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An Examination of Early Jewish Thought on the Afterlife

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An Honors College Project Presented to  
the Faculty of the Undergraduate  
College of Arts & Letters  
James Madison University

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by Robert Eugene Graham III

May 2017

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Accepted by the faculty of the Department of Philosophy & Religion, James Madison University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Honors College.

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PUBLIC PRESENTATION

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## Introduction

Hellenism, the introduction and intermingling of Greek culture with other cultures of nations that had become a part of or who had interacted with the Greek empire, was met with various thoughts from the Jews after it began to develop through Alexander's March in 333 B.C.E. (Flannery). Alexander's travels across the Ancient Near East and his creation of an empire that embraced Greek culture left the Jews, and every other nation and people within the empire, in a place in which their cultures were seen as ones that would be bettered by modernization from Hellenistic culture (Flannery). Though Alexander died, his empire left various Hellenistic rulers over the nations and people of the Ancient Near East (Flannery). These rulers implemented Hellenistic acculturation within the areas of the empire that they had control over (Flannery). Some Jews enjoyed participating in the modernity of Hellenism, while others saw it as a threat to the laws and culture of the Torah that had, for the most part, characterized the Jewish people for many years as Israelite religion transformed and developed over time (Flannery).

Eventually, it came to be apparent that the Jews who were more open to the modernization of their Jewish culture through Hellenism would be better off than those who opposed Hellenism. This is due to the fact that those who opposed it were met with

consequences under Hellenistic law; typically, being killed for their refusal to embrace Hellenistic culture (Flannery). This fully came to fruition in 168 B.C.E. when the Seleucid king Antiochus IV Epiphanes began to execute those Jews who kept their allegiance to the Torah, and who would not change their purity and dietary laws in the name of Hellenistic modernism in what came to be known as the "Crisis in Hellenization" (Flannery). The Jews who were opposed to Hellenism had to either reluctantly allow their beliefs and laws be Hellenized or die the death of a martyr for the sake of the Torah and their traditionally held culture and laws (Flannery). Many of those who were against the Hellenization of Judaism decided to take the path of martyrdom; wondering why they had to die for following the laws that YHWH had set about in the Torah - the same laws through which YHWH had provided a covenant of blessings for those who followed them (Deut. 28; Flannery). These Jews wondered why they, the righteous ones following the laws of YHWH, were being cursed, while the Hellenizers and the Hellenized Jews, the ones who had so quickly abandoned the laws of YHWH, were being blessed (Flannery). This was a significant step in history, for it led these Jews to develop what were, at that time, vague conceptions of the afterlife into various different theories that no longer left

the righteous dead in Sheol, but instead brought them back to life in several fashions (Elledge 6; Flannery).

These different theories concerning the afterlife became so significant and mainstream that they became the norm of discussion in other literature from early Judaism and Christianity (Flannery). People felt a deep need to explain why the righteous were not immediately being blessed for following the laws of YHWH, and their answers, though diverse, point, for the most part, to vindication in the afterlife for the righteous (Setzer 49; Elledge 19; Flannery). C. D. Elledge walks through the thought process behind theories of the time, utilizing the example of the resurrection described in 2 Maccabees, and how they provided vindication for the righteous: "Resurrection is envisioned only for the righteous martyrs who have died for the laws; yet the dying speech of Eleazar seems to imply the possibility of a future punishment for the wicked (6:26). Through the resurrection hope, the author demonstrates that even amid torture and martyrdom, the people have not been abandoned by God (6:12-17)" (19).

These theories took on several different forms, typically but not always differing based on how Hellenized the group writing about the theory in the literature of the time period was. However, no one theory was held uniformly or thought of in the same manner between various Jewish sects and within each of



the different texts of the time period (Flannery). Just because two different texts utilized the explanation of immortality of the soul of the righteous, what happened to an immortal soul in the afterlife could have been thought of in very different ways between those two texts (Flannery). However, since there are some key similarities in these theories throughout the literature of the time period, one can still study certain categories for these theories about the afterlife of the righteous. This paper will examine these various theories concerning the afterlife of the righteous; looking at citations of the theories from some of the important texts of the time period. Then, this paper will examine the Qumran community - namely, the members of the Qumran Yachad - and its unique and perplexing theories about the afterlife of the righteous. This is the point in the paper where the arguments for the thesis will truly take hold. The thesis of this paper is that, while not examined enough by the academic community, thought about the predestination of a righteous chosen people by YHWH began to develop during this time period. The development of this theory took place in much literature of this time period to a degree, but particularly can be found abundantly within the literature of Qumran.

## Resurrection

One of the major theories of how the righteous would be vindicated in the afterlife by YHWH is that of bodily resurrection. This theory began to seriously take form and develop with the apocalyptic Daniel 7-12. Elledge writes, "Though additional evidence has often been cited (Hos 6:1-3; Ezek 37:1-14; Isa 25:8, 26:14-19, 52:13-53:12; Ps 16:10, 17:15, 49:15, 73:23-28), the first definitive literary evidence in the Hebrew Bible for Jewish faith in a resurrection from the dead emerges from the visions in Daniel (chapters 7-12)" (12). N. T. Wright points out how many scholars state that some of the Jews found it hard to believe that if God truly loved them, that death would be able to put an end to this love (86). This led them to make developments in the idea of bodily resurrection, with texts such as Daniel being the first to clearly shed light on this idea's development (86). It is believed that Daniel 7-12 was written around the Crisis in Hellenization during the time frame of 167-163 B.C.E. (Elledge 12). As Alan Segal points out, the symbolism behind "the little horn" of Daniel 7:8 can be seen as Antiochus IV Epiphanes through the description of how long this horn would be in power in 8:9: "'The little horn speaking great things' must be Antiochus IV Epiphanes, the Seleucid king of Syria and ruler of Judea during the first half of the second century BCE. His evil reign is described as 'a

time, two times, and a half a time of the little horn,' which is an allusion to the three and one-half years when Antiochus persecuted the Jews during the Maccabean revolt" (288).

Nickelsburg analyzes Daniel 12:1-3 in order to understand the theory of bodily resurrection that is found in the text, starting on page 23 of his *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism and Early Christianity*. The NRSV translation of Daniel 12:1-3 reads:

At that time Michael, the great prince, the protector of your people, shall arise. There shall be a time of anguish, such as has never occurred since nations first came into existence. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone who is found written in the book. Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.

Nickelsburg explains how the Hebrew Bible sometimes refers to those who are dead as "asleep," as in the case of Daniel 12:2 (*Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life* 30). Likewise, and as one would assume, "awakening" is one way that the Hebrew Bible refers to those who regain life (30). John Collins makes

sure to clear up confusion; pointing out that while it is true that throughout the Hebrew Bible before the penning of Daniel 7-12 such words used to describe resurrection were typically used metaphorically, this should not be the way in which the resurrection of Daniel is to be understood, for this kind of resurrection is to be taken literally as bodily resurrection (391-2). In further discussing this, Collins points to several other examples of metaphorical resurrection in the Hebrew Bible, such as Isa. 26:19; Jer. 51:39, 57; Job 14:12 (392-3). Nickelsburg states that "the dust" that the dead are sleeping in is Sheol (30).

The "wise" ones and the ones "who lead many to righteousness" are the righteous who die for the sake of the Torah (Segal 291). The Hebrew term used for the wise, "maskilim," finds its roots in Isaiah 52-53, describing the servant of these chapters (Collins 393-4). The reason that the wise maskilim have a special place in Daniel 12 is seemingly because of their teaching other people in the ways of righteousness that they themselves understand and follow (393-4). The text states that these wise righteous ones will be "like stars," which, according to Segal, signifies their transformation into angels through angelomorphism, an utmost holy transformation that this paper will discuss more in concerns to its presence in the thought of the Qumran literature

(291-2). Segal goes on to explain how this angelomorphism may have roots in both Caananite and Greek thought of angelic and constellational heroes; however, he makes sure to clarify that there are many aspects of Jewish angelomorphism that are unique to Judaism and do not come from other cultural sources

(292). Collins also comes to this conclusion; he cites the examples of Castor and Pollux, two Greek heroes, who also became stars, while, at the same time, acknowledging that there is definitely Jewish influence in the description of angelomorphism of the wise in Daniel 12 (393-4). He even looks to another early Jewish text, 1 Enoch, to better understand the angelomorphism of Daniel 12: "...the stars are the host of heaven, and the comparison implies that the risen *maskilim* are associated with the angels. This is shown clearly by the parallel in *1En* 104:2-6: 'You will shine like the lights of heaven and will be seen, and the gate of heaven will be opened to you...you will have great joy like the angels of heaven...for you will be associates of the host of heaven'" (393-4).

One way in which this thought of bodily resurrection as found in Daniel 12:1-3 differs from other cultural sources is that, while there is also a theory of bodily resurrection found within Persian Zoroastrianism - a resurrection for all of those who are righteous, the resurrection of 12:1-3 is only for "some" of the righteous (292). Collins goes into detail: "Daniel does

not envisage universal resurrection. His concern is focused on the fate of the faithful, especially the 'wise,' and of their perfidious counterparts in the crisis of the Hellenistic age" (392-3). Collins again makes another comparison with Isaiah, which in chapter 66 describes the righteous being resurrected, but not those who are evil (392-3). This is the aspect that reveals a difference between the resurrection of Daniel 12 and that of Isaiah 66: the righteous of Isaiah 66 seem to be the only ones who resurrect, while both the righteous and those who are evil are resurrected by YHWH in Daniel 12 (392-3). The reason that evil people seem to be resurrected in Daniel 12 is so that they can face some kind of punishment, even if that is not necessarily something comparable to hell (392-3).

Another early Jewish text that promotes resurrection is 1 Enoch. According to Nickelsburg, this can be seen from examining 1 Enoch 22, 24, and 25 (*1 Enoch* 1 306). He writes, "That this author believed in some kind of a resurrection is evident. The spirits of the sinners described in vv 10-11 [of 1 Enoch 22] will be transferred to a final place of terrible and eternal punishment. Moreover, from 24:2-25:6, it appears that the righteous will be raised to a new and long life in Jerusalem..." (306). Scholars do not fully know if this resurrection described in 1 Enoch is a bodily resurrection, but Nickelsburg believes that some of the terms used in 1 Enoch 25

point to the possibility of a bodily resurrection due to the meaning associated with them in several texts from the Hebrew Bible (315). One such example that Nickelsburg utilizes for this argument is that of "bones" in Isa. 66:14 and Ezek. 37:5, 7-10 (315). According to Nickelsburg, "bones" had a meaning behind it that was connected with one's senses in the Semitic languages - the group of languages that Hebrew belonged to (315). Due to this use of "bones," Nickelsburg believes that this shows that 1 Enoch is describing a bodily resurrection that will lead to all of the righteous being in Jerusalem (315). Whether or not this resurrection that is explained in 1 Enoch is bodily resurrection or not, resurrection is the form of afterlife that is written about in 1 Enoch.

The main Jewish proponents of this theory of bodily resurrection at the time seem to be the Pharisees. One source that describes the thought of several Jewish groups of the time is the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus. One of these groups that he discusses is the Pharisees. Claudia Setzer says, "Josephus presents this constellation of elements about the Pharisees:...Belief in afterlife and/or resurrection from the dead (*J.W.* 2.163; *Ant.* 18.12-15)" (24). Sanders also contributes by pointing to other statements of Josephus concerning the Pharisees' belief in bodily resurrection: "'Every soul, [the Pharisees] maintain, is imperishable, but the souls

of the good alone pass into another body, while the souls of the wicked suffer eternal punishment' (*War* 2.164)" (299). From this description alone, one can notice how Josephus's descriptions of the Pharisees have a Hellenistic "sound" to them (Sanders 301). This means that while one can have some idea about the beliefs of the Pharisees and other Jewish sects that Josephus describes, one can never be completely sure how accurate these descriptions are with the Hellenistic bias of Josephus behind them (301). Nonetheless, Josephus has still proven to be an invaluable source for Jewish history and thought of that time period through his *Wars* and *Antiquities*. Aside from just Josephus, one can examine what early Christian literature had to say about the beliefs of the Pharisees, who are common characters in the Gospels. Setzer writes, "In the Synoptics, the Pharisees are not connected to the belief in resurrection from the dead, probably because Jesus and the Pharisees agree [that there will be a bodily resurrection]" (26). Clearly, with the theory of bodily resurrection beginning to take shape with Daniel 7-12, and with its continual discussion even in early Christian literature, one can see how the theory of bodily resurrection as vindication of the death of the righteous is a major theory about the afterlife that developed during this time period.



## **Immortality of the Soul**

A second of the major theories of how the righteous would be vindicated in the afterlife by YHWH was immortality of the soul. The idea of the immortality of the soul (psuxe) is an exceptionally Hellenistic idea (Flannery). Later Jewish authors such as Paul focused more on the spirit (pneuma); differentiating it from the soul (Flannery). Based on how Hellenistic the theory of the soul being immortal is, it should come as no surprise that Josephus attributes this idea to another important sect of the time period - the Essenes (Sanders 299-300). Sanders cites Josephus: "'It is a fixed belief of [the Essenes] that the body is corruptible..., but that the soul is immortal and imperishable. Emanating from the finest ether, these souls become entangled, as it were, in the prison-house of the body, to which they are dragged down by a sort of natural spell; but when once they are released from the bonds of the flesh, then, as though liberated from a long servitude, they rejoice and are borne aloft'" (299-300).

One must then figure out which early Jewish works of literature the Essenes are writing in, or at least which works contain the theory of the immortality of the soul and the eternal life that the souls of the righteous get to enjoy as vindication in death. The literature that seems to best fit this description is that of some of the literature found at

Qumran (Elledge 19-20). While not necessarily always pointing to the belief of the immortality of the soul, theories about the afterlife found in the Sectarian literature of Qumran are unique and will be discussed more in depth later in this paper (19-21). Despite how unique the thought concerning the afterlife was to the seemingly Essene Qumran Yachad, their beliefs line up more with the idea of immortality of the soul than with bodily resurrection (22). This can be seen through the example of the *Thanksgiving Hymns*, a set of hymns in the Sectarian literature from the time period of 100-50 B.C.E. where the members of the Qumran Yachad worship YHWH with angels (21). This is similar to and relates in several ways to the idea of angelomorphism found in Daniel 12:3; and, as mentioned, will be discussed in further detail later in this paper. Elledge cites a passage from the *Thanksgiving Hymns* which he believes points to this eternal worship of YHWH with angels:

I thank you, O Lord, because you have saved my life from the pit, and from the Sheol of Abaddon you have lifted me up to an everlasting height, so that I can walk on a boundless plain. And I know that there is hope for someone you fashioned out of dust for an everlasting community. The depraved spirit you have purified from great offence so that he can take a place with the host of the holy ones, and can enter in

communion with the congregation of the sons of  
heaven. (1QH 11.19-22 quoted in Elledge 21)

This eternal worship of YHWH with angels seems more relatable to the theory of immortality of the soul than it does to bodily resurrection. The immortal soul of the member of the Yachad worships YHWH with angels for eternity since YHWH has saved him from Sheol. The language of "saved my life from the pit" allows for the possibility that the member of the Yachad may have been saved by YHWH before ever having to experience Sheol in the first place. This would give further evidence for this being more relatable to the theory of the immortality of the soul. Elledge gives another example of Qumran Sectarian literature which supports the theory of the members of the Yachad concerning the afterlife being more similar to that of the immortality of the soul of the Essenes: "The hymn may, thus, emphasize the everlasting communion between the worshipper and angelic beings that exist in the present, rather than a literal resurrection from the dead. In the *War Scroll* (c. 50 B.C.E.), the same basic principles of everlasting fellowship with the angels in the presence of God are envisioned among the blessings that God will bestow upon Israel at the end of the conflict (12.1-5; cf. 13; 16.15-17.9; 18.6-15)" (22).

The thought of the righteousness of Qumran will be discussed later in this paper, but it is important to note how

the members of the Qumran Yachad thought that they would live out righteous lives through following the laws of YHWH and the rules of the Yachad and through defeating those who oppose YHWH through the war against the kittim - the Romans: "The positive Qumran hope was strongly communitarian: they would fight a battle and win; all of God's adversaries would be destroyed..." (*Jewish Literature* 137-8, 143; Sanders 302). Based upon these passages from the Sectarian literature of Qumran, it appears that while it may not perfectly promote the idea of the eternal immortality of the soul as the vindication for the righteous, this is the best theory to explain the thought of the Qumran Yachad concerning the afterlife of the righteous.

### **No Vindication Beyond Sheol**

A third of the major theories of how YHWH would vindicate the righteous in the afterlife is that there actually would not be any vindication or afterlife beyond the tradition of Sheol that had been held before the Hellenistic period. According to Wright, this is thought by many scholars to be the majority position of most of the Hebrew Bible before the writing of texts such as Daniel (86). In explaining how many scholars understand the writings of the Hebrew Bible, he says "In the early period, there was little or no hope for a life of joy or bliss after death: Sheol swallowed up the dead, kept them in gloomy darkness, and never let them out again" (86). In fact, he goes on to explain how it is easy for most who read the Hebrew Bible to believe that many of its passages look like those of Homer, the infamous Greek writer, since they make it seem as if there is nothing - in other words, no vindication - beyond death and Sheol (87). Wright even cites several passages as examples from these texts of the Hebrew Bible that could be used by some to make this argument (87). One example is from the very first book of the Hebrew Bible, as found in Gen. 3:19: "'Dust you are, and to dust you shall return'" (88). This makes it appear as if humans have been brought into this world, only to return to the state in which they originated - dust. Another passage cited by Wright is Ps. 115:17: "'The dead do not praise YHWH, nor do any

that go down into silence'" (87). However, even though these passages seem to point to the idea that there is no kind of vindication or life beyond Sheol, Wright believes that this should not be how the entirety of the Hebrew Bible before the book of Daniel is interpreted. To give support to his argument, he describes how the kings of the Hebrew Bible were thought to be in a realm that included their other dead ancestors once they passed on (90). He points out that this does not mean that these kings were necessarily buried in the same grave as their ancestors, but instead that they were present together in the afterlife (90). In explaining the phrasing of "sleeping with one's ancestors" that was used in the Hebrew Bible to describe what the kings were doing in the afterlife, he writes, "'Sleeping with one's ancestors', in other words, was not simply a way of saying that one was buried in the same grave or cave, but that one had gone to the world of the dead, there to be reunited with one's forebears" (90). Though this realm should still be labeled as Sheol, at least it is not completely desolate in the sense that one can still be together with his/her ancestors in death.

This alone, though, was not enough to appease the minds of some Jews. Even before texts such as Daniel that explicitly refer to bodily resurrection were written, the Psalms point to some skepticism among the Jews that death and Sheol were the end

result (103). According to Wright, it was YHWH's love and faithfulness that led the author(s) of the Psalms to write; the author(s) could not imagine such a God to allow the Jews to not find some kind of life beyond Sheol (103). He explains, "In many parts of their literature, and supremely the Psalms, we find evidence that they knew this love in vivid personal experience. It was this personal experience, rather than any theory about innate immortality, that gave rise to the suggestion that, despite the widespread denials of such a thing, YHWH's faithfulness would after all be known not only in this life but in a life beyond the grave" (103). Even though some of these psalms seem to point to some kind of vindication beyond Sheol, these psalms even within the whole book of Psalms are not many in number, including only Psalm 16, 49, and 73 (107). It is not until the Crisis in Hellenization that Daniel and other early Jewish texts emerge that explicitly develop theories for what this life beyond Sheol would look like.

Despite the fact that the Hebrew Bible, for the most part, simply does not describe much vindication beyond Sheol, this theory cannot be easily found in the literature of the time period of the Crisis in Hellenization. However, Josephus discusses the sect that held this belief - the Sadducees. Josephus states, "'As for the persistence of the soul after death, penalties in the underworld, and rewards, [the

Sadducees] will have none of them.' (*War* 2.165) and 'The Sadducees hold that the soul perishes along with the body.' (*Antiq.* 18.16)" (Sanders 299-300). This set of beliefs of the Sadducees is further supported in the early Christian literature of the Gospels. Setzer explains, "[The belief in resurrection] is a dividing line in Jesus' one encounter with the Sadducees (Mark 12:18-27 and parallels). They are identified solely by their non-belief: '...and the Sadducees came to him, who say that there is no resurrection...'" (26). One of the only works from this time period that would look similar to that of the Sadducees in terms of promoting the idea that there is no vindication beyond Sheol is the Wisdom of Jesus ben Sirach, also known as Ecclesiasticus (Wright 136). One such quote from Ecclesiasticus that reveals this is "'Give, and take, and indulge yourself, because in Hades one cannot look for luxury. All living beings become old like a garment, for the decree from of old is, 'You must die!'" (14:16f quoted in Wright 136). In general though, when thinking of the troubles that some of the Jews faced during this time period such as those stemming from the threats of Antiochus IV Epiphanes and the executions that he was causing, it is difficult to imagine that there would be a Jewish sect that did not theorize some kind of afterlife that would bring justice and blessings to those who died in the name of the righteousness of the law of



YHWH. However, this was the position of the Sadducee sect of Judaism during this time period.

## **Qumran and Predestination in Its Literature**

Now that the most widely held beliefs about the afterlife from this time period have been discussed, this paper can now focus on how unique the theories of the afterlife of the righteous were in Qumran. Discussion of the major theme of predestination as the method of YHWH for selecting the righteous ahead of time will then occur. But first, it is important to define exactly what is meant by predestination in this paper since, as Emmanuel Tukasi notes, different authors utilize the term with different meanings (13-4). This paper will be utilizing the term in the way that Tukasi does: "...[it]...affirm[s] the dictates of God beforehand (cause), whether broadly or narrowly, which guides the course of events (effect)" (14). The theories of the afterlife of the righteous are so unique for the Yachad of Qumran since they actually believed that the members of the Yachad did not need to wait till after death in order to partake in what the rewards of the afterlife would be, but instead that they already were beginning to experience these things through the worship of YHWH with angels that was discussed earlier in this paper. Elledge remarks, "The absence of resurrection from these key sectarian writings has led some to the conclusion that resurrection was peripheral to the Qumran Community's ideology, which was concerned, instead, with the present realization of eschatological life in its own worship

and devotion" (23). This worship of YHWH with angels looks much like the angelomorphism of the wise ones of Daniel 12:3. In fact, the Qumran Yachad was familiar with Daniel and utilized it as a text that it kept and interpreted, according to Segal (303). Segal takes this explanation of the similarities between the involvement with angels of the Qumran Yachad and the angelomorphism of Daniel 12:3 further by pointing out, "The members of the community wanted to approach God's throne and their hymnic texts demonstrate this relationship" (303-4). He connects this to the studies of Rachel Elior, Bilhah Nitzan, and Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis, who believe that the angelomorphism that the Yachad discussed in its texts is one that involves mystical encounters and transformations between YHWH and the Qumranites - a common aspect of early Jewish literature (303-4; Flannery). There is definitely a connection between the other literature of this time period and that of Qumran; however, Qumran interpreted this literature and adopted some of its ideas in order to form its own theories about the afterlife, or rather how the members of the Qumran Yachad were already partaking in eternity through worshipping YHWH with angels.

As mentioned earlier in this paper, the Qumran Yachad considered its members righteous. This consideration of themselves as righteous came from their view that they were

predestined as the chosen righteous people of YHWH. This idea of being predestined as the chosen righteous people of YHWH and that certain times were predestined by YHWH did not find its origins in the Qumran Yachad. Other literature from this time period seems to explore and consider the idea of YHWH predestining certain characters from each text to be chosen as YHWH's righteous people and of YHWH predestining certain times for things to occur. Several examples can be cited from 4 Ezra: "He answered me and said, 'When the Most High made the world and Adam and all who have come from him, he first **prepared** the judgment and the things that pertain to the judgment...'" (7:70-71 quoted in "The Fourth Book of Ezra" 539, emphasis mine) and "For how long the time is that the Most High has been patient with those who inhabit the world, and not for their sake, but because of the times which he has **foreordained!**" (7:74 quoted in "The Fourth Book of Ezra" 539, emphasis mine). There is also the example in Tobit in which Raphael explains to Tobias how his wife was predestined to be for him: "'Do not be afraid, for she was **set apart for you before the world was made**'" (6:18 quoted in "Tobit" 69, emphasis mine). Though not found manifold within all of the literature from this time period, one can notice how predestination from YHWH began to be theorized and considered in the literature.

When examining the literature of Qumran, this consideration of YHWH's predestination of a chosen righteous people and times for things to occur becomes much more apparent and developed. This paper will look to make some fairly original points that reveal how important the theorizing of predestination was to the Qumran Yachad. However, certain other scholars have at least also picked up on this to some degree. One such scholar is E. P. Sanders. He writes, "It is certainly true that no other Jewish literature emphasizes God's sovereign determination of all things more than do the Scrolls" (373). This paper will now look throughout the Qumran Sectarian writing, the *Rule of the Community*, for various examples of predestination on the part of YHWH and how this thought develops more throughout the literature of Qumran. One example within the *Rule of the Community* which reveals the theme of YHWH's predestination is the constant language that reflects the ideology of predestination behind the *Rule of the Community*. Tukasi explains, "We can recognize determinism in a passage if the text employs certain terms. Although it is inadequate to restrict the usage of words to one meaning, certain terms are peculiar to a particular ideology. And in the case of our subject, words such as 'beforehand, design or plan, establish, immutable' are vocabularies which are relevant" (30-1). As this paper discusses several of the passages from the

*Rule of the Community*, one can see just how frequently these kinds of words are used in order to point to the view of the predestination of the Yachad that has been done by YHWH.

A second example within the *Rule of the Community* which shows the theme of the predestination that has been done by YHWH is the timing of YHWH for causing certain things to happen within the lives of each of the members of the Yachad. It is written, "They shall not stray from any one of all God's orders concerning their **appointed** times; they shall not advance their **appointed** times nor shall they retard any one of their feasts" (1QS 1:13-15 quoted in Garcia Martinez 3, emphasis mine). Each member has times that have been predestined by YHWH for certain things to happen in their lives, and these times are not to be altered due to their nature of being predestined. This idea that YHWH has already predestined certain times for things to occur is just continuously furthered: "Before they existed he made all their plans and when they came into being they will execute all their works in compliance with his instructions, according to his glorious design without altering anything" (3:15-16 quoted in Garcia Martinez 6). The *Rule of the Community* goes on to discuss how the people of the Yachad are the ones who have been chosen as the righteous, and how YHWH has predestined an end time. It is written, "For these are those selected by God for an everlasting covenant and to them shall

belong all the glory of Adam...For God has sorted them into equal parts until the appointed end and the new creation" (4:22-23, 25 quoted in Garcia Martinez 7-8). Though it is not clearly stated that this choice of YHWH of the chosen righteous through the Qumran Yachad is one that occurred at the beginning of time, one could interpret even this choosing by YHWH of the righteous people as something that has been predestined. As one can see, the timing of things that will occur in the lives of the members of the Yachad and of the end times, along with the choosing of the righteous people by YHWH can all be interpreted as and reveal the development of thought on predestination.

A third example within the *Rule of the Community* which points to theme of YHWH's predestination is in the fashion in which he has created everything. According to Tukasi, this can be seen in 3:15-17: "'From the God of Knowledge comes all that is occurring and shall occur. Before they came into being he established all their designs; and when they come into existence in their fixed times, in accordance with his glorious plan they perform their task. Nothing can be changed. In his hand (are) the judgments of all things; he being the one who sustains them in all their affairs'" (33). Scholars such as A. Dupont-Sommer, Armin Lange, and Emmanuel Tukasi recognize how this passage explains how God created a universe in which he predestined it in such a way that, as the passage states, "nothing can be

changed" (33). Since the universe has been made in a way in which its peoples, things, and events have been predestined by YHWH, these things cannot and will not be affected in any other way. YHWH has already put them into place and has decided on certain times for each event that will happen in history, and even YHWH will not decide against these times that have been set. Tukasi even explains how it is significant that the creation and events of history cannot take care of and take place themselves (34). The passage describes how YHWH "sustains them" (34). Without his continual taking care of the universe, it would not be able to function in the way that it has been put into place (34). However, since it has been predestined by YHWH and all of its events have been predestined by YHWH, there is no way that creation will not continually be sustained by YHWH.

A fourth example within the *Rule of the Community* which reveals the theme of predestination done by YHWH is that of the two spirits - that of good and that of evil. These two spirits and their predestined roles begin to be discussed after 3:17 in the *Rule of the Community* (37). As Tukasi points out, the roles of the two spirits can be understood simply by reviewing the names that are given to them in 3:18-19: "spirits of truth and deceit" (40-1). These two spirits are even connected with light and darkness, respectively (3:19, 25; 40-1). Just from knowing this, one would most likely deduce that the spirit of truth is



that of goodness and light, while the spirit of deceit is that of evil and darkness. Just as was discussed in terms of all of creation in 3:15-17, the two spirits "are not on their own for they owe their sustenance to the God who set them up as part of the cosmic order" (40-1). In fact, Tukasi notes just how significant it is that the two spirits are mentioned in the *Rule of the Community*. The presence of the two spirits in the universe allows for an explanation to why there is both good and evil in the world that YHWH has created; in other words, why YHWH created both good AND evil. Tukasi explains, "If the God of Knowledge is indeed responsible for the cosmos as it now exists, the age-old unsolved problem for all theism emerges. How does one account for the problem of evil in a universe where God is believed to reign supreme?...Suffice it to say that the Qumran Community offer their own insight in dealing with the problem" (39).

The Qumran Yachad did not randomly develop this idea of a good and evil spirit; rather, the members of the Community came to develop this idea from what they read in the Hebrew Bible. In 1 Samuel 16:14-16, at one point in time, Saul is given the Spirit of God, while at another point in time, God gives an evil spirit to him (39-40). As the members of the Yachad read this story about Saul, they realized that YHWH has put both good and evil into place in the world (39-40). In

explaining the thought of the Qumranites concerning these two spirits, Tukasi states, "It is in these spirits that God sets the dynamics of good and evil especially in relation to human beings" (39-40). It is important to note the predestined nature of the spirits of good and evil. These spirits of good and evil were predestined by YHWH to not exist together for all of time (4:18; 40-1). There will be a point in which YHWH finishes all that is evil and any connection that members of the Yachad have with the spirit of evil (4:20-23; 49). This means that only the spirit of good will be left for the Qumranites to have a connection with (49). This time period in which the destruction of the spirit of evil takes place has even been predestined by YHWH (4:18; 49). The belief that YHWH has predestined a time in which all evil would be finished is not a novel idea. This belief can even be found in other literature from the early Jewish time period (49). One example of a text that this belief is found in is one which was discussed earlier, 1 Enoch (49). 1 Enoch 10:1-7, 16 describes how there will no longer be any evil deeds that are committed during this time period, but instead that only good deeds will be partaken in by all for eternity (49). As Tukasi puts it, "...history takes its course in accordance with the pre-ordination of God. And so also shall the Endtime take its course in accordance with the divine decree" (49). Throughout the early Jewish literature - with

much of the development coming from the texts of the Qumran Yachad - the predestination of a time for YHWH to finish evil and for good to continue on for eternity is a belief that can be seen in several of the texts.

Along with these spirits of good and evil are the good and bad things and deeds of the world that are connected with these spirits (47). These too have been predestined by YHWH since they are in connection with the spirits of good and evil (47). According to Tukasi, "What God loves and hates are already established. They are founded upon the two spirits. This establishment by the God of Knowledge never changes" (47). When people partake in deeds that are good, they are associating with the spirit of good, and when they partake in deeds that are evil, they are associating with the spirit of evil (48). In fact, the Qumranites believed that each person took part in good and evil deeds according to how connected he/she was with the spirit of good and the spirit of evil (48). After partaking in good deeds, one becomes connected with the spirit of good, and, in a similar fashion, after partaking in evil deeds, one becomes connected with the spirit of evil (48). Once this has occurred, one's level of connection with the spirits of good and evil is determined by the good and evil spirits themselves (48). Tukasi quotes the *Rule of the Community* in its description of how the spirits influences one's

actions, and he goes on to explain how this signifies that the spirits are deterministic: "'According to a man's share in truth shall he be righteous and thus hate deceit, and according to his inheritance in the lot of deceit he shall be evil through it, and thus loathe truth.'" (4.24-25a) It follows therefore that no human being can escape the activities of these spirits once he or she has participated in them. A person manifests the trait of truth or deceit not by choice but by the virtue of the spirit in which one participated" (48). As one muses on the Qumranites's view of the role of the spirits of good and evil in a person's actions, one can see that, in a sense, these actions become predestined once the person gains a connection with both the spirit of good and evil. According to how much of a connection he/she has with each of the spirits, he/she will commit good and evil deed to a corresponding degree.

However, it is significant to note that, though one's deeds become predestined through his/her level of connection with both the spirit of good and the spirit of evil, this does not mean that one is predestined by YHWH to be considered righteous or evil before any deeds are even partaken in. Tukasi makes this clarification: "Every human being becomes either a child of light or a child of darkness not by any pre-arranged order, but by one's choice of actions" (61-2). While there were Jewish groups at the time, such as the Essenes, who did believe that

people were predestined by YHWH to be righteous or to be evil, this is not what the Qumranites described as their belief in the *Rule of the Community* (60-1). As one examines 3:20-21, one understands that it is up to each person to decide whether he/she will commit good or evil deeds, which are connected to the good and evil spirits (46). Once one has begun to act in a way that is good or that is evil, this is where the predestining of the spirits begins to take place (46, 48). Indeed, Tukasi points out, "Whichever path a person walks, it is the properties which are fundamental to that way that will become manifest in the person" (46). It is as if these good and evil deeds, through the connection that one creates with the good and evil spirits when partaking in his/her actions, begin to shape one's characteristics and further actions that one takes. As a person begins to develop momentum in a good or evil fashion, it is difficult - in the sense of predestination, impossible - to change the types of deeds one partakes in and the level of connection he/she has with the good and evil spirits. It is clear in various examples of the Qumran Sectarian literature - with the examples in this paper being most prevalent in the *Rule of the Community* - that thought of YHWH predestining a righteous chosen people was beginning to form in many of the early Jewish texts, and that the Qumran Yachad took many steps to further the theorizing of the various aspects of the world that YHWH had

predestined and who would be the righteous chosen people of  
YHWH.

## Conclusion

This paper begins by explaining the history of how theorizing on the afterlife of the righteous people of YHWH began through the circumstances brought on the Jews who were martyred under Antiochus IV Epiphanes for refusing to abandon the laws of the Torah for the sake of the modernization of Judaism through Hellenism. It then looks at the different theories that began to appear in the literature of the time period of what the vindication in the afterlife for the righteous would look like. This involves examining passages from various texts from the time period along with some of the major Jewish sects from the time period who adhered to these theories concerning the afterlife of the righteous. The paper then discusses the unique thought about the afterlife of the Qumran Yachad, and how the members of the Yachad already believed themselves to be partaking in what would continue for eternity in worshipping YHWH with angels. This leads to the main thesis of the paper in which the development of the idea of YHWH's predestining of the chosen righteous people and times for things to occur was looked at in the Qumran Sectarian literature. While predestination thought can be seen in other texts of the time period, it comes to be theorized and developed significantly throughout the literature of Qumran due to the belief among the Qumranites that they were the righteous chosen

people of YHWH who best retained the following of YHWH's laws,  
unlike many other Jews who had steadily fallen away from  
adhering to what YHWH requires.



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