winning the battle. If the point in the community's history were known when this conflict took place some light might be shed on the topic. In a simple reading of the passage it would appear that the conflict was in the early stages of the community, possibly even before the group moved to Qumran.<sup>96</sup> If van der Woude is correct that the term Wicked Priest referred to whomever held the office of the High Priest instead of one individual the aforementioned information would

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<sup>95</sup> The only scholars of recent times who have attempted to date the Scrolls into the Christian era are primarily Robert Eisenman and Michael Wise in *The Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered* (New York: Penquin Books, 1992) and Barbara Thiering, *Redating the Teacher of Righteousness* (Sydney: Theological Explorations, 1979).

<sup>96</sup> VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today*, 104.

now help.<sup>97</sup> However, most question van der Woude's theory and hold one Wicked Priest as conflicting with the Teacher of Righteousness.<sup>98</sup>

### 1QpHab I, 16-II, 4

Habakkuk 1: 5 - [Behold the nations and see, marvel and be astonished; for I accomplish a deed in your days, but you will not believe it when]

[Interpreted, this concerns] those who were unfaithful together with the Liar, in that they [did] not [listen to the word received by] the Teacher of Righteousness from the mouth of God. And it concerns the unfaithful of the New [Covenant] in that they have not believed in the Covenant of God [and have profaned] His holy Name.

The second reference to the Teacher of Righteousness is based on Habakkuk 1: 5. This concerns his conflict with the Liar mentioned in several places throughout the Dead Sea Scrolls. This passage refers back to the beginning of the Qumran community. The Liar was the individual who took a group of followers, possibly to Jerusalem, and separated from the Teacher of Righteousness and his followers who were at Qumran. It is believed by most that this occurred at the beginning of the community's history and that during this division the Teacher and his followers remained at Qumran while the Liar and his followers exited possibly going back to Jerusalem.<sup>99</sup> If this is the case and the pesher is interpreted in chronological fashion, this passage might help to place the Man of Lies at the extreme beginnings of the community. If the dating from the Covenant of Damascus is correct, then this line of reasoning would place the Man of Lies somewhere

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<sup>97</sup> Woude, 349.

<sup>98</sup> Brownlee, "The Wicked Priest," 3.

<sup>99</sup> This theory is supported by most scholars, in particular G. Jeremias, G. Vermes, F.M. Cross, W. Brownlee, et al.

around 175 B.C.E. This is significant because this timeline would eliminate Jonathan Maccabeus and Simon Maccabeus as candidates for the Wicked Priest. Therefore, two things must happen in the historical search for the person of the Wicked Priest. Jonathan and Simon must be eliminated as candidates for the Wicked Priest, or the time line of the Covenant of Damascus must be taken as inaccurate. Since the author<sup>100</sup> was far removed from the time of these occurrences it is just as likely that his historical data is inaccurate and/or his commentary is fragmented and not in a particular order. The fact that he was writing an interpretation for theological and religious purposes makes it necessary to be very cautious in following his accounts.

### **1QpHab VII, 1-5**

. . . and God told Habakkuk to write down that which would happen to the final generation, but He did not make known to him when time would come to an end. And as for that which He said, That he who reads may read it speedily:

Interpreted this concerns the Teacher of Righteousness, to whom God made known all the mysteries of the words of His servants the Prophets.

The third instance where the Teacher of Righteousness is mentioned is an interpretation of Habakkuk 2: 1-2. The text specifically relates God instructing Habakkuk to write down what would happen to the final generation. The author takes strong hold of this passage for making bold statements concerning the Teacher of Righteousness. The report exalts the nature of the Teacher as highly as possible. The author states that the Teacher is arguably greater than any prophets or leaders in the

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<sup>100</sup> It is very likely that more than one author produced the Covenant of Damascus or that a redactor has edited the text. See Davies, *Qumran*, 112-114.

history of Israel. The statement is, “this concerns the Teacher of Righteousness, to whom God made known all the mysteries of the words of His servants the Prophets.” This interpretation says that the Teacher is a combination of all of God’s prophets. This text does reveal the ultimate degree for the Teacher, but complete knowledge of the community’s understanding of the Teacher of Righteousness is not absolute.<sup>101</sup>

The dating is important in the Habakkuk pesher. Vermes believes it was composed in the late first century B.C.E.<sup>102</sup> If this is the case, then the pesher is removed at least 100 years from the Teacher of Righteousness. Because of the length of time involved it is probable that a later writer or editor is reporting things about which his information is possibly very unclear in nature. The manner of the texts themselves seems to say that the author is reporting only very favorable events about his community. As stated about history writing of this period, he is possibly not speaking of accurate history. His purpose is to eulogize his community and the Teacher of Righteousness. This makes the texts much more difficult. If the author were known to be closer chronologically, his work could be seen as a more accurate and less stylized rendering of the community’s history.

### **3. The Hosea Pesher (4Q166-167)**

#### **4Q166, II, 2-4**

Hosea 5: 14a - For I will be like a lion [to E]ph[ra]im [and like a young lion to the house of Judah].

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<sup>101</sup> Philip R. Davies, “The Teacher of Righteousness and the ‘end of days’,” *Revue de Qumran* 13 (1988) : 313.

<sup>102</sup> Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 340.



Its interpretation concerns the last Priest who shall stretch out his hand to strike Ephraim. . .

The text of Hosea in the Dead Sea Scrolls is extremely fragmentary, making it difficult for study and interpretation. Any applicable terms that appear have very little context from which to evaluate the individuals. The only applicable reference for the Teacher of Righteousness is very vague. The commentary mentions the “last Priest who shall stretch out his hand to strike Ephraim. . . .” The lack of context makes this reference most difficult. Is the reference to the Priest of the Qumran community who will overthrow the old Temple regime when the community is restored as the true Israel? Is it possibly referring to the Wicked Priest who was in conflict with the Teacher of Righteousness and his community? Finding the identity is primarily tied up with the term Ephraim.

#### **4. The Micah Peshar (1Q14)**

##### **1Q14, 6-10**

Micah 1: 5 - And what is the high place of Judah? [Is it not Jerusalem?]

[Interpreted, this concerns] the Teacher of Righteousness who [expounded the law to] his [Council] and to all who freely pledged themselves to join the elect of [God to keep the Law] in the Council of the Community; who shall be saved on the Day [of Judgement]. . .

The peshar of Micah makes a very pointed reference to the Teacher of Righteousness. It gives greater confirmation to his role as leader in the community and the fact that he had great authority. The passage states that the Teacher of Righteousness expounded the Law, which adds to the previous arguments that he added interpretive

guidance to the Law or that he determined that it demanded more than was apparent. The question seems to be whether or not the many observances required of community members were simply statutory for the community or were implied within the Law, which the Teacher of Righteousness drew out of it. If the Teacher felt that the Law carried all of the community's rules within its bounds, it could be said that he was doing what he felt was required. However, if the statutes were imposed apart from the covenant of Moses, then it might help to understand the Teacher more as a law-giving figure bringing about the new covenant relationship. However, the "new covenant" terminology is dated later in the Qumran scrolls than the Teacher of Righteousness. Therefore, he probably did not see himself establishing the new covenant, but his followers may have interpreted him as a new Moses after his death.

The evaluation of the above passage unfortunately sheds little evidence on the actual historical person of the Teacher of Righteousness. The greatest benefit of the passages is that they do attest to the existence of the Wicked Priest and a Teacher of Righteousness who had a very significant status with the people and a great influence within the Qumran community. The texts also reveal a great deal about the character and nature of the two figures. Finding historically accurate data from the Covenant of Damascus and the peshers is a much greater problem. The authors might have given historically accurate detail, but that was not their primary concern. Data that helps to actually name the two characters is very sparse throughout the texts.

## 5. The Psalms Peshar (4Q171, 4Q173)

The community seems to point all scripture to itself and to its own era, interpreting all scripture apocalyptically. Therefore, the Psalms almost beg to be interpreted in the same fashion. The Qumran community interprets the Psalms with an eye on its own situation, interpreting the texts in accordance with their beliefs. Poetry speaks in terms that are more elastic in meaning. Therefore, it would be easier for the Qumran community to interpret the Psalms apocalyptically as opposed to the more prosaic literature of Habakkuk, Micah and some of the other biblical texts. This does appear to be the case in the interpretations of the Psalms.

### 4Q171, III, 14-17

The steps of the man are confirmed by the Lord and He delights in all his ways; though [he stumble, he shall not fall, for the Lord shall support his hand].

Interpreted, this concerns the Priest, the Teacher of [Righteousness whom] God chose to stand before Him, for He established him to build for Himself the congregation of. . .

As can be seen again from this interpretation of Psalm 37, liberties seem to be taken by the community. Taken in a very literal manner the Psalm seems to simply offer a commentary on God. He is one who will delight in anyone whose ways are of God. An exegetical point is important for understanding this particular verse from Psalm 37. The RSV, REB, NASV and NIV interpret the verse in general terms speaking of “a man” whose steps are ordered by the Lord. The NRSV even goes so far as to interpret the verse as “Our steps.” This is more definite than the previous versions’ renderings, but all are general and do not speak of a definite individual. The text from Vermes, however, states

that it is the steps of “the man” that are ordered by the Lord.<sup>103</sup> This is a significant point in that the community’s rendering of the text possibly points to a definite individual. Is it possible that the community had a different text? Since the text is a copy of the biblical text with a commentary, it is most likely that the author would choose to write his words to indicate “the man” which could then be applied to the Teacher of Righteousness. A problem is that Vermes’ translation may be in question. Martinez also translates the text as indefinite agreeing with the biblical accounts.<sup>104</sup> However, he does place his text in brackets which means that the text was difficult or lacking portions. Therefore, not only is the early text questionable but the translators differ as well. The answer probably can not be known.

## **B. Best Evidence for the Identity of the Teacher of Righteousness**

The best information for evaluating the Teacher of Righteousness comes from the Covenant of Damascus and the Habakkuk peshier. The Covenant of Damascus speaks often about the status of the Teacher of Righteousness. The Habakkuk peshier does this as well, and it is much better than the other peshiers because it is less fragmentary, containing more references. Regardless, these sources are not extremely useful for actually understanding the true identity of Teacher of Righteousness. They deal more with this person’s character and nature. The Habakkuk peshier deals with the conflict between the Teacher and the Wicked Priest, and, therefore, it is an excellent resource for

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<sup>103</sup> Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 350.

<sup>104</sup> Florentino Garcia Martinez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: The Qumran Texts in English*, Trans. Wilfred G.E. Watson (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994), 204-205.

revealing information about the interaction between the two. The two resources are problematic because they simply do not yield much that is definite and that can be used to identify the two characters.

### **C. Evaluation of Leading Options for the Teacher of Righteousness**

The evidence above that relates to the Teacher of Righteousness is obviously not enough to allow for definite statements about this character's identity. This investigation of the peshers must be undertaken with solid input from the historical data of the era if any chance of discovering the Teacher will present itself. Certain historical characters have been suggested as the Teacher of Righteousness. The following will attempt to evaluate these historical figures in light of the information from the pesher materials and the Covenant of Damascus.

Possibly the first person to be considered as the Teacher of Righteousness was Onias III. This person succeeded his father Simon II as the High Priest in Jerusalem around the year 190 B.C.E. He inherited the position at a time when its influence in the region was high. However, during his leadership the position began to lose authority. The problems began with Simon, the brother of Menelaus, who threatened the power of the high priestly office.<sup>105</sup> This incident was a foreshadowing of things to come, and the decline of power would continue until control was completely lost during the Maccabean Revolt.

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<sup>105</sup> Rappaport, "Onias," 23.

The loss of power at this time would lead to an opportunity for an overthrow of the priesthood. Onias III ended up losing his position when Antiochus IV Epiphanes basically allowed Jason, Onias' brother, to buy the office of High Priest at approximately 175 B.C.E. It is unsure what happened to Onias III from this point. In 2 Maccabees 4: 30-38 it is reported that Onias III was murdered in or near the year 172 B.C.E. In his *Antiquities* Josephus also states a similar fate for Onias.<sup>106</sup> However, Josephus states elsewhere that Onias III founded a Jewish temple in Egypt.<sup>107</sup>

If the account from 2 Maccabees is correct then the possibility of Onias III as the Teacher of Righteousness ends. It seems that this is the best possibility of his fate since Josephus agrees with 2 Maccabees in his *Antiquities*.<sup>108</sup> If he died in 172 B.C.E. he would be eliminated as a candidate based on the archaeological and paleographical time line. The Teacher of Righteousness would have appeared at approximately 170 B.C.E., which is obviously too late for Onias III. The archaeological and paleographical dating from the Qumran Scrolls also eliminates Onias III if he had died by 172 B.C.E. However, this other account in Josephus' report is problematic. If Onias III had not died but escaped Jerusalem, he instantly becomes a very good candidate for the position of Teacher of Righteousness. Also, taking the Covenant of Damascus literally would put the Teacher of Righteousness at 177 B.C.E. which would allow for approximately five

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<sup>106</sup> Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities*, 12. 4. 1, 12. 387-388, 13. 62-73.

<sup>107</sup> Flavius Josephus, *War*, 1.33, 7.423.

<sup>108</sup> Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities*, 12.387.

years of ministry at Qumran. This, however, is problematic because the length of the ministry of the Teacher of Righteousness seems more lengthy than this.

The data supporting Onias III as the Teacher of Righteousness begins with the Covenant of Damascus. The appearance of the Teacher of Righteousness in the time frame of the Covenant of Damascus would allow for Onias III to appear near the year 170 B.C.E. If he did go to Egypt in 172 B.C.E. he could have returned to lead the Qumran community. Onias III would seemingly fit very well with the characteristics that this group desired. He was of the Zadokite line and rightful heir to the office of High Priest.<sup>109</sup> It appears that the community did not approve of the other High Priests because they were not of the Zadokite line. Therefore, Onias III surely would have gained the approval, and possibly the sympathy, of this group of individuals. However, scholarly consensus makes it difficult to name Onias III as the Teacher of Righteousness. It places the dating of the Teacher of Righteousness about 20 years later. This assumes, and probably correctly, that the dates in the Covenant of Damascus are not historically accurate. Archaeological data has attested to this, which makes it much more difficult to label Onias III as the Teacher of Righteousness.<sup>110</sup>

Onias IV was the son of Onias III. He is also a good candidate as the Teacher of Righteousness. Though he was the rightful heir to the office of High Priest, he was not allowed to serve in that position. Apparently he was living in Egypt while still holding a

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<sup>109</sup> Schiffman, *From Text to Tradition*, 72.

<sup>110</sup> Davies, *Qumran*, 54.

certain amount of priestly authority with the Jews in that region.<sup>111</sup> Because he was not allowed to hold the office he could have become the leader of the Qumran community. However, his presence in Egypt makes this appear doubtful. Also, his establishment of the Jewish temple in Egypt would have been quite contrary to the beliefs of the Qumran community. Therefore, he would have needed a change in his belief system in order to be consistent with the teachings from Qumran. In addition, if he established the temple in Egypt in 160 B.C.E., he would not have been able to be at Qumran by the time frame of the Covenant of Damascus.

One of the most careful attempts to label the Teacher of Righteousness was the scholarly effort of Ben Zion Wacholder. In his work *The Dawn of Qumran: Sectarian Torah and the Teacher of Righteousness* he determined that Zadok, the individual mentioned in the scrolls, was the Teacher of Righteousness. This view is in stark contrast to scholarly consensus, which believes this Zadok to be the tenth or sixth century B.C.E. person of biblical history. Wacholder, however, places the birth of this person in the third century B.C.E. and argues that the community's origins go back to the latter part of that century.<sup>112</sup>

Wacholder's argument begins with his study of the Temple Scroll. Yigael Yadin, the original editor of the Temple Scroll, designated it as such because he saw it as an editor's compilation of different strands of the canonical Torah.<sup>113</sup> However, Wacholder

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<sup>111</sup> Schiffman, *From Text to Tradition*, 82-84.

<sup>112</sup> Ben Zion Wacholder, *The Dawn of Qumran: The Sectarian Torah and the Teacher of Righteousness* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1983), 99.

<sup>113</sup> Robert W. Suder, Review of *The Dawn of Qumran: The Sectarian Torah and the Teacher of Righteousness*, by Ben Zion Wacholder, *Hebrew Studies* 26 (1985) : 374.



believes this scroll to be a document which would take the place of the Torah. Therefore, he entitled it the Torah Scroll and labeled it 11QTorah instead of using Yadin's convention of 11QTemple. Wacholder believes that this Torah Scroll was previous to all other Qumran documents and that it was written by the Teacher of Righteousness, the Zadok mentioned in the Covenant of Damascus.<sup>114</sup>

Wacholder dates the origins of the community to approximately 196 B.C.E. by taking the 390 years from Nebuchadnezzar's captivity of the Jews, noted in the Covenant of Damascus, as literal. In Wacholder's opinion Zadok was the originator of the community, and he composed 11QTorah just previous to his formation of the community. Wacholder has found references to this Zadok in Rabbinic and Karaite literature, and he has determined that he was a disciple of the Antigonus of Soko. With this Zadok named as the Teacher of Righteousness, he would identify the Wicked Priest as Onias III, the High Priest of that era.<sup>115</sup>

There are some serious problems with Wacholder's reconstruction of the history of the Qumran community that have prevented his theory from being widely accepted. A few scholars<sup>116</sup> do believe that the origins of Qumran possibly begin near to the timing of Wacholder. However, scholarly consensus currently sees the community as beginning

<sup>114</sup> James C. VanderKam, Review of *The Dawn of Qumran: The Sectarian Torah and the Teacher of Righteousness*, by Ben Zion Wacholder, *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 46 (1984): 803.

<sup>115</sup> James A. Sanders, Review of *The Dawn of Qumran: The Sectarian Torah and the Teacher of Righteousness*, by Ben Zion Wacholder, *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 105 (1985): 148.

<sup>116</sup> Vermes sees reasons to date the community to the early stages of the second century B.C.E. He bases this on the dating of the Covenant of Damascus and the Hellenistic crisis. This does not necessarily mean that Qumran was inhabited by this group before circa 150 which archaeology attests. See Vermes' *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 32-33.

around 150 B.C.E. based on archaeology, with the greatest testimony from the Hellenistic pottery and coins found at Qumran.<sup>117</sup> However, even if Wacholder's dating is to be chosen other problems exist. The Covenant of Damascus states that God sent the Teacher of Righteousness after "groping" for twenty years. Wacholder, on the other hand, believes that the community was originally formed by Zadok, his Teacher of Righteousness. How Wacholder deals with this issue is unclear. Another issue is that, according to Wacholder, the pesher of Habakkuk is thought to have been written around 170 B.C.E. while Zadok was still alive. VanderKam, however, believes that the pesher of Habakkuk was written later and, therefore, after the death of Zadok.<sup>118</sup> The current consensus would uphold VanderKam placing the writing of this pesher at the latter part of the first century B.C.E.<sup>119</sup> One other problem, which was mentioned above, is the fact that most scholars believe that the Zadok mentioned in the Qumran Scrolls existed in the tenth or sixth century B.C.E. If the consensus is correct, Wacholder's theory can be discounted.

Ben Zion Wacholder has made a very well respected attempt to reconstruct the history of the Qumran community, and many still see a great value in his work.<sup>120</sup> His views have by no means been completely discounted, but they are received with much

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<sup>117</sup> VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today*, 104.

<sup>118</sup> James C. VanderKam, Review of *The Dawn of Qumran: The Sectarian Torah and the Teacher of Righteousness*, by Ben Zion Wacholder, *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 46 (1984): 804.

<sup>119</sup> Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 340.

<sup>120</sup> Davies, *Qumran*, 42.

hesitation by scholars in Dead Sea Scrolls research. Many questions still need solid answers if Wacholder's theory and historical reconstruction will be widely accepted.

Another plausible theory for naming the Teacher of Righteousness is that he was the High Priest of the "Intersacerdotium."<sup>121</sup> This theory is based on the seven year period between 159 and 152 B.C.E. during which the nation existed without a priest. Questions center around why there was not a priest during this time and the whereabouts of the rightful claimant to the position. It is not unreasonable to believe that this individual was the person who became the Teacher of Righteousness. The individual's residence at Qumran is a valid explanation for his disappearance. If the High Priest were prevented from taking office during the era, he may have simply decided to establish his chosen group at Qumran.

Hartmut Stegemann initiated this theory and based his argument on his studies of three occurrences in the Scrolls where the Teacher of Righteousness is referred to as a High Priest.<sup>122</sup> In the three instances, from Habakkuk and the Psalms, Stegemann argues that the term **הכהן** takes the Teacher of Righteousness to this loftier status. He argues that Ezra and Nehemiah offer ten references of this sort revealing that the term was used to designate a High Priest. Six of the passages are used by Stegemann to claim that **הכהן** designated a High Priest and that they refer to Ezra. As Wise points out, this is problematic because it is doubtful that Ezra, though a great leader, was ever a High

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<sup>121</sup> Wise, "The Teacher of Righteousness and the High Priest of the intersacerdotium: two approaches," *Revue de Qumran* 14 (1990) : 587.

<sup>122</sup> Hartmut Stegemann, *Die Entstehung de Qumrangemeinde* (Bonn: Diss., 1971).

Priest.<sup>123</sup> The other four references have flaws as well. Through his studies Wise has shown that Second Temple Judaism simply did not use **הַכֹּהֵן** to denote a High Priest. The better evidence points out that Second Temple Judaism used some form of **הַגִּדְלוֹ** **הַכֹּהֵן** to label a High Priest. The inscriptions on coins from the era usually used this latter terminology, but in a few instances they do use the abbreviated **הַכֹּהֵן** to denote a High Priest.<sup>124</sup>

Wise has only set out to show the problems in Stegemann's argument, but he does not intend to devalue the suggestion. Stegemann may have a case that the Teacher of Righteousness was the displaced High Priest. However, Wise has shown that basing the argument on the use of the term **הַכֹּהֵן** will simply not lead infallibly to the Teacher of Righteousness. Wise has gone on to point out a connection between the Temple Scroll, which he believes was authored by the Teacher of Righteousness, and a letter from I Maccabees. He believes that the letter was written by a Seleucid king, either Demetrius I or Alexander Balas, to the unknown priest. It is possible that the letter was to the Teacher of Righteousness, thus, he would have been the High Priest.

The efforts of Wise have shown that Stegemann may have been correct in his belief that the Teacher of Righteousness was the High Priest of the seven year vacant period. The evidence delineated by Wise more clearly points to Stegemann's belief. The fact that scholars have either agreed with Stegemann or have withheld judgment speaks

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<sup>123</sup> Wise, 590-591.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., 596-597.

of a stronger possibility.<sup>125</sup> The time frame for the events would fit well with the current consensus of dating the Qumran community. Therefore, the position of Stegemann and Wise currently holds a large degree of validity until proven incorrect.

Judah the Essene was suggested early in Qumran studies by Jean Carmignac in *Christ and the Teacher of Righteousness*.<sup>126</sup> His studies, however, were based on simple exclusion versus evidence. Jerome Murphy-O'Connor has argued this point, showing that Carmignac's belief that Judah the Essene could not have lived before or after the Teacher of Righteousness was unfounded.<sup>127</sup> Carmignac takes his reference from Josephus' mentioning this Judah in his *Antiquities*.<sup>128</sup> Josephus places this person in the Temple in 103 B.C.E. Carmignac assumes a quiet period of about fifty years for the community before the community interacted with the Wicked Priest, who he believes was Alexander Jannaeus. For Murphy-O'Connor the dating does not match up, and the suppositions of Carmignac are simply too suspect. He relies on too many speculative occurrences for Judah the Essene to have been the Teacher of Righteousness.<sup>129</sup> Murphy-O'Connor does not completely deny the possibility but shows a need for much more data before Carmignac can be given more credit.

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<sup>125</sup> Ibid., 588.

<sup>126</sup> Jean Carmignac, *Christ and the Teacher of Righteousness: The Evidence of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, Trans. Katharine Greenlead Pedley (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1962).

<sup>127</sup> Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, "Judah the Essene and the Teacher of Righteousness," *Revue de Qumran* 10 (1981) : 579-580.

<sup>128</sup> Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities*, XIII, 311-313.

<sup>129</sup> Murphy-O'Connor, "Judah the Essene and the Teacher of Righteousness," 584.

It is easy to draw connections between the Teacher of Righteousness and the person of Jesus.<sup>130</sup> Both of these historical figures share many aspects in common which do deserve comparisons for consideration. In their theological beliefs the Teacher and his community shared many points in common with Jesus. Jesus and the Qumran group sought to live strictly by the laws of the Torah.<sup>131</sup> However, they did not share the same interpretation of the Torah. The community at Qumran held to a very strict observance of the Torah with very little, if any, room for compromise. Their interpretation was primarily to the “letter of the Law.” Contrarily, Jesus interpreted the Torah quite loosely by comparison. His view of the Torah allowed for a certain degree of compassion and simple common sense. For example, the Qumran community taught against helping an animal out of a pit on the Sabbath.<sup>132</sup> However, Jesus, seeing a certain need for the Torah to be flexible enough to be practical, would allow this type of activity on the Sabbath.

As well as the Torah being the governing document for Jesus and the Teacher’s group both looked to the Hebrew scriptures for guidance and wisdom. Both held the scripture in extremely high regard. This is evident from the references to the scriptures found in the Qumran scrolls and Jesus’ many references and quotes from the scriptures of old. However, the Qumran community seemed to see value in many ancient texts outside of what became the canon of scripture. They found valuable prophecy in 1 Enoch,

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<sup>130</sup> Charlesworth, *Jesus and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 9-22.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, 9-10.

<sup>132</sup> Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 109.

Jubilees, Tobit, etc.<sup>133</sup> Jesus, on the other hand, apparently limited valid prophetic literature to the canon.<sup>134</sup>

The theologies of Jesus and the Qumran community found a good deal of commonality in their eschatological views. Both felt that God's promises were currently being fulfilled. The Qumran community affirmed that the present time was the beginning of the divine intervention in the age to come. Eschatological activity was being seen in their era, and they believed that they were the individuals who truly understood the meaning within the sacred scriptures. Jesus, in similar fashion, believed that scripture's true meaning had been disclosed to him. The members of the Qumran community believed that God had revealed divine truths to the Teacher of Righteousness who taught the community under divine authority.<sup>135</sup> Jesus and the Teacher shared this aspect, for Jesus was also known for his teaching on many subjects, including the eschaton.

Did the community believe that the Teacher was their messiah? John J. Collins has pointed out that the references to the end of days when the messiah will come are all future and appear to be in a time after the Teacher of Righteousness had died.<sup>136</sup> He bases this on his understanding of 1QpHab II, 1-10, which states:

[Interpreted, this concerns] those who were unfaithful together with the Liar, in that they [did] not [listen to the word received by] the Teacher of Righteousness from the mouth of God. And it concerns the unfaithful of the New [Covenant] in that they have not believed in the Covenant of God [and

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<sup>133</sup> VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today*, 37-38.

<sup>134</sup> Charlesworth, *Jesus and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 10.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, 10-11.

<sup>136</sup> Eugene Ulrich and James VanderKam, eds., *The Community of the Renewed Covenant* (Notre Dame, Indiana: Notre Dame University Press, 1994), 195-199.

have profaned] His holy Name. And likewise, this saying is to be interpreted [as concerning those who] will be unfaithful at the end of days. They, the men of violence and the breakers of the Covenant, will not believe when they hear all that [is to happen to] the final generation from the Priest [in whose heart] God set [understanding] that he might interpret all the words of His servants the Prophets, through whom He foretold all that would happen to His people and [His land].

Collins believes that this text clearly looks back to the Teacher of Righteousness and forward to the “end of days.”<sup>137</sup> Therefore, even though a particular individual will teach righteousness he is not to be understood as the Teacher of Righteousness having returned as an eschatological figure.

There is cause to think the community viewed the Teacher of Righteousness not as the messiah but as the eschatological prophet to Israel. Vermes has pointed out that if the community’s messiah is seen in the context of second temple Jewish ideas, he was expected as “an Elijah returned as a precursor of the messiah or as a divine guide sent to Israel in the final days no doubt identical with ‘the prophet’ promised by God to Moses.”<sup>138</sup> If it could be deduced that the coming prophet was to “. . . teach the truth revealed on the eve of the establishment of the Kingdom, it would follow that his part was to all intents and purposes to be the same as that attributed by the Essenes to the Teacher of Righteousness.”<sup>139</sup> The Teacher of Righteousness did appear, in the community’s perspective at least, at the “end of days.”

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<sup>137</sup> Ulrich and VanderKam, 203.

<sup>138</sup> Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Qumran in Perspective*, 185.

<sup>139</sup> Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 185-186.



The problem for naming Jesus as the Teacher of Righteousness, as some have supposed,<sup>140</sup> is again concerned with the time frame of the Teacher. There is no doubt that Jesus lived in the early part of the first century C.E. There is also little doubt that the Teacher lived in the second century B.C.E. The dating of the materials that mention the Teacher of Righteousness at the latest are in the first century B.C.E. Therefore, even if the Teacher of Righteousness existed during the same time that the texts were written he would still be placed over 100 years before Jesus of Nazareth. The consensus of the argument takes the dating back even further.<sup>141</sup> Therefore, it is basically impossible that Jesus was the Teacher of Righteousness.

John the Baptist has also been suggested as the Teacher of Righteousness,<sup>142</sup> and there are some good reasons for believing that he may have actually been a member of the Qumran community before he began his ministry. He, like Jesus, had many things in common with the Qumran community, and it is quite possible that these commonalities came from a direct influence from the community. One of the primary reasons for seeing a possible connection between John the Baptist and the community was the fact that John's father, Zechariah, was a member of the priesthood.<sup>143</sup> The individuals at Qumran were members of priestly families. Thus, it is a simple process to draw a connection between the two. Zechariah's circles may have included Qumran, which would have

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<sup>140</sup> Most all who have taken this path at one time or another, Carmignac, etc., have given in to the evidence which has proved that Jesus was not the Teacher of Righteousness.

<sup>141</sup> Davies, *Qumran*, 54.

<sup>142</sup> Barbara Thiering, *Redating the Teacher of Righteousness* (Sydney: Theological Explorations, 1979).

<sup>143</sup> Otto Betz, "Was John the Baptist an Essene?" *Bible Review* 6 (1990) : 24.

allowed him much interaction with the individuals at that locale. If this is the case, then John the Baptist surely would have been influenced as well.

The problems with this theory are somewhat obvious. Zechariah was married to Elizabeth, whereas the community at Qumran appears to have been a celibate group. The numerous graves at Qumran with only male remains indicate that this was probably the case.<sup>144</sup> Therefore, it seems unlikely that Zechariah would have lived at Qumran. He could have had connections, but it seems improbable since the Qumran community saw those outside of itself as impure. Zechariah would surely not have been considered for membership at Qumran because of his marital status. Josephus, in *War*,<sup>145</sup> does mention married Essenes, but the group at Qumran was almost certainly celibate. This, of course, would not have kept John from seeking membership at Qumran at a later date, as many interpret his time in the desert.

Some scholars have taken hold of this theory of John having been a member of the Qumran community. Otto Betz is probably the champion of this possibility. In fact, Betz believes that John grew up at Qumran. Later he heard a greater call of God and departed from the community.<sup>146</sup> John's time in the wilderness could have been time spent at Qumran. He does show many similarities with the group, which could be used to argue his membership with these individuals. Theologically the community shared many common views with John the Baptist. Both were expecting an imminent judgment of

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<sup>144</sup> Davies, *Qumran*, 64.

<sup>145</sup> Josephus, *Jewish War*, 2. 12-121.

<sup>146</sup> Betz, 25.

God. The Teacher of Righteousness and John both preached God's glory to come in the very near future. The Teacher and the community focused greatly on the book of Isaiah and its immediate fulfillment.<sup>147</sup> From that same book is the reference to John the Baptist in the gospel accounts as "one crying in the wilderness." However, the community saw this phrase as directed toward itself, whereas the gospels direct it to John the Baptist.

The primary issue connecting John the Baptist with the Qumran community is the issue of baptism. Both the community and John the Baptist placed great emphasis on the process of baptism or ritual bathing. The Qumran community seemed to have had a long history of baptism in its theology and practice.<sup>148</sup> At the site of Qumran many cisterns are obvious that were used for the purpose of ablutions. Some of the cisterns even contain steps leading into them, which attests to the idea that the community was possibly very focused and concerned with baptism, or at least purity rituals.<sup>149</sup> The point is that both the Qumran community and John the Baptist practiced water rites, and, therefore, a possible connection does exist.

Even though the community and John the Baptist had similar beliefs and practices and though there is some decent evidence that John may have been at Qumran, it is not cautious scholarship to attempt to name him as the Teacher of Righteousness. This is the theory put forth by Barbara Thiering. She sees John the Baptist as the Teacher of

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<sup>147</sup> VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today*, 126.

<sup>148</sup> Klaus Berger, *Jesus and the Dead Sea Scrolls: The Truth Under Lock and Key?* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993), 57.

<sup>149</sup> Robert L. Webb, *John the Baptizer and Prophet: A Socio-historical Study* (Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1991), 157.

Righteousness and, as mentioned previously, Jesus as the Wicked Priest.<sup>150</sup> At the risk of being redundant, the same fallacy exists here as it does for Jesus. Even if John had been at Qumran, he could not have been the Teacher of Righteousness because the Teacher of Righteousness lived somewhere between 100 and 150 years previously. The community does leave evidence that it existed into New Testament times until around the destruction of the Temple in 68 C.E.<sup>151</sup> The consensus on the dating for the Teacher of Righteousness simply will not allow this connection with John the Baptist, just as they do not allow for a connection with Jesus.

The most difficult person to attempt to name as the Teacher of Righteousness is James, the brother of Jesus mentioned in the gospels. This theory was first posited by Robert Eisenman in *James the Just in the Habakkuk Peshier* and then later by Eisenman and Michael Wise in *Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered*.<sup>152</sup> They base their theory on a connection of their texts with the biblical letter of James. Eisenman believes that the ideology between the two texts is similar, and he goes so far as to say that James, the brother of Jesus, had conflicts with the apostle Paul and, therefore, that Paul was the Wicked Priest.<sup>153</sup>

The theory of Robert Eisenman and Michael Wise has gained little support from the academic community. The two scholars have attempted to solve the problem of the

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<sup>150</sup> Thiering, *Redating the Teacher of Righteousness*, 1979.

<sup>151</sup> Davies, *Qumran*, 36.

<sup>152</sup> Eisenman and Wise, *Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered*, 1992.

<sup>153</sup> George Brooke, Review of *The Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered*, by Robert Eisenman and Michael Wise, *Epworth Review* 20 (1993) : 123.

identity of the Teacher of Righteousness without following sound scholarly logic and data. The two miss the issue by many years in their dating scheme. James the Just can not be the Teacher of Righteousness simply based on the time frame. James lived in the first century C.E., whereas there is basically no doubt that the Teacher of Righteousness lived in the second century B.C.E. These two have also missed the issue, even disagreeing between themselves. Eisenman names the sect as a Christian organization. Radiocarbon dating alone has disproved this theory.<sup>154</sup> Wise agrees with Driver<sup>155</sup> and Roth<sup>156</sup> that the community was a sect of Zealots. Scholarly consensus easily refutes this idea.<sup>157</sup> Thus, it is interesting that these two would ask the field of Qumran studies to follow them when even they can not agree. Besides, there is no evidence that Paul had any ties to the priesthood. In fact, he says he was a Pharisee.

There is currently a telling lack of research concerning the Teacher of Righteousness. This enigmatic figure in the Qumran Scrolls seems to beg for attention, and yet few scholars in recent days have made solid statements about his identity. This is probably based on two possible points for consideration in the discussion of the Teacher of Righteousness. One is simply that many of the known historical candidates have not proved to be solid candidates. As noted above, many of the possibilities have serious

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<sup>154</sup> VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today*, 16-17.

<sup>155</sup> G. R. Driver, *The Judean Scrolls: The Problem and the Solution* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1965).

<sup>156</sup> Cecil Roth, *The Historical Background of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1958).

<sup>157</sup> Magen Broshi, Review of *The Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered*, by Robert Eisenman and Michael Wise, *Biblical Archaeologist* 57 (1994):62-63.

problems as to why they are probably not the Teacher of Righteousness, and not a single candidate poses as an excellent possibility. The other point is surely based on the evidence at hand. Many questions still need to be answered before the texts can speak authoritatively about a particular individual who could have been the Teacher of Righteousness. With the many attempts that have for the most part failed, it is likely that scholars are simply reserving judgment until further evidence and information are available. Therefore, the quest for the historical Teacher of Righteousness will surely remain in a static condition until archaeology, paleography and other studies reveal more evidence about the Teacher of Righteousness.<sup>158</sup>

#### **D. Implications for the Chosen Option**

The best evidence for the person of the Teacher of Righteousness seems to point to the High Priest who was never allowed to take office. Many of the options that have been named have significant flaws primarily in their time schemes. The person who should have held the position of High Priest from 159 to 152 B.C.E., however, fits nicely into the chronology for what is the scholarly consensus on the dating of the Teacher of Righteousness. Davies has shown that the community originated around 150 B.C.E.<sup>159</sup> which would be near the end of the “intersacerdotium” and the settlement of Qumran. Also, this person would have been highly influential with conservative Jews in the region, and he would have been of Zadokite lineage. The individual’s position and status would

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<sup>158</sup> VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today*, 16-17.

<sup>159</sup> Davies, *Qumran*, 54.

have also made him a threat to Jonathan Maccabeus or Simon Maccabeus if he were the true heir to the position of High Priest. Especially if this person were seen by the nation to have been usurped by the Maccabees, even though they allowed for a renewed freedom of worship, many in the nation may have felt more allegiance to this unnamed High Priest. Because of the traditions of the Zadokite lineage, the High Priest may have been seen sympathetically but also as authoritative. Thus, this is a legitimate reason why Jonathan would have feared and possibly persecuted this High Priest.

A particular problem for identifying this person as the Teacher of Righteousness is that no name can be attributed to him. It may be that there simply was no natural successor. However, this does not seem logical that the nation which placed so much emphasis on the priesthood would have no successor. This kind of instability most likely would not have been left unchecked in Jerusalem. Even more peculiar is that the position remained vacant for seven years. The nation would have felt insecure without someone in the office. Therefore, it is more probable that the person did exist but was not allowed to serve. Though it is nowhere documented, serious turmoil and debates could have continued over this position during the seven years. Based on the information above and the lack of information about the Teacher of Righteousness, the best hypothesis as to the identity of the Teacher of Righteousness seems to be the High Priest of the "Intersacerdotium." Scholarship has not vigorously accepted this theory, but the fact that no refutations have been offered is telling. Further study, though, is needed in this area in order to side with Stegemann.<sup>160</sup> Since the Teacher of Righteousness is thought to

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<sup>160</sup> Wise, "The Teacher of Righteousness and the High Priest of the intersacerdotium: two approaches." *Revue de Qumran* 14 (1990) : 587-613.

have composed some at least of the Qumran hymns, a study of their dating and theology could very possibly affirm the assertions of Hartmut Stegemann.

#### **E. Suggestions for Further Research**

The solution to the mystery concerning the Teacher of Righteousness is a problem that simply requires more data. The Covenant of Damascus and the peshers offer valuable information, but as noted, they have problems with their data that need answers. Renewed efforts in textual matters would surely help the issue. This type of effort would help to more accurately determine the dating of the texts and possibly the author or authors involved. More paleographical work may give better data, and the use of modern scientific technology, such as AMS spectroscopy, will surely aid the study of the texts. James VanderKam has reported some of these results which show the value of AMS spectroscopy.<sup>161</sup> However, this type of test is not absolute, and better refinement of the process will continue to benefit the dating of the texts.

A serious study of the hymns of the Qumran Scrolls would doubtless shine light on the study of the Teacher of Righteousness. It is believed that many, if not all, of the hymns were written by the Teacher of Righteousness.<sup>162</sup> If this could be determined, a better understanding of the thoughts and ways of the Teacher could be gained. Greater understanding of the content and more accurate dating of the hymns would surely offer

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<sup>161</sup> VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today*, 16-19.

<sup>162</sup> Zdzislaw Kapera, ed., *Mogilany 1989: Papers on the Dead Sea Scrolls Offered in Memory of Jean Carmignac*, Part 2 (Krakow: Enigma Press, 1991), 9-10.



great benefits to the study. Comparative studies of the Qumran texts should be able to offer help to the study as well. Wacholder has used this type of process between the Temple Scroll and the Torah as well as with other texts to conclude that Zadok was the Teacher of Righteousness.<sup>163</sup> Though his results appear less than convincing he has shown the possible value of comparing texts within the Qumran community as well as comparing them with texts outside of the community.

Other areas of study may present themselves with time and may produce more conclusive results about the nature and character of the Teacher of Righteousness, the Wicked Priest and the Man of Lies. New and better data concerning these individuals would benefit the understanding of the Qumran community, and it may also give a greater understanding of the overall history and theology of the region in the second and first centuries B.C.E. Until more information is disclosed the Teacher of Righteousness will continue to be an enigmatic figure eluding the scrutiny of the academic world.

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<sup>163</sup> Wacholder, *The Dawn of Qumran*, 203.

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