

is said to reach the sea only further south, after passing Hosah. It touches (the landward side of) four cities on the way from “great Zidon” (v. 28), but does not “go out” at those places. Yet if Tyre were the island, the border would surely be counted as reaching the sea there.

- 2 Ezekiel’s description of Nebuchadrezzar’s siege makes no sense if against an island. He could not possibly raise a fort or mount against that rocky outcrop, then lying half a mile (800 metres) away. Nor would axes, chariots or horses be of use. Instead he would need ships, or to make a causeway. But he had no navy, and neither strategy is mentioned by Ezekiel.

Babylon’s attack on Tyre, then, was clearly the siege of a *mainland city*.

The island that the Tyrians occupied has been destroyed and rebuilt repeatedly through the centuries. If at 26:14 Ezekiel meant the island, his words have indeed failed. But, as I have shown, the Tyre he describes was on the mainland. What then can we determine of that original city, whose permanent utter removal Ezekiel so clearly predicted? Where was it? In the second part of this article we will look at some fascinating evidence from satellite pictures that may well give us the answer to this question.

(To be concluded)

# The Damascus Document

Malcolm Edwards

CONSIDERING the debate during the last fifty years about the non-Biblical writings of the Dead Sea Scrolls and their relevance to Christianity, it is surprising how little prominence has been given to the few scroll fragments found in caves 4 and 6, which are indisputably linked with later writings. Discovered in Cairo in 1897, these later writings are known today as the *Damascus Document*.

The contents of these writings have an important bearing on the identity of the writers of the *Manual of Discipline* and the *Habakkuk Commentary*, found amongst the Dead Sea Scrolls and thought by most of their editors to have been connected with the sect of the Essenes, whom some Scrolls experts believe to have been the true originators of Christianity. Happily, very few modern Scrolls writers express this view with any confidence, since there is nothing substantial in the non-Biblical scrolls to suggest this other than the mention of the new covenant of Jeremiah 31. In every other respect the Qumran writers were totally Judaistic in belief and practice, and zealously kept the Law of Moses with its associated ritual. Nevertheless, it is of some value to us to try to establish the identity of this particular Jewish sect and to discover in what period of history they lived.

One of the first Scrolls editors to link the fragments from caves 4 and 6 with the *Damascus Document* was the esteemed Israeli archaeologist Professor Eleazar Sukenik. In spite of this,

its significance seems either to have been not properly appreciated or has been insufficiently expressed.

## Documents discovered

The story of the discovery of these writings is briefly as follows. In 1897 Cambridge University scholar Solomon Schechter, a student of ancient writings, heard of the existence of a genizah (a storage room for old faded documents) in the Ben Ezra Synagogue, in an old part of Cairo named Fostat. He lost no time in travelling there, and amongst the writings he took away to examine were some about a highly organised Jewish sect who lived in Judea about 196 B.C. and who had separated themselves from mainstream Judaism, having differences in doctrine and practice.

Back in Cambridge, Schechter worked on the documents for some four years, after which he published his findings in two volumes entitled *Documents of Jewish Sectaries*, Volume 1 of which is the most relevant to our consideration. He called it *Fragments of a Zadokite Work*.

The writings show that members of this particular sect were extremely pious, and claimed to be living in what they termed ‘the age of wrath’. A leader had risen among them called ‘the Teacher of Righteousness’, and he came into conflict with an opposing leader known as ‘the Man of Scoffing’. This powerful adversary seems to have prevailed, resulting in the Zadokite sect having to escape to Damascus.

The writings were only copies of much earlier scrolls, and date to about 150 B.C. They were written after the death of the Teacher of Righteousness, whom the sect believed would eventually return as Messiah. Since this particular conflict was during the reign of the high priest Jonathan (160-142 B.C.), some scholars identify him with the Man of Scoffing.

### **The Zadokites**

Knowing as we do that 'Zadokites' is the proper term for the sect of the Sadducees, the *Damascus Document* strongly suggests that the two sects were actually one and the same, and that the writers of the *Manual of Discipline* and the *Habakkuk Commentary* in the Dead Sea collection were Sadducean in origin rather than Essene. This particular group would qualify almost perfectly both in piety and practice, especially since the Dead Sea writings also speak of the new covenant and also tell of a leader named the Teacher of Righteousness in bitter conflict with an adversary called the Wicked Priest.

It is interesting that Schechter anticipated that the Zadokite sect of the Damascus Document would have had some written rules of discipline, and the *Manual of Discipline* qualifies well in this respect. We must, of course, presume that some time prior to Christ's ministry the Zadokite ancestors of the Sadducees had returned from Damascus and gradually acquired prominence in Judea and Jerusalem.

We know that the Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection, and significantly there is no mention of the resurrection in the Damascus Document, nor in the corresponding Qumran writings. The only brief mention of the resurrection is in a hymn scroll found in Cave 1, but this may not have belonged to the Sadducees.

The case for the Scroll writers' occupation of the Qumran buildings as some kind of monastery

seems no longer valid. The latest findings at the Qumran ruins is at variance with the original conclusions of French archaeologist Roland de Vaux, who reported that the ruins were once an Essene monastery in which many scrolls were written and copied.

### **Pottery workshop?**

Israeli Archaeologist Yishak Magen, who has more recently and more thoroughly excavated the site over a period of ten years, claims that the scrolls found in the Dead Sea caves have no connection whatsoever with the Qumran buildings. His conclusions are that the ruins were for some time a busy pottery factory, and that the so-called baths for ritual cleansing were actually tanks for the settlement of fragments of clay, excellent for pottery, from the water that flows down into the site during heavy rains. The large quantity of broken pottery unearthed at Qumran seems to confirm these conclusions. Magen also claims that what de Vaux took to be a scriptorium for scroll copying was nothing more than the pottery workers' eating place.

It is now suggested, with much credence, that the Dead Sea Scrolls were actually written elsewhere and placed in the caves by pious Jews en route to the Masada fortress when fleeing from the Romans during or after A.D. 70. This would account for the scrolls lying there quite undisturbed after the war, for the bodies of their pious custodians would have been amongst those of the 900 odd Zealots who committed mass suicide at Masada rather than surrender to the encircling soldiers of the Roman Tenth Legion.

### **Sources:**

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