THE ASSUMPTION OF MOSES
A CRITICAL INVESTIGATION OF ITS ORIGIN, LANGUAGE AND THEOLOGICAL CONTENTS

A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of Divinity

University of Edinburgh

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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by

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May 1955

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PREFACE

The great Scottish theologian of a past generation, A.B. Bruce, once wrote that the general public had but one duty to fulfill towards apocalyptic. That duty was to "consign it to oblivion". This field of inquiry was to be reserved only for professional scholars, for apocalyptic was thought to be too esoteric, bizarre, and complex for the layman, and the rewards of its study too few.

However, in the years since Bruce penned his judgment upon apocalyptic, history has taken a course quite unforeseen in his tranquil day. Two world wars have come and gone. For biblical scholarship one of the results of the events of the last fifty years has been a marked quickening of interest in apocalyptic, both canonical and non-canonical. Further, the general advance in the science of antiquities has stimulated new studies. This new mood was grasped by the great English scholar, R.H. Charles, and his monumental labors in this field have issued in increased discernment of the nature of apocalyptic. Seldom has one man made so great a contribution to a specialized area, and all students after him are deep in his debt.

One of the interesting products of this resurgence of scholarly study of apocalyptic is the fact that the laymen have also taken up a concern for the apocalyptic passages in the Scriptures. Unfortunately this non-professional study has sometimes resulted in conclusions which are lacking in

an understanding of the nature of apocalyptic. In spite of deficiencies in the popular treatment of apocalyptic, the fact remains that the subject has caught the interest of not only scholars but laymen as well. Contrary to Bruce's opinion, apocalyptic is currently a valid area of investigation for scholars and laity.

The title and general approach for this paper were suggested to me by Prof. Matthew Black who was my mentor at New College, University of Edinburgh. Prof. Black, now principal of St. Mary's College, University of St. Andrews, pointed out that no comprehensive introduction to the Assumption of Moses had been done in English since Charles published his work in 1897. Much of this work was incorporated with minor corrections and variations into his two-volume Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha in 1913, but his real work on the Ass. Mos. dates from 1897. Since his introduction and exegetical notes were published numerous articles and monographs have appeared on both sides of the Atlantic dealing with individual problems in the book, so it became my intention to gather up this new material and sift it, comparing it with Charles' work. At the same time I reserved the right to criticize some of Charles' conclusions, several of which appear to have been arrived at with undue haste.

Furthermore, not only the Ass. Mos. but several other books of the intertestamental period need to be re-read against the evidences brought to light from the Dead Sea finds. Some scholars have hinted that the Ass. Mos. may be

of Essene provenance. Whether or not this is true, it is a challenging question which must be dealt with. This same thought was expressed to me in Jerusalem in April, 1954, by Dr. James Muilenburg, then the director of the American Schools of Oriental Research. His studies of some new fragments had led him to question the relation of the Ass. Mos. to these new materials. This issue is discussed in the chapter on authorship.

So far as I was able to determine every scholar who worked on the Ass. Mos. had depended upon the text published by Ceriani. Schmidt-Merx, Hilgenfeld, Charles and others had worked from this text and had attempted their emendations and reconstructions from Ceriani's text of 1861. Accordingly I strongly desired to study the manuscript first-hand with the hope of publishing a new Latin text of the Ass. Mos. Modern photographic techniques using infra-red and ultra-violet light have been quite successful in clarifying a defective text, in this case the lower writing of a palimpsest. I wrote the Ambrosian Library in Milan asking permission to examine the manuscript and arrange to have it photographed by these new lighting techniques. They replied that this would be possible. In May, 1954, on the return to Edinburgh from a trip to the Holy Land, Prof. Black and I visited the library and examined the manuscript closely. It was quite difficult to read the lower writing and in many places impossible. Before we left we asked to have some trial photographs made and the films were to be sent to

Edinburgh.

When the films arrived I saw that they had not produced the desired results. That summer I returned to Milan two times, attempting to secure some photographs that would enable me to read the faded letters and so bring forth a new text independent of Ceriani's work. However, it was to no avail. The manuscript had apparently been treated with chemicals when Ceriani worked with it. This treatment may have been useful to him in discerning the text, but the effect was to damage the manuscript even further so that subsequent efforts are futile. On the next two pages are examples in facsimile of the more legible and very poor pages, illustrative of the difficulty to be encountered in reading this manuscript. It was with much reluctance that I finally abandoned my attempts to work directly from this sole extant manuscript of the Ass. Mos. If this attempt had succeeded by means of ultra-violet or infra-red light, it might have been possible to clarify some of the lacunae and obscure readings which are crucial for the interpretation of the book. Therefore I concluded that I too must work from Ceriani's text, and all further study on this book will have to depend on it. The only hope for more textual material on the Ass. Mos. is either in the discovery of a new manuscript, or in finding an old document which contains clear and extensive citations from the Ass. Mos.

It is my pleasant obligation to acknowledge the many who have assisted me in writing this paper. Foremost is my

iudicii quam uobis · et quib(us) · propheta dicit iustificas
tis sodomam id est in comparatione uestra · sodoma
iustificata est · Nihil quidtamen ideo sacramenta
diuina quae apud iudaeos erant · talia erant quales
ipsi erant quae d(omi)n(u)s quoq(ue) ipse suscipit et ad ea cele
branda leprosos quos mundauerat misit · et za
zacchariae ministranti angelus adstitit, eumq(ue)
in templo sacrificantem exauditum esse nuntiauit
Haec eadem sacramenta et in bonis hominib(us) illius
temporis erant et in malis peioribus quam sunt
ethnici quando quidem in malitia sodomitis prae
lati sunt et tamen illa sacramenta erant inu
trisq(ue) integra ad q(ue) diuina · Nam et ipsi gentiles
si quid diuinum et rectum in doctrinis suis habe
re potuerunt non inprobauerunt s(an)c(t)i nostri ·
Quamuis illi per suas superstitiones et idola
triam et superbiam ceterosq(ue) perditos mores
detestandi essent · et nisi corrigerentur di
uino iudicio puniendi · Nam et paulus apostolus
apud athenienses cum de d(e)o quaedam diceret p(ro)
hibuit testimonium quod quidam eorum tale a
liquid dixerint · quod utiq(ue) si ad x(ristu)m uenerint
quod utiq(ue) · agnosceretur eis non inprobaretur
et s(an)c(tu)s cyprianus talibus aduersus eosdem ethnicos
utitur testib(us) · Nam cum de magis loqueretur
quorum tamen inquit precipuus ostanes · et for
mam d(e)i negat conspici posse · et angelos ueros di
cit sedi eius adsistere In quo et plato pari ratio
ne consentit, et unum d(eu)m seruans · ceteros
angelos uel daemonas dicit hermes quoq(ue) tri
megistus unum d(eu)m loquitur eumq(ue) incom
praehensibilem adq(ue) inaestimabilem confitetur
si ergo isti uenissent ad percipiendam x(rist)ianam
salutem non eis utiq(ue) diceretur hoc malum ha
betis uel falsum habetis · sed plane merito

V

NATURAEQ· SUAE. PARTIM ODIO BELLI ANTIQUI
TAM PARTIM QUADAM CORRUPTIONE PERMISCUISSET
ET TUNC SE PECCARE DICANT QUANDO IN EA NATURA MA
LI PRAEVALET NATURAE DI. HAEC MANICHEORUM EST
IMMUNDISSIMA INSANIA QUORUM DIABOLICA INPIETAS
ET DIABOLICA FACILLIME VERITAS INDUBITATA DE
VICERIT. QUI DI NATURAM INCONTAMINABILEM
ATQ· INCORRUPTIBILEM CONFITETUR QUID AUTEM
FLAGITIOSAE CONTAMINATIONIS ET CORRUPTIONIS DE
IPSIUS MERITO NON CREDITUR A QUIB· DS QUI SUM
MEATQ· INCOMPARABILITER BONUS EST CONTA
MINABILIS ET CORRUPTIBILIS CREDITUR·

SUNT ETIAM QUI EO MODO IN EXCUSATIONE PECCATO
RUM SUORUM ACCUSANT DM UT DICANT EI PLA
CERE PECCATA. NAM SI DISPLICERENT INQUIUNT
NULLO MODO EA FIERI OMNIPOTENTISSIMA UTIQ·
POTESTATE PERMITTERET QUASI VERO PECCATA
DS IMPUNITA ESSE PERMISERIT· ET NON ETIAM
QUOS ASUPPLICIO SEMPITERNO REMISSIONE LIBE
RAT PECCATORUM. NULLUS QUIPPE DEBITAE GRA
VIORIS POENAE ACCIPIT VENIAM NISI QUALEMCU
MQUE ETSI LONGE MINOREM QUAM DEBEBAT
SOLVERIT POENAM. ATQ· ITA IMPERTITUR LARGI
TAS MISERICORDIAE UT NON RELINQUATUR ETIAM
IUSTITIA DISCIPLINAE. NAM ET PECCATUM QUOD
INULTUM VIDETUR HABET PEDISEQUAM POENAM
SUAM UT NEMO DE EAM CMISSO NISI AUT AMARITU
/ut caecitatem non doleat/
DINE DOLEAT. SIC ERGO TU DICIS· CUR PERMIT
TIT ISTA SI DISPLICENT. ITA EGO DICO CUR PUNIT
ISTA SI PLACENT· AC PER HOC SICUT EGO CONFITE
OR QUOD OMNINO ISTA NON FIERENT NISI AB OM
NIPOTENTE PERMITTERENTUR· ITA TU CONFITE
RE FACIENDA NON ESSE QUAE A IUSTO PUNIUN
TUR UT NON FACIENDO QUAE PUNIT MEREAMUR
AB EO DISCERE CUR PERMITTIT ESSE QUAE PU

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mentor, the Rev. Prof. Matthew Black, D. Litt., D.D., who has been exceedingly generous in time and effort to advise, suggest, correct and encourage me in carrying out this study. His fund of knowledge and love of scholarship have made a contribution to this work and have been a stimulus to my own efforts. The Rev. Prof. Norman Porteous, D.D., under whose direction I completed the paper, gave several helpful criticisms and I am in his debt. It was my privilege to spend some months in study at Basel University and there I was assisted in this paper by Profs. Walter Baumgartner and Bo Reicke. Prof. Baumgartner was most helpful in working with me on the chapter dealing with the Semitic origin of the Ass. Mos. His skill as a Semitist of first-rank was placed at my disposal and many of the ideas incorporated in that chapter are his suggestions. Prof. Reicke gladly offered to read and correct the chapters on authorship and theology. Prof. Reicke's reputation as a scholar who has contributed to the ever-growing store of knowledge on the Dead Sea Scrolls led me to enlist his help, and he graciously consented. I am grateful to both these men at Basel University who have been so generous to me. My thanks are due to the staffs of at least two libraries, that of New College, University of Edinburgh, and the Ambrosian Library in Milan, Italy. At New College Library the Rev. Dr. J.A. Lamb, Ph.D., and Miss E. Leslie, B. Comm., were of much assistance to me in locating books and manuscripts which were necessary in the preparation of the paper. My thanks go to the staff at the

Ambrosian Library for their willingness to allow me to examine the manuscript of the Ass. Mos. Their photographic technician was most helpful to me in securing the photographs of some of the pages from the manuscript. My wife has been a helpmeet in the finest sense of the word by her willingness to type my paper and to examine it for errors in spelling and grammar. To all these benefactors and co-laborers in biblical scholarship I gladly extend my heartfelt and sincere thanks. Of course, the responsibility for the shortcomings of this work is mine.

Unless otherwise noted, all citations from the Ass. Mos. are from Charles' translation. Biblical passages are taken from the Revised Standard Version. Quotations of Josephus are taken from either the translations of the Loeb Classical Library or Whiston. American rules of spelling, grammar and punctuation have been followed throughout.

Edinburgh
May, 1955

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CBQ = Catholic Biblical Quarterly

JBL = Journal of Biblical Literature

JQR = Jewish Quarterly Review

JTS = Journal of Theological Studies

SVT = Supplements to Vetus Testamentum

CHAPTER I

THE HISTORY OF THE TEXT

For several centuries biblical scholars have known that a book called the Assumption of Moses, or the Ascension of Moses, existed early in the history of the Church, and that it had quite a wide circulation. Clement of Alexandria is the first of the prominent church fathers to allude to this work. He was followed by Origen who cited the book by name. Later writers mentioned the work, either directly or by inference, through the course of 900 years, Ecumenius being the last. The outstanding reference in the Bible to this work is that found in Jude 9, and it has provoked comment for many years. Dean Stanley in his article on Moses in Smith's Dictionary of the Bible gave an interesting conclusion regarding the passage in Jude:

> It probably refers to a lost apocryphal book mentioned by Origen, the Ascension or Assumption of Moses. All that is known of this book is given by Fabricius, Codex Pseudep. V. T. i. 838-844.[1]

This was written in 1863, after the discovery of the MS of the Ass. Mos., but Stanley did not yet know of it. It is an interesting conjecture by Stanley, and it is illustrative of the level of knowledge which many scholars had on this subject.

There is little doubt that the Ass. Mos. was a com-

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[1] Stanley, D., Art: "Moses", A Dictionary of the Bible, W. Smith, Ed. London: John Murray, 1863, Vol. II, pp. 424-433.

posite literary product. It originally consisted of two distinct books, the first being the Testament of Moses, and the second the Assumption of Moses. The latter title eventually became the title of the composite work. The extant portion, the first half, is the Testament of Moses. There is good evidence for this conjecture on the following grounds:

1. Jude, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and subsequent writers quote the book which deals only with Moses' Assumption and related events. This was the original Ass. Mos.

2. The present Latin text appears to be the Testament of Moses and it contradicts the record of Moses' assumption. In 1:15 Moses dies an ordinary death; see also 3:13 and 10:14. In 10:12 the following words occur: "Erunt enim a morte receptionem usque ad adventum illius tempora CCL". Charles argues, and rightly, that receptionem is an interpolation added by the compositor to make the Testament agree with the Assumption.

3. The conflation of the two works into one was probably accomplished in the first century A.D. Josephus (Ant. 4:8:48) supplies the best evidence for this conjecture:[1]

> And, while he bade farewell to Eleazar and Joshua and was yet communing with them, a cloud of a sudden descended upon him and he disappeared in a ravine. But he was written of himself in the sacred books that he died, for fear lest they should venture to

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[1]Thackeray, H. St. J., Josephus, IV. Loeb Classical Library. London: William Heinemann Ltd., Vol. IV, p. 633.

> say that by reason of his surpassing virtue he had gone back to the Deity.

By these words Josephus implies two facts: a knowledge of the biblical account in Deut. 34:5,6 of the death of Moses, and in the strained language above he also recognizes the new claim about Moses' death as recorded in the Ass. Mos. It is clear that the influence of this book and its teaching was rather widespread by Josephus' (b. 37; d. circa 100) time.

In the range of extra-canonical books several appear which deal with Moses, but they are distinct from the Ass. Mos. Since he occupied so prominent a place in the history of Israel it is not surprising that a corpus of literature has grown up around him. The book most easily confused with the Ass. Mos. is the Apocalypse of Moses, an alleged history of Adam's life and death as revealed to Moses. It is written in Greek by a Christian, and properly belongs in the category of Adamic literature. Tischendorf and Ceriani published this work in 1866, and the Mechitarists of Venice published an Armenian version. In the Midrashic literature the title Petirath Moshe occurs.[1] Philo wrote Vita Mosis, and Josephus quotes it in Antiquities (4:8:4,48). Lastly, the Acts of the Nicene Council (II:18) distinguishes between the Ass. Mos. and the Book of the Mystical Sayings

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[1]Gförer, Prophetae veteres pseudepigraphi. Stuttgart: 1840, pp. 303-304.

of Moses; very little is known of this work.

Antonius Maria Ceriani, the librarian of the Ambrosian Library in Milan, discovered in 1861 the fragments of a Latin MS of the long-lost Ass. Mos. The modern world prior to this discovery did not know that such a Latin translation existed; it had been supposed that the book existed only in Greek. The Latin MS appeared to be dated from the sixth century. Ceriani, recognizing the import of his discovery for the field of biblical studies, published the text of the Ass. Mos. in his Monumenta Sacra et Profana,[1] a four-volume work of considerable scholarship. At the end of his published text of the Ass. Mos. Ceriani added two pages of critical notes.

The MS itself is a sixth century palimpsest of eight folios. Both sides of the page are used, and each page has two columns with twelve to eighteen letters per line. As in the uncial Greek MSS, there is no separation between words, and punctuation is scarce. The MS is in poor condition; occasionally entire verses are obliterated. See especially 1:1; 7:1,2,5,6,7,10; 8:1; 11:4,5; and 12:5-7. Unfortunately, several of these passages are critical for the interpretation of the text, and scholars have divided markedly in their emendations of these difficult sections. Charles[2]

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[1]Ceriani, A.M., Monumenta Sacra et Profana. Milan: 1861, Vol. I, pp. 55-64.

[2]Charles, R.H., The Assumption of Moses. London: Adam and Charles Black, 1897, p. xxix.

notes that the MS came originally from the Abbey of Bobbio near Pavia. The extant portion of the Ass. Mos. is presumably about one half, or less, of the original length. The testimony concerning this original length comes from Nicephorus who states that the entire book consisted of 1400 stichoi, a stichos being a line of average length assumed in measuring the contents of a text. Nicephorus observes that this is about the same length as the book of the Revelation. Thus, the extant portion of the Ass. Mos. represents only about half of the original work; the second and lost half has not been found to date. Deane[1] feels that the lost section "will probably now be never brought to light". However, it may not be a lost cause. Perhaps in the mountain of MSS which are yet to be examined and studied, some scholar with the perception and patience of a Ceriani will find the lost section.

The extant portion as we now have it is divided into two parts. In the first Moses gives the charge to Joshua which contains an outline of Jewish history. Coupled with this history is a prophecy of events which will lead to the restoration of a theocracy. The second section is a self-effacing, humble reply of Joshua wherein he declares his unworthiness to assume the mantle of leadership. In the midst of an encouraging response by Moses the book terminates

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[1]Deane, W.J., Pseudepigrapha. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1891, p. 108.

abruptly in the middle of a sentence.

It is no longer maintained that this MS is the work of the original Latin translator. There are many evidences that it is the work of a copyist, and a very unskillful one. He attempts retranslation, emendation and correction. He misread e for c at 11:2; read eum as cum, etc. At 5:6 a six-line dittograph occurs; see also 6:3; 8:5; and 11:13.

The quality of the Latin is "beyond measure barbarous and anomalous, the vulgar dialect of country peasants, and resembling the old Itala rather than any classical form which we possess".[1] In style the Latin of the Ass. Mos. is much like that of the Muratorian Canon. Both works were originally in the Abbey of Bobbio, and it is highly probable that the Ass. Mos. was copied from an older MS by one of the monks of the Abbey. Charles, in analyzing the quality of the Latin, depends largely upon the work of Wordsworth, Sanday, and White who made a careful linguistic study of the fifth-century Bobbio MS of the NT, k. However, a more up-to-date palaeographic study of this MS of the Ass. Mos. was done under the direction of A.E. Lowe.[2] His description is as follows:

> Ruling on the hair side. Single bounding lines. Prickings to guide the ruling run through the text.

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[1] Ibid., p. 104.

[2] Lowe, A.E., Editor, Codices Latini Antiquiores, Part III. Italy: Ancona-Novara. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1938, p. 14.

Gatherings (composition difficult to determine, probably some tens among them) were signed by a q and a Roman numeral in the right-hand lower corner of the last page (p. 57 shows qV, p. 132 q. XV); flesh side outside quires. Punctuation: the medial point marks the main pause. Abbreviations include Nomina Sacra (δ $\overline{\text{NS}}$ = dominus, $\overline{\text{ISRL}}$ = israel) and B·, q· = bus, que, $\overline{\text{NI}}$ = nostri. Omitted M and N at line-ends marked by a single stroke, omitted M also by a stroke with a dot below. No special decoration; initials quite simple; the first three lines of the Ass. Mos. (p. 112) were in red which has entirely disappeared. Parchment rather coarse. Script is rather stiff and regular defined uncial: the hasta of ϵ is high and the loop closed; the oblique stroke of N is thick; O is broad and the axis is almost vertical; the bow of R comes down low; the general impression is that of a hand accustomed to writing Gothic uncial.

Written probably in Italy; a number of other MSS containing apocryphal matter were used for rewriting about the same time at Bobbio. It is extremely illegible, and many pages are stained by reagent.

Almost forty years before Ceriani discovered the obscure writing which resulted in uncovering the text of the Ass. Mos., Amadeus Peyron had studied the upper writing of this palimpsest. This upper writing was discovered to be some hitherto unknown orations of Cicero. Peyron edited the MS and published his findings in 1824. But the Ass. Mos., the text of which was the lower writing on the same MS, was not 'discovered' until 1861 by Ceriani.

Ceriani's find appears to have gone largely unnoticed at first among English-speaking scholars. But the publication of a critical text excited many scholars in Germany. The first to attempt a corrected text was Hilgenfeld whose work was assisted by others. Hilgenfeld published three editions altogether. The first was an attempt at a recon-

struction of the obscure passages.[1] Then in 1868 he retranslated the Latin back into Greek, which he supposed to be the original language of the work.[2] This task was not overly difficult in view of the slavish rendering originally made from the Greek to Latin. This edition also contains extensive notes on the text. His third edition is contained in his Messias Judaeorum, 1869.[3] Charles says of Hilgenfeld, "To this great scholar we owe the finest textual work that has been produced on this book. Much of it is of permanent value, and many of his emendations are accepted as final."[4]

After the work of Hilgenfeld came that of Volkmar[5] which contains a German translation and commentary. But Charles observes that the work is limited by Volkmar's "partiality for a certain period of history" which leads him to find facts in the Ass. Mos. which will accord with his "preconceived ideas".

A third translation was made by Schmidt and Merx[6] who

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[1]Hilgenfeld, Novum Testamentum extra Canonem Receptum. Leipsig: 1866, pp. 93-115.

[2]Hilgenfeld, Zeitschrift für Wissenschaftl. Theol., 1868, pp. 273-309, 356.

[3]Hilgenfeld, Messias Judaeorum. Leipsig: 1869, pp. 435-468.

[4]Charles, op. cit., p. xvii.

[5]Volkmar, Mose Prophetie und Himmelfahrt. Leipsig: 1867.

[6]Schmidt, M., and Merx, A., "Die Assumptio Mosis", Archiv für wissenschaftliche Erforschung des Alten Testamentes. Halle: 1868, Band I, pp. 111-152.

proposed several conjectures and emendations. These men were the first to give serious consideration to the possibility of a Semitic original; their researches led them to conclude that the original was composed in Aramaic.

O.F. Fritzsche[1] edited the fourth major study of the Ass. Mos., and although he disagrees with some of the conclusions of his predecessors, he is deeply indebted to them. In his edition he puts Ceriani's text on one page, and on the opposite page he gives his emended text with many lacunae corrected. His work also contains some valuable critical notes.

Among English-speaking scholars there is one name which stands out above all others, that of R.H. Charles. In 1897 he published The Assumption of Moses, the first serious and comprehensive work done on this book in English. It is a very thorough piece of work in which he gives 65 pages of introduction. The main body of the work is an exegesis and emended edition of the Latin text together with Ceriani's unemended Latin text. In 1913 Charles published his massive two-volume work on the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha[2] in which he again treats the Ass. Mos. with some modifications of his earlier work, such as the identification of that

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[1]Fritzsche, O.F., Libri Apocryphi Veteris Testamenti Graece. Lipsiae: Brockhaus, 1871, pp. 700-730.

[2]Charles, R.H., Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913, Vol. II, pp. 407-424.

enigmatical figure, Taxo. It must be said of Charles' treatment, not only of the Ass. Mos. but of the entire range of intertestamental literature, that it is the point of departure for all subsequent scholarship in this field. One either agrees or disagrees with Charles; he must be reckoned with in this area of investigation. Occasionally one feels that some of Charles' conclusions were reached without sufficient consideration of all the factors involved, but, as Charles so aptly writes concerning the labors of Hilgenfeld, "...fault-finding is ungracious where such high services have been rendered".[1]

Many monographs, articles, chapters, and papers have been written dealing either with the entire book or with various problems in it since Ceriani's time. However, they are of lesser importance since they do not treat the matter as exhaustively as did Hilgenfeld, Charles, et al. These works may be found in the bibliography. Modern scholarship has made important contributions to the understanding of portions of the Ass. Mos., and such names as H.H. Rowley, C.C. Torrey, R. Pfeiffer, Mowinkel and Lattey are prominent.

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[1]Charles, op. cit., p. xviii.

CHAPTER II

BIBLICAL AND PATRISTIC CITATIONS

I. Biblical Citations.

There is no longer any question among scholars that the author of the Epistle of Jude not only knew the Ass. Mos., but he quotes from the lost portion. Jude 9 states as follows (RSV): "But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, disputed about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a reviling judgment upon him, but said, 'The Lord rebuke you'". This passage is not found in any part of the extant MS of the Ass. Mos., but it is beyond doubt that it was taken from the lost section, the original Ass. Mos. Charles asserts also that Jude 16 is in marked agreement verbally or in substance with Ass. Mos. 5:5 and 7:7,9. They read as follows:

> And many in those times will respect the persons of the rich and receive gifts, and wrest judgment (on receiving presents).
>
> ... but (in reality) to destroy them, complainers, deceitful, concealing themselves lest they should be recognised, impious, filled with lawlessness and iniquity from sunrise to sunset... And though their hands and their minds touch unclean things, yet their mouth will speak great things...

Jude 16 (RSV) reads: "These are grumblers, malcontents, following their own passions, loud-mouthed boasters, flattering people to gain advantage". The descriptions in the above-mentioned verses from Ass. Mos. are much like those in Jude 16, but it is hazardous to imply literary dependence of Jude. However, it is entirely possible that Jude may have seen

this passage. Charles notes the similarity between the Latin of the Ass. Mos. and the Greek of Jude 16, but his suggestion of literary dependence is neither necessary nor compelling. He goes on to detect further similarities in Jude 18, and rests his case for dependence in these words: "Now, lest the full force of these parallels should escape us, we should observe that the accounts in both books are actually or nominally prophetic."[1] Hilgenfeld[2] sees no NT citations of the Ass. Mos. other than the obvious and direct usage in Jude 9.

Charles maintains that II Pet. 2:10,11 is dependent upon Jude 9, or both are derived from the original Assumption. He cites II Pet. 2:3,13 in support of the latter alternative. But again one comes to the question of whether literary similarity necessarily implies literary dependence, and in this case it appears to be a weak argument. Zahn, in discussing the relationship of Jude 9, II Pet. 2:10 ff. and the Ass. Mos., says, "There is nothing in the parallel passage II Pet. 2:10 ff. referring to the same event, and so no reference to the Assumptio Mosis."[3]

Next, Charles notes "remarkable parallels between St.

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[1]Charles, R.H., The Assumption of Moses. London: Adam and Charles Black, 1897, pp. lxii-lxiii.

[2]Hilgenfeld, A., Novum Testamentum extra canonem receptum; 2nd ed. Leipzig: T. O. Weigel, 1876, pp. 109-135.

[3]Zahn, T., Introduction to the New Testament (Reprint). Grand Rapids, Mich.: Kregel Publications, 1953, p. 288.

Stephen's speech in Acts 7 and our text".[1] In particular he points out the reference by Stephen to the events of Moses in Egypt, the Red Sea, and the wilderness, and he compares this with the words of Ass. Mos. 3:11: "Who suffered many things in Egypt, and in the Red Sea, and in the wilderness during forty years". Charles feels that this "likeness is too close to be accidental".[2] When, however, it is remembered how large the events of the exodus bulked in the minds of the Jews and early Christians, it becomes apparent that Stephen had no need to make subtle reference to the Ass. Mos., but was rather alluding to the great redemptive act of God in Jewish history, a reference which would make a solid impact upon the minds of his hearers. Charles is saying too much.

Charles sees indirect references to the Ass. Mos. in other passages in the NT. Acts 7:38,39; Matt. 24:21,29; and Luke 21:25 are said to be dependent either directly or indirectly upon the Ass. Mos., or they are dependent upon a common source. The latter option is clearly the better.

The question arises at this point regarding the attitude of the NT writers not only toward the Ass. Mos., but the entire body of current extra-canonical literature. Did they hold these works as authoritative in a sense equal to

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[1] Charles, op. cit., p. lxiii.

[2] loc. cit.

that of the OT canon, or were they authoritative in a lesser sense, or were they cited merely as historical curiosities?

The German scholar Philippi[1] attempts to solve the question of the citation of a passage from the Ass. Mos. in Jude by proposing that the Ass. Mos. was derived from Jude, not conversely. However, this solution has not commended itself to scholars because it is, as Gloag states,[2] "highly untenable". Philippi pursues this theme, maintaining that after the Transfiguration Jesus explained to his disciples how the supposedly buried Moses could have appeared alive. And this explanation was passed on to Jude who embodied it in his epistle, and subsequently it was incorporated in the Ass. Mos. This attempted solution is interesting, but it lacks any historical evidence.

Another proposed explanation of this difficulty of Jude's allusion to a Jewish legend found in an apocryphal book suggests that Zech. 3:1,2 is the origin of this passage in Jude. II Pet. 2:11 is held to be parallel with Jude 9. But the objection to this view is that there is scant parallelism of thought between the passages involved. Zech. 3:1,2 and II Pet. 2:11 say nothing of either Moses or Michael.

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[1]Philippi, Das Buch Henoch. Stuttgart: 1868, pp. 166-191.

[2]Gloag, Paton, Introduction to the Catholic Epistles. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1887, p. 383.

Hofman, Calvin, Alford, and Keil all hold that the reference in Jude 9 and that in the Ass. Mos. concerning the death of Moses is derived from a current Jewish legend.[1] Alford cites the Targum on Deut. 34:6 to the effect that Michael was given special custody over Moses' grave.[2] Gloag seeks to simplify the problem by positing that the Ass. Mos. and Jude 9 were both drawn from an earlier current Rabbinic tradition, and that Jude modified his words by recalling the prophecy of Zech. 3:1,2. Jude then applied this to the idea of reverence for dignities found in vs. 8. "Jude employs it simply as an illustration of the evil of irreverence",[3] and this in no way compromises the authority or authenticity of the book. Mayor[4] concurs in this, that Jude wishes to restrain a spirit of disrespect and irreverence by this allusion to Michael.

Ginzberg's monumental work, The Legends of the Jews, contains several Rabbinic references to Michael's relationship to Moses.[5] 2 Petirat Moshe 381-382, Manzur 16, and DR

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[1] Ibid., p. 384.

[2] Alford, Henry, The Greek Testament. Cambridge: 1875, Vol. IV, p. 534.

[3] Gloag, op. cit., p. 385.

[4] Mayor, J.B., The Epistle of Jude and the Second Epistle of St. Peter. London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1907, p. 74.

[5] Ginzberg, L., The Legends of the Jews. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1947, Vol. VI, p. 159.

11:10 (מדרש דברים רבה) all contain elements of the old legend about the struggle between Michael and Sammael (Satan) over the body of Moses. Ginzberg cites DR 11:10, illustrating the controversy between Michael and Satan:

> Sammael, head of the Satans (evil spirits; comp. Tosefta Shabbat 17:3: "the angels of Satan"), waited impatiently for the moment of Moses' death, exclaiming: "O for the moment when Michael shall weep and I will open my mouth with laughter!" Hearing these words, Michael replied: "I weep, and thou laughest; but 'rejoice not against me, O mine enemy, though I am fallen, I shall arise; though I sit in darkness, the Lord is light unto me'".[1]

That Jude cites a current Jewish legend does not necessarily disqualify the place of Jude in the canon of the NT, nor does it imply Jude's endorsement of the historicity of the legend. He merely employed a theme which, though not completely clear to the modern mind, was apparently well known to his readers and he used it to buttress his argument. There is ample evidence that such references were used by other NT writers, yet not implying their approval of the lack of historicity; see I Cor. 10:4; II Tim. 3:8; Gal. 3:19; and Heb. 2:2.

Because of the paucity of sound evidence this matter probably cannot be answered with complete satisfaction. On this issue Zahn states:

> The fact that the author makes use of two pseudepigraphic writings bearing O.T. names, namely, the Assumption of Moses and the Book of Enoch, lessened for a time the ecclesiastical reputation of the epistle; but

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[1] loc. cit.

> this is no reason why we should question its genuineness. Except for the references in Jude, we do not know how these two books and other writings of like character were regarded by the older apostles and the brothers of Jesus. Nevertheless, what we find in Jude would seem to indicate that several of these writings, which do not stand the test of historical criticism, were regarded in this worthy circle as reliable witnesses of genuine tradition and true prophecy.[1]

II. Patristic Citations.

The patristic citations or allusions to the Ass. Mos. are arranged in order of their dates, the first being the earliest. The dates of Jude and the early patristic citations have a direct bearing on the date of the composition of the book and its circulation.

The earliest of some 13 patristic references to the Ass. Mos. is that found in Clement of Alexandria, born sometime near 150 and died between 211 and 216. In his Stromateis, chap. 6:15, Clement discusses the issue of religious knowledge and uses an event out of the Ass. Mos. to give impetus to his argument for allegory.

> Rightly, therefore, Jesus (Joshua) the son of Nave saw Moses, when taken up (to heaven), double, - one Moses with the angels, and one on the mountains, honoured with burial in their ravines. And Jesus (Joshua) saw this spectacle below, being elevated by the Spirit, along also with Caleb. But both do not see similarly. But the one descended with greater speed, as if the weight he carried was great; while the other on descending after him, subsequently related the glory which he beheld, being able to perceive more than the other, as having

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[1] Zahn, op. cit., pp. 269-270.

grown purer; the narrative, in my opinion, showing that knowledge is not the privilege of all.[1]

Three salient facts immediately emerge out of a reading of this passage. First, the incident to which Clement refers is from the now-lost half of the book, the same section from which Jude had drawn his information. Secondly, at the time Clement wrote his works, both the Testament of Moses and the Assumption of Moses had been combined into one literary product. Thirdly, Clement indirectly acknowledges the discrepancy in the accounts of Moses' death; presumably the second and lost half relates Moses' assumption into heaven, whereas in the first half (1:15) Moses is shown to have died a natural death, and was buried in an unknown place in the mountains. Clement does not flinch at this difficulty; indeed, he welcomes it as an obvious vehicle for allegory.

In Clement's commentaries on the Catholic Epistles (Adumbratio in Epistola Judae), of which only a Latin translation is extant in fragments, there is the following statement: "Quando Michael archangelus cum diabolo disputans altercabatur de corpore Moysi. Hic confirmat Assumptionem Moysi."[2]

Next of the Fathers to allude to the Ass. Mos. was Origen, 185-254, the illustrious pupil of Clement of Alexan-

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[1]Wilson, Wm., The Writings of Clement of Alexandria. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1869, Vol. II, p. 382.

[2]Zahn, T., Forschungen zur Geschicte des neutestamentlichen Kanons. Erlangen: 1883, Vol. III, p. 84.

dria. In De Principiis, 3:2:1, he says:

> And in the first place, in the book of Genesis, the serpent is described as having seduced Eve; regarding whom, in the work entitled The Ascension (Assumption) of Moses (a little treatise, of which the Apostle Jude makes mention in his epistle), the archangel Michael, when disputing with the devil regarding the body of Moses, says that the serpent, being inspired by the devil, was the cause of Adam and Eve's transgression.[1]

Then again in his homily on the book of Joshua Origen makes some comments which reflect an acquaintance with the Ass. Mos., but he does not refer specifically to the work.[2]

Didymus of Alexandria, 313-398, one of the last professors of the Alexandrian catechetical school, wrote a commentary on Jude. In reference to vs. 9 Didymus says:

> Adversarii hujus contemplationis praescribunt praesenti epistolae et Moyseos Assumptioni, propter eum locum ubi significatur verbum Archangeli de corpore Moyseos ad diabolum factum.[3]

In the writings of Epiphanius, a Greek church father, born around 320, and died in 403, there is an allusion to the burial of Moses' body.[4]

A contemporary of Augustine, Evodius, in a letter to

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[1]Crombie, F., The Writings of Origen (Ante-Nicene Christian Library, Vol.X). Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1869, Vol. I, p. 222.

[2]Migne, J., Patrologiae. Paris: 1857, Vol. 12, p. 384.

[3]Gallandi, A., Bibliotheca Veterum Patrum. Venice: 1788, Vol. VI, p. 307.

[4]Migne, op. cit., Vol. 41, p. 230.

Augustine, referred to certain ideas in the Ass. Mos.[1]

Cramer cites the testimony of Severus, Patriarch of Antioch, died 538, wherein no direct mention is made of the title of the Ass. Mos., but the allusions are clearly to the contents of the book. He is giving an exegesis of Jude 9 in which the burial of Moses is discussed.[2]

The Ass. Mos. is mentioned in the Acta Synodi I Nicaenae, but only a brief statement is given.[3] It is a close paraphrase composed from Jude 9, or from the lost section of the book. Gelasius of Cyzicum, a fifth-century Greek church historian, composed a history of the First Council of Nicaea, and these Acta Synodi Nicaenae preserve this allusion to the Ass. Mos.

Both Charles and Hilgenfeld cite the testimony of a scholion of Apollinarius in the Catena Nicephori.[4] This reference speaks of "other books, now apocryphal", and includes an obvious allusion to the Ass. Mos.

Charles cites several anonymous commentaries of Jude in which a clear knowledge of the Ass. Mos. is evident.[5]

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[1]Fabricius, J.A., Codex Pseudepigraphus Veteris Testamentum. Hamburg: 1722, p. 846.

[2]Cramer, Catena in Graecorum Patrum. Oxford: 1844, Vol. 8, pp. 161-162.

[3]Fabricius, op. cit., p. 844.

[4]Hilgenfeld, op. cit., p. 129. I could not verify this citation in any work earlier than Hilgenfeld.

[5]Cramer, op. cit., pp. 160-163.

C.F. Matthaeus cites a scholion first discovered by Roensch in which the dispute between Michael and the devil is expounded.[1] The language is very clearly that of the Ass. Mos. This scholion is written in minuscule Greek and is probably an eleventh century MS.[2]

Oecumenius in the tenth century wrote some extensive comments on Jude 9 in his NT scholia. Both Migne[3] and Matthaeus[4] quote the significant sections of Oecumenius' scholion in which there is an evident acquaintance with the Ass. Mos. There is some doubt as to the authenticity of these writings, however, and they cannot be viewed as wholly reliable.

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[1]Matthaeus, C.F., Novum Testamentum Graece et Latine, Septem Epistolae Catholicae. Riga: 1782, pp. 238-239.

[2]Charles, op. cit., p. 110.

[3]Migne, op. cit., Vol. 69, p. 714.

[4]Matthaeus, op. cit., p. 238.

CHAPTER III

PLACE AND DATE OF WRITING

I. The place of writing.

In a discussion of the place of writing the chief problem is the paucity of solid evidence, and it is not possible to locate the place of writing exactly. One can give only a general conclusion.

A search for indications of place of writing in the Ass. Mos. yields about five references: 1:3; 1:4; 3:1; 3:13; and 6:8. 1:3 and 4 go together and read as follows:

> nam secus qui in oriente sunt numerus. . . mus· et· . . mus et·. . .mus· profectionis fynicis· cum exivit plebs post profectionem quae fiebat per mosysen usque amman trans jordanem.

The first question to be taken up is the significance of in oriente, "in the east". Generally in this era this expression has reference to the Levantine provinces, and the inference is that one who is outside the area under consideration would so refer to it. Therefore, it suggests that such an expression would come from Rome, or the vicinity.

Next is the question of fynicis, an obvious Latin transliteration of the Greek φοινίκης . The problem is this: is it a mystical word, or does it refer to the mythical Greek word, or is it a geographical name? To assert that it is some kind of mystical word is quite foreign to the nature of this book, and would be pointless here. Nor does the idea of any reference to the great bird of Greek mythology fit in with the general sense. So it appears that

fynicis has geographical significance, and two factors may be adduced to support this conclusion:

1. the LXX in two places, Ex. 13:65 and Josh. 5:12, translates כנען by φοινίκης, i.e., Canaan is called Phoenicia.

2. Josephus in Antiquities 6:14:2, uses φοινίκης in reference to Canaan.

3. Eusebius also refers to Canaan by Phoenicia; see Praep. Ev. 9:17:2.[1]

It seems clear then, that fynicis means Phoenicia, or Palestine. Hilgenfeld tries to solve the problem by seeing a double reference in fynicis: the land of Canaan, and a mystical reference to the Greek bird.[2] This suggestion has not been followed by subsequent scholars except Wieseler who suggests that there is a connection between the reappearance of the Phoenix in 34 A.D. and the death and revival of Moses. He thus argues that the book originated to the east of the Jordan on the grounds that the Arabs reckoned their dates from the reappearance of this fabulous bird.

Ass. Mos. 1:4 speaks of "Amman across the Jordan". Charles correctly notes that "only a dweller in Jerusalem could have so described it". Moses would not have spoken of Amman as "across the Jordan".

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[1]Gifford, E.H., Eusebii Pamphili, Tom. I. Oxford: 1903, Vol. I, p. 528.

[2]Hilgenfeld, Nov. Test. extra Canonem Receptum. Lips: 1876, p. 131.

The entire discussion concerning the significance of these two verses for the locality of origin is brought into question by Charles' assertion that verses 3,4,5 are an interpolation. Schmidt-Merx, Volkmar and Charles reject part of these verses or all of them as a gloss added by a copyist. On objective grounds it must be admitted that these verses do not accord well with the general tenor of the remainder of the first chapter. If, as Charles says, verses 3,4,5 are a gloss, then the words in oriente suggest that the interpolation was made in the west, probably Rome. But, on the other hand, if the words in oriente are a genuine part of the text, the entire work may have been composed in the west. Such a conclusion raises a question difficult to answer: How does this agree with the writer's evident knowledge of the land of Palestine? Charles is probably correct when he takes 1:4 to be an interpretation of 1:3.

In 3:1 mention is made of ab oriente rex. Later in verse 13 the Israelites are spoken of as being carried away captive in partem orientis. These are clear references to Nebuchadnezzar and his conquest of Israel. The "east" is Babylon; cf. Ex. 16:35.

Lastly, in 6:8 the author speaks of occidentes (occidentis) rex potens which is an evident reference to Varus, governor of Syria, 4 B.C. Varus was a Roman general whose suppression of a Jewish rebellion is described in Josephus'

Antiquities (17:10:9,10; 11:1) and his Wars (2:5:1-3). The author is writing from somewhere in Palestine, and very probably Jerusalem.

The general impression gained from reading the Ass. Mos. is that the author was writing in Palestine concerning events which happened in Palestine. It was a land whose geography and history he knew well. This is not the work of a clever foreigner, but it is produced by a local figure. It is generally held by most investigators that the book is a product of Palestine.

Alexandria is at once excluded since the author shows no symptoms of the allegorizing method of that school. He is rather concerned with history, not vague mystical ideas with the possible exception of the identity of Taxo. But even though the name of Taxo is a mystery, yet the author obviously treats him as a real, not mythical, person, who did certain deeds in a definite place. Hilgenfeld asserts that the book was written in Rome by a visiting Jew, but his argument is not compelling.

II. The date of writing.

Any discussion of the date of composition turns on the significance and historical interpretation of chapter six. This short chapter of nine verses gives the surest means of determining the date of writing that is to be found in the book. In the course of some 90 years scholars have generally settled upon two periods as the possible times which

internal evidence indicates. The less favorably received theory and the least well-substantiated one is that first propounded by Volkmar, that chapters eight and nine point to the writing of the book during the rebellion of Bar Kokhba in 137-138 A.D. Volkmar sees in these two chapters an allusion to the persecution of the Jews by Hadrian, and a description of the subsequent revolt led by Bar Kokhba. In this interpretation Volkmar has been followed by Colani and Philippi, and in modern times by Zeitlin, though Zeitlin rests his case for the late date on other arguments than those put forth by Volkmar, et al.

Before attempting to refute the arguments for a late date, the positive case for the earlier date will be set forth. The earlier German scholars, with the notable exception of Volkmar, all place the dating prior to the destruction of the Temple by Titus. First the internal evidence for the 70 A.D. limit will be considered, and then the internal evidence for the early limit, i.e., Herod's death. Of primary significance, though it is an argument from silence, is the fact that the Temple stood as this book was written. Chapter two refers several times to the tabernacle, tower of his sanctuary, and house of the Lord. The Latin words are scenae testimonium, ferrum (which Charles emends to turrem) sanctuarii, domo domini. 3:2 speaks of the "holy temple of the Lord" (aede sancta domini); 5:3,4 refers to the domum servitutis suae, and altarium; 6:1,9 speaks of

the *sancto sanctitatis*, *alde*; and 8:5 alludes to the *abditum locum*. . .*alterium*.[1] Thus it is evident that the author recognized the existence of the Temple and its prominent place in contemporary Judaism. There is no indication that the Temple had been destroyed. A second argument, put forth by Charles,[2] asserts that the author teaches that the Temple will stand until the establishment of a theocracy. See 1:17 where *in loco* probably refers to Jerusalem, and 1:18 which speaks of a "day of repentance". This day of repentance is to precede the restoration of a theocratic or Messianic kingdom; such a concept was widely known in contemporary Jewish literature.[3] No Jew would have suggested any restoration of a theocracy in connection with the Temple after 70 A.D. Such hopes were permanently put to flight by Titus. Thirdly, Jewish literature known to have been produced after 70 A.D. bears evidence that the destruction of the Temple made a deep impact upon Jewry. The *Apocalypse of Baruch* and *IV Ezra* record this feeling.

J.E.H. Thompson[4] postulates a 'canon' for the dating of a book on internal evidence: "the time of the composition

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[1]All Latin quotations are taken from Ceriani's unemended text.

[2]Charles, *Ass. Mos.*, p. lv.

[3]*Ibid.*, p. 8.

[4]Thompson, J.E.H., *Books Which Influenced our Lord and His Apostles*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1891, p. 449.

of our Apocalypse is between the latest event clearly described and the first unmistakable break away from history". The latest limit has been shown to be prior to 70 A.D. On the other hand the earliest limit, or the point at which the author ceases to record history and begins to depart from known events, cannot be earlier than 4 B.C. Internal evidence supports this thesis on several grounds. In 6:6 there is a clear and unambiguous reference to Herod; in 6:2 an "insolent king" (rex petulans) is spoken of, a man "not.... of the race of the priests". Furthermore, this king, a cruel devastator of Israel, will execute judgment over Israel for 34 years. Josephus records these events in his Antiquities (books 15-17), and also in his War (1:18-33). Thus on historical evidences gained from a near-contemporary of Herod it is known that he reigned from 37-4 B.C., a rule of 34 years. Herod died in Jericho in 4 B.C., quite soon after the birth of Jesus of Nazareth (6 or 5 B.C.). This, then, is a firm historical point of reference in the Ass. Mos. which can be verified by external evidences.

The following verse, 6:7, provides the next major clue to a more exact date of composition. This verse says: "and he will beget children, who succeeding him will rule for shorter periods". Of the many children which Herod fathered[1] three sons succeeded him in ruling positions. The first was

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[1]See Josephus Ant. 17:1:2-3; War 1:28:4.

Archelaus, the despotic and least admired of his sons, who ruled from 4 B.C. to 6 A.D. A delegation of nobles from Samaria and Jerusalem went to Augustus to complain about his misgovernment, and as a result Archelaus was exiled to Vienna in Gaul in 6 A.D. At this time Judea became a Roman province; Archelaus had ruled only ten years. Herod Antipas was the second of Herod's sons to rule; he became tetrarch of Galilee and Perea. This is the individual whom Jesus described as a "fox" in Luke 13:32, and in this word Jesus attests that Herod Antipas was a clever man like his father. It was Herod Antipas who beheaded John the Baptist who had denounced Antipas' marriage to his brother's wife, Herodias. When Antipas was defeated by Vitellius, and eventually lost his position of authority to his brother Philip, his removal was regarded by many Jews as an indication of divine punishment for his treatment of John the Baptist.[1] So the rule of Antipas came to an end in 39 A.D.; it began in 4 B.C. The third of Herod's sons to rule was Philip, 4 B.C. to 34 A.D. According to Luke 3:1 Philip was the "tetrarch of the region of Iturea and Trachonitis"; Philip is responsible for the building of Caesarea Philippi, his capital, so well-known to the Gospels. Philip's rule ended at his death in 34 A.D.

The writer of the Ass. Mos. says that Herod's sons will rule for breviora tempora. But the known facts of history

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[1]Cf. Josephus Ant. 18:5:2 where his account differs somewhat from the Gospel records.

are that two of Herod's sons, Herod Antipas and Philip, ruled for 43 and 38 years respectively, whereas their father ruled only 34 years, as attested to both by the writer of the Ass. Mos. and a mass of external historical evidences. Therefore, the "break away from history" of which Thompson speaks occurs at this point; the author, putting words into Moses' mouth, ceases to record history and commences his own prophecy, which, of course, was not substantiated by later history. It is reasonable, then, to place the date of writing sometime after the deposition of Archelaus in 6 A.D., and sometime before 30 A.D., for if the book had been written after 30 A.D., the author would have known that both Herod Antipas' and Philip's reigns would exceed the length of their father's rule.

Charles offers a reasonable conjecture why the author ventured to prophecy that Herod's sons would reign for breviora tempora.[1] First, there was a general hope that such wicked rulers would soon be dethroned. Secondly, and of greater importance, Archelaus ruled only ten years, a proof of divine judgment in the eyes of the author. Therefore he predicts similarly short reigns for the other sons of Herod.

Further evidence for a post-4 B.C. date is offered in 6:8,9:

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[1]Charles, op. cit., p. lvii.

> Into their parts cohorts and a powerful king of the west will come, who will conquer them. And he will take them captive, and burn a part of their temple with fire, (and) will crucify some around their colony.

These words accurately describe the activity of Varus who quashed a rebellion of the Jews against Roman authority in 4 B.C.[1] Varus, a Roman, was governor of Syria, and was sent by Rome to put down the insurrection. In so doing, the Temple was partially destroyed by soldiers under Varus' command. Also, according to Josephus (Ant. 17:10:10) some 2000 Jews were crucified by Varus. The words of 6:8,9, then, are a clear historical allusion to Varus' suppression of the Jews in 4 B.C.

In connection with the discussion of the date of the Ass. Mos., the words of 7:1 must be considered. "And when this is done the times will be ended, in a moment the (second) course will be (ended), the four hours will come". This represents Charles' rendering of his emended Latin text. The text of Ceriani is very corrupt at this point; it reads as follows: "ex quo facto finientur tempora nomento. . .etur cursus a. . .horae iiii". It is clear that it is quite difficult if not impossible to reduce this to intelligible meaning. Charles well notes that

> We cannot discover the actual words of the writer even if we knew them, their interpretation would

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[1] See Josephus Ant. 17:10 ff.; War 2:5:1-3, passim.

be difficult, as they are enigmatical or symbolical.[1] Almost every scholar who has studied this passage has attempted a reconstruction, and the remarkable feature of their many efforts is the absence of unanimity of opinion, either in reconstruction or interpretation. Thompson[2] is doubtful if any definite temporal significance may be attached to the four hours, but suggests rather that they represent four marked periods beginning with the fall of the rex petulans. Lattey[3] holds that the book can be dated "only a little before 30 A.D." on the grounds that only under direct Roman rule, after Herod and Archelaus, did the Sadducees exercise strong religious rule under Roman political domination. This is opposed to Ferrar and Burkitt who date the book much closer to 6 or 7 A.D.

Of the older studies done on the Ass. Mos., Hilgenfeld, Schmidt-Merx, Fritzsche, Ewald, Wieseler, Drummond, Dillmann, Schürer, Charles, Deane, Gloag, and Thompson all maintain the date between 7 and 30 A.D. Of the more modern writers who support this date are Burkitt, Ferrar, Pfeiffer, Rowley, Lattey, and Torrey. The older writers who posit a post 70 A.D. include Volkmar, Colani, Keim, Hausrath, and Rosenthal. The outstanding modern writer who holds to a late date is

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[1]Charles, op. cit., p. 77.

[2]Thompson, op. cit., p. 447-448.

[3]Lattey, C., "The Messianic Expectation in 'The Assumption of Moses'", CBQ, Jan., 1942, p. 13.

Solomon Zeitlin. Volkmar, Colani, et al. base their reckoning on a historical interpretation of chapters eight and nine. In these chapters they see a reference to the persecution of the Jews under Hadrian in 137-138 A.D. These chapters must be regarded as historical, but Charles and later scholars have argued with success that one or both of these chapters are misplaced; they should be regarded as alluding to Antiochus Epiphanes instead of Hadrian. The question of chapter displacement will be taken up more fully in chapter 5 which treats of the identity of Taxo.

The modern exponent of a late date is Zeitlin,[1] who, like Volkmar, has a predisposition in favor of the Bar Kokhba period which blurs his objectivity at points. Although Zeitlin dates the writing in this period, he argues from a standpoint different from that of Volkmar. In the opening of his discussion he dismisses out of hand the idea that the Ass. Mos. was written before the destruction of the Temple. "This date is out of question and need not even be considered."[2] He reasons that the Anno Mundi method of dating was not used during the Second Commonwealth; rather in this period the Jews reckoned dates by eras - the era of the Seleucids, eras of the kings, etc. Here Zeitlin is assuming his conclusions in his argument. But the era of

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[1]Zeitlin, S., "The Assumption of Moses and the Revolt of Bar Kokba", JQR, Vol. 38, No. 1, July, 1947, pp. 1-45. See esp. pp. 9-12, 27-31, 34-37.

[2]Ibid., p. 10.

the creation is used only after the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D., and he cites Josephus' dating in Wars wherein he gives the dates according to the Roman emperors, and IV Ezra 14:48. On the basis of this argument he says:

> Thus, we may say with certainty that this book, The Assumption of Moses, could have been composed only after the destruction of the Second Temple.[1]

Concerning the reasons for the 7-30 A.D. date of the book Zeitlin merely says they are "not sufficient proof to assign the book to this early date".[2]

Zeitlin builds his case for the date on the first two verses of the book where Moses' death in his 120th year is said to be the 2500th year from the creation of the world. And in 10:12 Moses says that CCL times will elapse between Moses' death and the advent of God. Each "time" is seven years, or a year-week, a sabbatical year. CCL (250) times is 1750 years, which, when added to the 2500 years from the creation of the world, yields 4250 years Anno Mundi, or 490 A.D. With this evidence he goes on to say:

> According to the Talmud, the son of David will arrive in the eighty-fifth Jubilee. A Jubilee consists of fifty years. Eighty-five times fifty are 4250 years = 490 C.E. Thus, the Messianic Age given in the Talmud corresponds exactly to the date in The Assumption of Moses. Another passage in the Talmud says that the Messiah will come in the year 4291 A.M. I had occasion to point out that the actual reading was 4231, that is, in the year 471 C.E. Why is 4231 designated as the year of the Messianic Age? It is

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[1] Ibid., p. 11.

[2] loc. cit.

> because eighty-four Jubilees are 4200 years; and thirty-one years constitute a majority of the years and decades of the eighty-fifth Jubilee. I believe therefore we may say with certainty that the book, The Assumption of Moses, was composed in the year 140 C.E. Three hundred years of tribulations, which the author says the Jews will suffer, would give us 440 C.E. i.e. 4200 A.M., or eighty-four Jubilees. When Taxo told his sons to go into caves on the "fourth" (hundred) because of the beginning of the age of the advent of God, he really meant the eighty-fifth Jubilee, which the Talmud also assigned as the Jubilee of the Messianic Age. The advent of God was expected in the thirty-first year of this Jubilee, i.e. 4231 A.M., or 471 C.E. Thus, 140 C.E., when The Assumption of Moses was composed, plus 331 gives us 471, i.e. 4231 A.M., which is the beginning of the Messianic Age.[1]

In criticism of this position, the first factor to be challenged is his statement that "during the Second Commonwealth, this manner of designating an era by Anno Mundi, was not used by the Jews".[2] Further on he says that "only after the destruction of the Second Temple did this manner of designating the era come into vogue".[3] The Jewish Encyclopedia, in an article on Jose ben Ḥalafta, a second century student of Akiba, states that he devised a biblical chronology dating from the creation of the world to the emperor Hadrian.[4] This was formally designated as an Anno Mundi chronology.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 34, 35.

[2] Ibid., p. 10.

[3] Ibid., p. 11.

[4] Art. "Jose Ben Ḥalafta", The Jewish Encyclopedia. New York: Funk & Wagnalls Co., 1904, Vol. VII, pp. 241-242.

However, apparently Zeitlin ignored the Book of Jubilees;[1] the entire method of dating in this book is based on the Anno Mundi system. Several citations from Jubilees will serve to illustrate the point of origin for dating. The prologue of Jubilees reads:

> This is the history of the division of the days of the law and of the testimony, of the events of the years, of their (year) weeks, of their Jubilees throughout all the years of the world. . .[2]

Then again in Jubilees 1:27 these words:

> And he said to the angel of the presence: Write for Moses from the beginning of creation till My sanctuary has been built among them for all eternity.

In 1:29 the words "from the time of the creation", and "according to all the creation of the earth" appear. The opening words of chapter two constitute a resume of the instruction to Moses:

> And the angel of the presence spake to Moses according to the word of the Lord, saying: Write the complete history of the creation, how in six days the Lord God finished all His works and all that He created. . .

In these few quotations from Jubilees it is clear that the author is reckoning all his dating by Jubilees from the creation of the world, not the creation of Adam, or some subsequent event.

Charles asserts concerning the date of Jubilees that

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[1]Charles, R.H., Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913, Vol. II, pp. 1-82.

[2]Ibid., p. 1.

it "was written in Hebrew by a Pharisee between the year of the accession of Hyrcanus to the high-priesthood in 135 and his breach with the Pharisees some years before his death in 105 B.C."[1] So Zeitlin's statement that the Jews used Anno Mundi dating only after 70 A.D. appears to have omitted consideration of Jubilees.[2]

Several additional criticisms of Zeitlin's argument may be made. He states that the 7-30 A.D. date lacks "sufficient proof";[3] yet he does not point out wherein this proof is insufficient. He acknowledges the argument for the earlier date, but offers no adequate criticism of it.

Secondly, Zeitlin has not given any acceptable alternatives to the pointed data of chapter 6, upon which the 7-30 A.D. date is predicated. Before he can argue successfully for a date in the Bar Kokhba period he must correlate the details of chapter 6 with the figures of a century later.

Thirdly, his argument for the institution of the Kingdom of Heaven in 4250 A.M.[4] does not date the composition of the Ass. Mos., it merely projects a date for the arrival

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[1]Charles, op. cit., p. 1. Cf. Rowley, H.H., The Relevance of Apocalyptic. London: Lutterworth Press, 1952, pp. 84-90. Rowley argues for a Maccabaean date.

[2]Cf. Ibid., p. 43 where Zeitlin maintains a "fifth century B.C.E." date for Jubilees.

[3]Zeitlin, op. cit., p. 11.

[4]op. cit., pp. 34-35.

of the Kingdom, based upon a Talmudic reference[1] and the date of 2500 in Ass. Mos. 1:2. His entire case for a late date is spun out of obscure references which do not find sound support in the Ass. Mos.

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[1]Sanhedrin 97b.

CHAPTER IV

THE AUTHOR

A cursory investigation of the political and religious parties in Palestine in the period between 200 B.C. and 70 A.D. yields a bewildering array. Pfeiffer[1] lists the following: Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, Zealots, scribes, Herodians, Galileans, Sicarii, Samaritans, and Disciples of John the Baptist. To this list several other sects and parties may be added, including Dositheans, Hassidim, the Covenanters of Damascus, and the so-called "fourth sect of Jewish philosophy",[2] a title assigned by Josephus, who at this point was probably guilty of imposing Greek thought-forms quite alien to the Jewish mind.[3]

This group of parties and sects, one of which probably claimed the allegiance of the author of the Ass. Mos., narrows down to three parties whose influence was felt in the first half of the first century A.D.: Sadducees, Essenes, and the Pharisees. T.W. Manson[4] gives a very informative review of the political and religious complexion of Palestine

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[1]Pfeiffer, R., History of New Testament Times. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1949, p. 53.

[2]Ant. 18:1:6.

[3]For a brief discussion of this weakness of Josephus for Greek philosophy, see Schürer, E., The Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ, 2nd Ed. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1885, Div. II, Vol. II, p. 15.

[4]Manson, T.W., The Servant-Messiah. Cambridge University Press, 1953, pp. 10-11.

in the first Christian century. He cites Josephus'[1] statement that the Pharisees numbered "above six thousand" under the rule of Herod the Great. The Essenes numbered four thousand,[2] and the Sadducees were few. Manson estimates that the total figure for Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes is between 30,000 and 35,000 persons, "whereas the population of Jerusalem alone may be put at not less than 55,000-95,000 to say nothing of the Jews in the Judean countryside and in the territory of Herod Antipas".[3] As to the figure for the population of all of Palestine in the time of Jesus, he cites Jeremias' estimate of 500,000-600,000. On the basis of this total figure, the Pharisees constituted a mere five per cent, and the Essenes, Pharisees and Sadducees together seven per cent, of all the Jews in Palestine at that time. The remaining 93 per cent were hoi polloi, 'average Jews'.

While admitting the small size of this group of parties, it must be recognized that they exerted an influence quite disproportionate to their number. To which party did the author of the Ass. Mos. belong, and whose position does he represent?

One of the earliest descriptions of the Sadducees comes from Josephus,[4] stating the differences between the Pharisees

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[1] Ant. 17:2:4.

[2] Ant. 18:1:5.

[3] Manson, T.W., op. cit., p. 11.

[4] Ant. 18:1:4.

and Sadducees. The issue of the origin of the Sadducees has long been contested. Concerning the etymology of the name Sadducee it has been held that the party took its name from Zadok, mentioned in I Kings 2:35 as the priest whose descendants exercised this function in Jerusalem since the time of Solomon. Pfeiffer[1] in modern times holds this view. Schürer[2] states another generally accepted position, that the Sadducees owe their name to Zadok, not the Zadok of Solomon's day, but to some unknown Zadok. Another theory affirms that the party comes from Zadok, the supposed disciple of Antigonus von Socho, whose history is found in the Aboth de-Rabbi Nathan.[3] T.W. Manson rejects all these theories in the following statement:

> The theory that the party got their name from another Sadok, who lived in the Greek period and either founded the sect or was an outstanding member of it, has no real support save in a Rabbinic account of Sadducean and Boethosian origins. This account may be safely dismissed as legendary; and the theory, even though it is backed by the great authority of Eduard Meyer, must be deemed to explain ignotum per ignotius.[4]

Another idea about the party is that its name is derived from the Hebrew word ṢDḲ, meaning "the righteous ones".

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[1] Pfeiffer, op. cit., p. 56.

[2] Schürer, E., op. cit., pp. 31 ff. See also Moore, G.F., Judaism. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950, Vol. I. pp. 70-71.

[3] Ibid., p. 32.

[4] Manson, T.W., op. cit., p. 15, n. 1.

As Manson[1] points out, such a false etymology was flattering to the Sadducees, but patently impossible.[2]

Manson sets aside all the prior arguments on both historical and etymological grounds.[3] His historical objection is based upon the fact that the high priests of the period 172 B.C. to 70 A.D. were, with two exceptions, not of Zadokite lineage. The true Zadokite priestly line in 170-169 B.C. moved to Leontopolis in Egypt and founded an opposition movement. Menelaus (172-162 B.C.), Alcimus (162-160 B.C.), and the long continuation of Hasmonean high priests, begun by Jonathan Maccabaeus in 152-143 B.C. and ended by Aristobulus in 35 B.C., were all non-Zadokites. Between 37 B.C. and 70 A.D. the two Zadokite exceptions to this pattern, Ananel (37 B.C.), and Phinehas (67-70 A.D.), held office along with twenty six non-Zadokite high priests.

So, many of the legitimate claimants to the name Zadokite were in Egypt after 170 B.C., not in Palestine. However, the new light on this era, shed by the finds near the Dead Sea, offers the possibility that the Essenes were derived from a true Zadokite remnant in Palestine. The first mention Josephus makes of 'Sadducee'[4] is _after_ the departure of the

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[1] _Ibid._, p. 16.

[2] Cf. Dupont-Sommer, _The Jewish Sect of Qumran and the Essenes_. London: Valentine, Mitchell & Co., Ltd., 1954, pp. 69-74.

[3] Manson, _op. cit._, pp. 12-16.

[4] _Ant._ 13:5:9.

Zadokites for Egypt. "In other words, when we have a Zadokite high priesthood, we have no mention of the Sadducees, and when the Sadducees appear on the scene, there are no more Zadokite high priests."[1]

Doctrinally considered, the Sadducees were a negativist party, their foundation being, in a large measure, a rejection of certain Pharisaic tenets. On the question of Scripture the Sadducees recognized its authority alone as binding,[2] whereas the Pharisees placed the Torah and the tradition of the elders on an equal footing.

> This tradition was known as Halakah, that is "Walking", what we should express as "every-day practice", and in the later Judaism, which was Pharisaism developed, we find the startling declaration: "It is a sorer offense to teach things contrary to the ordinances of the scribes, than to teach things contrary to the written Law".[3]

Such an idea would have been entirely unacceptable to a Sadducee. Pfeiffer[4] holds that the Sadducees acknowledged only the Pentateuch of all the OT, but Moore disposes of this idea in these words:

> The statement of several of the Fathers that the Sadducees (like the Samaritans) acknowledged as Scripture nothing but the Pentateuch may be a misunderstanding of what Josephus says about their

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[1]Manson, T.W., op. cit., p. 13. Manson suggests that the name "Sadducee" is derived from Aramaic SDKY which corresponds to the Greek syndikous, or civic official, p. 16.

[2]Ant. 13:10:6.

[3]Bevan, E., Jerusalem Under the High Priests. London: Edward Arnold & Co., 1904, p. 123.

[4]Pfeiffer, op. cit., p. 56.

> rejection of everything but the written law, meaning that they did not admit legal or doctrinal deductions from the Prophets.[1]

A second doctrinal difference between Pharisees and Sadducees was on the question of divine purpose and intervention in history. Rather than depend upon the sovereignty and omnipotence of God to bring about desirable goals, the Sadducees placed emphasis upon the freedom of the will of the individual to direct his own life, and indirectly, to influence the unfolding of history. Thirdly, the Sadducees denied a future life after death, either for the righteous or the unrighteous, and it naturally follows that they rejected the idea of the resurrection of the body. Jesus disputed with the Sadducees on this very issue.[2] The fourth area of dispute was concerned with angels and demons, the existence of which the Sadducees denied.[3]

Many conjectures have been made in attempt to determine the radical element which caused these differences to arise. Schürer[4] says this root difference is "confined on the whole to this general rejection of Pharasaic tradition by the Sadducees". Moore[5] observes that the "primary cleavage

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[1]Moore, op. cit., p. 68.

[2]Matt. 22:23 ff.

[3]The only evidence for this fact is found in Acts 23:8. Josephus says nothing about it.

[4]Schürer, op. cit., pp. 37-38.

[5]Moore, op. cit., p. 68.

between the Sadducees and the Pharisees was on the doctrine of revelation". And Manson[1] suggests that their differences arose over methods of solving the problem of evil. The Sadducees made God so transcendent that He was relieved of responsibility for the existence of evil, whereas the Pharisees, regarding God as more immanent, were involved in a type of Zoroastrian dualism. Another explanation for these differences asserts that basically the Pharisees were supernaturalists, and the Sadducees were anti-supernaturalists.

In practical affairs the Sadducees were largely composed of the wealthy priestly aristocratic class; this explains their small numbers. They were concerned with blood lineage, with social standing. Their main interest was in Temple ritual and priestly function, not with national morality. In the testimony of Josephus[2] the Sadducees tended to be much more severe in the administration of justice. Lastly, the Sadducees were the arch-conservatives and reactionaries in religion of their age. This inflexibility and inability to adapt their religious convictions to changing times and circumstances contributed greatly to their disappearance from Judaism after 70 A.D.[3]

Was the author of the Ass. Mos. a Sadducee? In the

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[1]Manson, T.W., op. cit., p. 19.

[2]Ant. 20:199; cf. also Ps. Sol. 4:2.

[3]See Moore, op. cit., I, p. 280 on the plight of the Sadducees.

light of the recognized position of the Sadducees the author could not have spoken for them. Chapter ten affords the clearest evidence that the author looked for direct divine intervention to exalt Israel and cast down the Gentiles. Ass. Mos. 10:8-10 reads:

> Then happy wilt thou be, O Israel!
> And thou wilt mount above the neck and wings
> of the eagle
> And. . .will be filled.
> And God will exalt thee
> And make thee to cleave to the heaven of the stars,
> To the place of their habitation
> And thou wilt look from the highest (place),
> And wilt see thy enemies in the dust;
> And wilt recognize them and rejoice,
> And wilt give thanks and confess thy Creator.[1]

He was a believer in divine providence; very little emphasis is given to Israel's will. In this chapter the future state of Israel is described in glowing terms. But the Sadducees denied immortality. Charles[2] believes that chapter seven is to be regarded as a bitter attack upon the Sadducean party. The general tenor of the entire book is foreign to the doctrines of the Sadducees.

With the elimination of the Sadducees as the party of the author, the choice is to be made between the two remaining parties, the Essenes and Pharisees. The earliest description of the Essenes is given by the Alexandrian Jewish

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[1] Manson, op. cit., p. 31.

[2] Charles, op. cit., p. li.

philosopher, Philo,[1] born around 20 B.C., and died after 40 A.D. At least three of his extant writings contain descriptions of the Essenes. He suggests that their name denotes 'saintliness'; they lived apart in small villages for fear of contamination of their souls. They were practical communists, possessing nothing of their own and working according to common need. They had no slaves, were diligent in the study of the Torah, and did not marry. New recruits were drawn from homes outside the party.

Josephus refers several times to the Essenes, the outstanding reference being in his War 2:8:2-13. He also gives a description of them in Ant. 18:1 ff. In philosophical language he states that the Essenes held all things to be determined by destiny, a mediating position between the Pharisees and Sadducees. They sent gifts to the Temple but no sacrifices, and they avoided the common court of the Temple. They were an upright community, devoting themselves chiefly to agriculture. About 4000 in number, they owned no property and lived an ascetic existence.[2]

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[1] Quod Omnibus Probus Liber, 12; De Vita Contemplativa; and the fragments of Philo's larger work on the Jews, preserved in Eusebius' Praeparatio Evangelica, 8:11.

[2] Josephus' writings outline several aspects of the customs of the Essenes. Practice of ablutions before meals, celibacy, communal meals, wearing white clothing, the forbidding of oaths, anointing with oil, and slavery were all distinguishing characteristics, according to Josephus.

Kohler[1] maintains that Josephus borrowed from another account from which Hippolytus' Refutatio Omnium Haeresium, 9:18-28, was composed. Many discrepancies appear between Josephus' record and that of Hippolytus, and the record of the latter is "far more genuinely Jewish, and showing greater accuracy in detail and none of the coloring peculiar to Josephus".[2]

Pliny the Elder, 23-79 A.D., is the fourth ancient writer to give information about the Essenes. His Historia Naturalis, 5:17, offers several items of interest. However, Schürer[3] feels that Pliny's account is not entirely reliable.

Opinion about the etymology of the name "Essene" has not been uniform. Josephus himself varied the spelling of the name; fourteen times he calls them Essēnoi, and six times Essaioi.[4] Pliny referred to them as Esseni; and Philo Essaioi, claiming that the name is derived from hosioi. Schürer calls this "etymological trifling". It is apparently a Semitic name, and several conjectures have been brought forward,[5] none of them conclusive. A modern proposal is

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[1]Kohler, K., art. "Essenes", The Jewish Encyclopedia. New York: Funk & Wagnalls Co., 1904, Vol. V. pp. 224-232.

[2]loc. cit.

[3]Schürer, op. cit., pp. 193-194.

[4]Ibid., p. 190.

[5]See Schürer, op. cit., p. 191.

made by Dupont-Sommer[1] who suggests that the name looks back to the Aramaic word ḥese meaning 'pious', 'holy'. The Greek ending -enoi or -aioi was attached to this stem, thus producing Essēnoi or Essaioi. He gives the only objection to this, namely, that "ḥese is not attested in Palestinian Aramaic, but only in eastern Aramaic".[2] However, he saves his argument by asserting that this eastern Aramaic word demonstrates that the mystical sect of the Essenes arose in the Jewish colonies of Mesopotamia. That they later moved to Palestine is indicated by the Irano-Babylonian traces in its doctrines.

The question of their history is very difficult to assess in a few pages. Schürer feels that the "origin of the Essenes is as obscure as their name".[3] Josephus' first mention of the Essenes is made in reference to the era of Jonathan Maccabaeus, 150 B.C.,[4] and later he wrote of Judas the Essene in Aristobulus' reign, 104-105 B.C.[5] Schürer continues, "According to this, the origin of the order would have to be placed in the second century before Christ."[6]

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[1]Dupont-Sommer, A., The Dead Sea Scrolls. Oxford: Blackwell, 1952, pp. 86-87.

[2]loc. cit.

[3]Schürer, op. cit., p. 191.

[4]Ant. 13:5:9.

[5]Ant. 13:11:2; War 1:3:5.

[6]Schürer, op. cit., p. 191.

Concerning the nature and origin of the Essenes, Schürer maintains that they are basically a Judaeo-Pharisaic sect.[1] However, their differences from regular Jewry are attributable to Pythagorean influences.[2]

Two very significant archaeological finds in the twentieth century have enlarged this question of the origin and nature of the Essenes. In 1910 Solomon Schechter published the text of some fragments from a genizah in Cairo under the title Fragments of a Zadokite Work.[3] These fragments are currently located in the library at Cambridge. In 1913 R.H. Charles published his introductory notes and English translation.[4] This new find provoked a vast amount of divided opinion, some scholars asserting that the fragments dated from as early as the second century B.C., and other dated them from the eleventh century A.D. These fragments tell of a sect, bound together by a covenant, which had to flee to Damascus; and they subsequently came to be known as the Covenanters of Damascus, or, the Sons of Zadok.

Then in 1947 came the remarkable discoveries of the documents now generally called the Dead Sea Scrolls. These

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[1] Ibid., p. 209.

[2] Ibid., pp. 216-218.

[3] Schechter, S., Fragments of a Zadokite Work; Documents of Jewish Sectaries. Cambridge: 1910, Vol. I.

[4] Charles, R.H., The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913, Vol. II, pp. 785-834.

scrolls were accidentally found by a member of the Ta'amire tribe in some jars located in a cave at Ain Feshka near the north-west end of the Dead Sea.[1] The scrolls consist of two Biblical texts, both of Isaiah, and some non-Biblical texts: the Manual of Discipline, a MS of the lost Book of Lamech, and some texts which came to be known as the War of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness, and the Psalms of Thanksgiving. The Habakkuk Commentary is attached to one of the Isaiah scrolls.

Just as the Zad. Work engendered divided and varied opinion, so has the newer find.[2] Its prime significance for the Ass. Mos. is that it throws much added light on the history of the intertestamental period. Rowley has established the relationship between the Sons of Zadok and the Dead Sea Scrolls, holding that the non-Biblical material from the Ain Feshka cave and the Zad. Work date from the second century B.C. They were produced by a pre-Maccabaean sect which was involved in the conflict of that time. Ultimately, because of their attitude toward the Zadokite priesthood, they were forced to move temporarily to Damascus.

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[1] See Dupont-Sommer, op. cit., pp. 10-17, for a complete account of the discovery.

[2] For an extended bibliography, see Rowley, H.H., The Zadokite Fragments and the Dead Sea Scrolls. Oxford: Blackwell, 1952, pp. 89-125. Also see Rowley, H.H., "The Covenanters of Damascus and the Dead Sea Scrolls", Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, Vol. 35, No. 1, September, 1952.

Dupont-Sommer devotes an entire chapter,[1] and later a book[2] to the correlation between the sect which produced these writings and the Essenes. Rowley says of his work that "The sect was clearly akin to the Essenes. All the points of contact which have been noted by Dupont-Sommer and others may be freely allowed."[3] Kohler[4] states that the ancient Ḥassidim were the stock from which stemmed both the Essenes and the Pharisees, and Dupont-Sommer follows this conjecture, asserting that the Essenes and the Ḥassidim are one and the same party. These are the pious Jews who were so passionately attached to the Law and the Covenant. He gives further details concerning the points of similarity between the Essenes and the sect of the scrolls. He notes parallels of oaths, characteristics of piety, doctrine, and party organization and polity.[5]

Both Rowley[6] and Dupont-Sommer[7] recognize that certain differences exist between the known doctrines of the Essenes and those of the New Covenant. The first of these differences

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[1]Dupont-Sommer, The Dead Sea Scrolls, pp. 85-96.

[2]Dupont-Sommer, A., The Jewish Sect of Qumran.

[3]Rowley, The Zadokite Fragments, pp. 78-79, 82-83.

[4]Cf. Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. V, p. 225.

[5]Dupont-Sommer, The Dead Sea Scrolls, pp. 88-89.

[6]Rowley, The Zadokite Fragments, pp. 79, 82-83.

[7]Dupont-Sommer, The Dead Sea Scrolls, p. 89.

appears on the issue of animal sacrifice: Josephus states that the Essenes refrained from these sacrifices because of their own purification rituals, and they performed their own sacrifices among themselves outside the Temple, whereas the New Covenant community code suggests sacrifices in the Temple.[1] Philo adds to this in saying that the Essenes serve God, 'not by sacrificing animals, but by seeking to order their thought duly in accord with holiness'.[2] This idea resembles the NT idea of spiritual sacrifices. The rejection of animal sacrifice may have come about due to the decrease in number of the sons of Aaron and Zadok, the ordered priestly line, and later priests were elected, and they ceased to sacrifice but to prepare and bless the communal sacred meals. Dupont-Sommer concludes that the Code assumes that the laws of the sect were to be obeyed by all. However, the Sons of Zadok, having abandoned the ritual service in the Temple could sacrifice only outside the Temple.[3]

A second and stronger objection to the identification of the Essenes with the sect of the New Covenant is at the point of attitude to war. The Essenes were pronounced pacifists, and the belligerent sentiment of the Rule of Battle of the Sons of Light hardly accords with Essene pacifism. Dupont-Sommer has propounded a plausible answer to the

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[1] Ant. 18:1:5.

[2] Philo, Quod omn. prob. lib., 75.

[3] Dupont-Sommer, The Dead Sea Scrolls, p. 88. Cf. also appendix to this chapter.

objection. He dates the Rule of Battle prior to 64 ~~A.D.~~ B.C., and at the time the Essenes were known as the Ḥassidim, devoted to the cause of Judas Maccabaeus who was called the 'chief of the Ḥasidim'.[1] At the outset, the war under the Maccabaeans was a religious war, fought to preserve the purity of the religion of Israel, and the Ḥassidim threw themselves into the conflict. But by the time of John Hyrcanus, 135-104 B.C., the war became a political as well as a religious war, and under Aristobulus, the nephew of Judas Maccabaeus, the situation reached its nadir. At this point the disillusioned Ḥassidim, later the Essenes, broke with the heirs of Judas, Jonathan, and Simon, and constituted themselves a pacifistic opposition party. According to Dupont-Sommer's[2] reconstruction of events, the Master of Justice (otherwise known as the Teacher of Righteousness) appeared, recalling to his followers the faith of their fathers, and thus was born the sect of the New Covenant, "the pure and authentic continuation of the former Essenism - of the Essenism which Josephus tells us existed already about the time of Jonathan (160-147 B.C.)".[3] And later he observes that their belligerent profession evolved into a complete pacifism which is easily explicable in the light of the far-reaching changes

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[1] II Macc. 14:6.

[2] Dupont-Sommer, The Dead Sea Scrolls, pp. 92-93.

[3] loc. cit.

in the history of the sect during and after the Maccabaean wars.[1]

The reconstruction of the history of the sect of the New Covenant and their relationship to the Essenes is a complex subject, and scholarly opinion is by no means unanimous on these issues. In spite of the differences noted between the Essenes and the sect of the New Covenant, it is highly probable that they are to be regarded as the same group, but viewed at two or more stages in their history. Rowley has an excellent statement on this question:

> That there are differences between what we know of the Essenes and what we find in the Scrolls may be due to the fact that our testimony about the Essenes comes from a later period than the time from which these works come. The failure of the hopes of the coming of Messiah within forty years of the death of the Teacher of Righteousness may have brought about modifications, and in any case we have no right to assume that a sect must be entirely static in faith and practice. I am not concerned to differentiate our sect from the Essenes, but only to say that if they were Essenes, they are here seen at an earlier stage of their history than we find in Philo or Josephus, and that we have reflected here their interests and activities in relation to the burning issues of the Maccabaean age and of the second century B.C.[2]

All the foregoing discussion has been preliminary to the question: was the author of the Ass. Mos. an Essene or a member of the sect of the New Covenant? Of the older writers, Schmidt-Merx were the first to propose Essene

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[1] Ibid., p. 94.

[2] Rowley, The Zadokite Fragments, pp. 82-83.

authorship.[1] In more recent times M.J. Lagrange has advanced the same idea.[2] Dupont-Sommer repeats this conjecture,[3] but enlarges it. He believes that not only Enoch and Jubilees are quite likely to be of Essene origin, but also the Testament of the XII Patriarchs, the Ass. Mos., and the Psalms of Solomon. "All questions of literary and historical criticism relative to this literature must be reopened afresh."[4]

The points of similarity between the Essenes, the Sect of the New Covenant, and the viewpoint of the brief Ass. Mos. are numerous and striking. However, over half a century ago, long before the discovery of the Zadokite documents in Cairo, and before the Dead Sea Scrolls, R.H. Charles[5] offered some telling objections to Essene authorship which appear to be confirmed in the light of the new evidence, Lagrange and Dupont-Sommer notwithstanding. Charles gives five objections to the idea of Essene authorship:[6]

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[1]Charles, Ass. Mos., p. liii.

[2]Lagrange, M.J., Le Judaisme avant Jesus-Christ. Paris: 1931, pp. 259, 329.

[3]Dupont-Sommer, The Dead Sea Scrolls, pp. 94-95. Cf. also Mowinckel, S., "The Hebrew Equivalent of Taxo in Ass. Mos. IX", SVT, Vol. I, 1953, pp. 94-96.

[4]loc. cit. Cf. also Volz, P., Die Eschatologie der jüdischen Gemeinde. Tübingen: Mohr, 1934, pp. 33-34. Volz appears to doubt the Essene provenance of Ass. Mos.

[5]Charles, op. cit., pp. liii, liv.

[6]loc. cit.

1. the Essene ideal was individualistic, whereas the Ass. Mos. presents a national hope.

2. the Ass. Mos. is surpassingly interested in the Temple, quite in contrast to the Essene view.

3. the Ass. Mos. is concerned with pure and polluted animal sacrifice, but the Essenes were not only disinterested but disapproved of such sacrifice.

4. the Essenes held a differing idea of the nature and location of heaven and hell from that of the Ass. Mos.

5. the Ass. Mos. gives special distinction to the pre-existence of Moses' soul, but the Essenes held to the doctrine of the pre-existence of all souls.

Charles' first objection cannot be accepted without reservation, for the Essenes and the sect of the New Covenant held strong ideas about the binding nature of their community. The Manual of Discipline dwells repeatedly on the "Community of the Covenant",[1] separation of the community from the world and retreat to the desert,[2] "Readmission into the Community after Punishment",[3] and "The Community of the Covenant".[4] "For the adherents of the Covenant, the idea of 'unity' and 'communion' impregnates the whole of life".[5] However, this

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[1] Dupont-Sommer, The Jewish Sect of Qumran, p. 132.

[2] Ibid., p. 134.

[3] loc. cit.

[4] Ibid., p. 132.

[5] Ibid., p. 64.

community spirit was partisan rather than ethnic; the Manual of Discipline speaks of "the Community in Israel".[1]

The fourth and fifth objections adduced by Charles concerning the after-life and the doctrine of pre-existence are made on the basis of one passage in Josephus[2] and a few random passages in the Ass. Mos. Dupont-Sommer in his book, The Jewish Sect of Qumran and the Essenes, reproduces most of the Manual of Discipline, and there is a notable lack of specific detail about either the after-life or pre-existence in these passages. The Fragments of a Zadokite Work have very little to say on these ideas.[3] So it appears safer to withdraw this objection because of the scarcity of really definitive evidence.

But Charles' second and third objections, concerning the Temple, and animal sacrifice, must be regarded much more decisively. Josephus[4] affirms that the Essenes were denied access to the Temple courts. The Zad. Work makes frequent reference to the "Sanctuary",[5] but if Rowley is correct in dating this work in the second century B.C.,[6] sufficient

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[1] Ibid., p. 134.

[2] War 2:8:11.

[3] For teaching on immortality, see 5:6.

[4] Ant. 18:1:5.

[5] Cf. 1:3 passim.

[6] Rowley, The Covenanters of Damascus, p. 153.

time would have passed to allow a considerable change in attitude by the sect of the New Covenant with respect to the Temple. It is significant that in all the passages of the Manual of Discipline cited by Dupont-Sommer,[1] nothing is said of the Temple or Sanctuary. Several times the Manual speaks of "a holy House for Israel",[2] a "House of holiness for Israel",[3] but this quite obviously does not refer to the Temple but to the sense of a family of kindred. The British speak of the "House of Windsor" in the same way. In marked contrast, the Ass. Mos. evinces a real, not an ideal, concern for the Temple and its fortunes. In 2:4 the origin of the Temple is described; in 2:8,9 the author dwells on the abominations wrought in the Temple; see also 5:3,4 and 6:1. The two attacks against the Temple, by Nebuchadnezzar (588-586 B.C.) and Varus (4 B.C.) are detailed in 3:2 and 6:9. In all, the Ass. Mos. makes nine allusions to the Temple, and three to the tabernacle.

As to the Essene view of sacrifice, both Philo and Josephus[4] state that animal sacrifices were rejected by the Essenes. This idea is clearly reaffirmed in the Manual of Discipline (9:3-5):

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[1] Dupont-Sommer, The Jewish Sect of Qumran, p. 69.

[2] Ibid., p. 133.

[3] Ibid., p. 69.

[4] See supra.

> And when these things shall come to pass in Israel, at these destined times, the Institution founded by the Holy Spirit for eternal Truths shall make atonement for the guilty rebellions and sinful infidelities, and (to obtain) (Divine) Grace for the Earth, without the flesh of holocausts or the fat of sacrifices. But the offering of the lips in respect for right shall be as a fragrance of righteousness and the perfection of way shall be as the free-will gift of an acceptable offering.[1]

One difficulty with this view of Essene sacrifice is presented by a passage in the Zad. Work 14:1 ff. which reads:

> Let no man send to the altar a burnt-offering or a grain offering or frankincense or wood by the hand of any man affected with any of the types of uncleanness, thus empowering him to convey uncleanness to the altar; for it is written: 'The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination, but the prayer of the righteous is like an offering of delight'.[2]

This passage indicates that the Zadokites performed animal sacrifice, and thus the accepted view that the Essenes did not follow this practice is contradicted. However, two additional factors must be considered. First, Zad. Work 7:8 hints that the author regarded the Temple (sanctuary) as polluted:

> Also they convey uncleanness to the sanctuary, inasmuch as they do not keep separate according to the Law, but lie with her that sees 'the blood of her flux'.[3]

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[1] Dupont-Sommer, The Jewish Sect of Qumran, p. 135.

[2] Rabin, C., The Zadokite Documents. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954, p. 58.

[3] Ibid., p. 18.

Secondly, according to Reicke,[1] the Zad. Work represents an earlier stage of Essene development than that reflected in Josephus and Philo. It is held that the Zad. Work is inclined to a Pharisaic position (hence some sacrifice) while the Man. Disc. is more Essenic. Both are simply evidences from the same party, but represent different levels of development.[2]

Furthermore, while Zad. Work 14:1 ff. speaks of sacrificing and the altar, it is not absolutely clear that the author has in mind the altar in the Temple, although this would be the normal interpretation. Josephus[3] says the Essenes offered sacrifices by themselves (ἐφ' αὑτῶν), and it is not without the bounds of reason to conjecture that the sacrifice and altar of Zad. Work 14:1 ff. might refer to private Essene ritual rather than Temple ritual. Zad. Work 14:1 ff. does not demand this interpretation, but it does allow it.

On the other hand the Ass. Mos. is deeply concerned with sacrifices of animals, making four references to sacrifice. Of particular interest is the idea in 4:8:

> Duae autem tribus permanebunt in praeposita fide sua tristes et gementes quia non poterint referre

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[1] Reicke, B., Handskrifterna fran Qumran, Uppsala, 1952, pp. 20-21, 56-58.

[2] Cf. supra where Rowley suggests the same thought.

[3] Ant. 18:1:5.

immolationes domino patruum suorum.[1]

Dupont-Sommer, speaking of the Essene doctrine of sacrifice, says, "If this does not involve the absolute condemnation of sacrifices it at least suggests a deeply spiritual attitude which could easily accept their suppression".[2] It is clear that the Essene idea of sacrifice became increasingly divergent from that of the Pharisees, nor was there any desire to return to the practice. But the spirit of Ass. Mos. 4:8 suggests that the inability to offer sacrifices was an aberration, a calamity, and a situation engendering sadness and lament. It is extremely improbable that an Essene would have so described this situation.

Another factor against Essene authorship of the Ass. Mos., one which Charles does not raise, is the difference between the Ass. Mos. and the entire Essene corpus on the point of Messianism. Whether the "Messiah of Aaron and Israel" in the Zad. Work is to be identified with the Teacher of Righteousness is not under discussion here,[3] but it is clear that the Zad. Work does entertain a persistent Messianic expectation. Zad. Work 15:4, 18:8 speak of the appearance of the Messiah of Aaron and Israel. In the modern finds of the Dead Sea, the Man. Disc. repeats this hope for a Messiah

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[1]Charles, Ass. Mos., p. 71.

[2]Dupont-Sommer, The Dead Sea Scrolls, p. 89.

[3]Cf. Dupont-Sommer, Jewish Sect of Qumran, pp. 54-57, where he maintains this view.

of Aaron and Israel; col. 9, line 11 of the Man. Disc. mentions the "Messiahs of Aaron and Israel" in the plural.[1] As in the case of the Zad. Work, the messianic expectation is open to various interpretations, but it is certain that some form of Messianism appears in the Man. Disc. In contrast to this note in the Zad. Work and the Man. Disc. is the position of the Ass. Mos. Except in rare instances,[2] scholars are agreed that there is no trace of Messianism in the Ass. Mos., and it may be said to be not only non-messianic but definitely anti-messianic. This is contrary to what is presently known of Essene messianic hopes.

Lagrange and Dupont-Sommer have suggested the possibility that the Ass. Mos. was of Essene provenance, but neither has offered any substantial evidence to support this contention. On the basis of all the evidence available, and in view of the author's attitude towards the Temple and the rite of animal sacrifice, it is unlikely that he spoke on behalf of the Essenes.

Pfeiffer says of the Pharisees that "we lack all information about their origin",[3] although he suggests that they were the successors to the Hassidim.[4] The first

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[1] Cf. Brownlee, W.H., The Dead Sea Manual of Discipline, Supplementary Studies 10-12 of the Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, 1951, pp. 35 ff.

[2] Cf. chapters 6 and 11.

[3] Pfeiffer, op. cit., p. 54.

[4] Cf. also Moore, Judaism, I, p. 59.

appearance of the Pharisees by name occurs in the time of Jonathan (161-143 B.C.) in a brief mention by Josephus.[1] They appear again as an opposition party against John Hyrcanus (135-104 B.C.).[2] I Macc. 2:29-38 records an insight into the nature of the Hassidim under Antiochus Epiphanes; a body of refugees from the persecutions allowed themselves to be slaughtered with their families in the wilderness in preference to profaning the Sabbath by defending themselves. "Let us all die together in our innocency". That they exerted a wide influence in the lifetime of Jesus and His apostles is attested by repeated reference to them in the New Testament.

As in the case of the Sadducees and Essenes, scholars are divided over the meaning and origin of the name. Schürer[3] states that Pharisee is derived from Perisha, the verb being parash, to separate. Moore follows this interpretation.[4] The next question is to determine what it was the Pharisees were separate from: all uncleanness and illegality, or unclean persons.[5] T.W. Manson supports a new idea that the name Pharisee "originally meant 'Persian';

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[1] Ant. 13:5:9.

[2] Ant. 13:10:5,6.

[3] Schürer, op. cit., pp. 19-22.

[4] Moore, op. cit., p. 60.

[5] Cf. Moore, op. cit., pp. 60-62 for further references.

and it was applied to the innovators in theology. . ."[1]

The theology of the Pharisees is seen best in contrast to that of the Sadducees. This question has been partially treated in the discussion of the Sadduceean viewpoint. Pfeiffer well says that "The most important characteristic of the Pharisees is their punctilious observance of the Law, both written and unwritten".[2] This outstanding trait is dwelt upon many times in the New Testament. Josephus' testimony on this issue is also copious.[3] Fulfillment of every particular of the Torah was the beginning and the end of all their endeavors. In addition to diligent attention to the written Law, profound regard was maintained for the unwritten law, the body of tradition which resulted in the Mishnah and Talmud.[4] Schürer[5] advances three additional characteristics of the Pharisees. First is the immortality of the soul which is closely related to the idea of resurrection from the dead. Those who in life devoted themselves to virtue will pass on to eternal bliss, but the vile to eternal torment.[6] For the righteous the future life is to

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[1]Manson, op. cit., p. 19.

[2]Pfeiffer, op. cit., p. 55.

[3]Cf. War 2:8:14; Ant. 17:2:4; Life 38.

[4]Cf. Sanhedrin 11:3 for the teaching on obedience to the scribal law. Also Ant. 13:10:6; Matt. 15:2; Aboth 3:11.

[5]Schürer, op. cit., pp. 13-17.

[6]Ant. 18:1:3.

be in the glory of the messianic kingdom. Secondly, the Pharisees believed in the existence of angels and spirits. "That in this respect also the Pharisees represented the general standpoint of later Judaism needs no proof."[1] Thirdly, the Pharisees held that Divine Providence is active in everything that takes place, including human action. This was not put in such a way as to compromise human responsibility. Schürer rightly rejects Josephus' easy Hellenized categories[2] and perceives that Pharisaic doctrine on Providence is substantially a continuation of the genuine Old Testament view. This thought is expressed in Aboth 3:15.

For additional significant ideas current in Pharisaism prior to and during Jesus' lifetime, the Psalms of Solomon are instructive. Manson[3] selects four passages which are especially useful: 8:27-30; 11; 17; and 18. The general theme is the religious apostasy within Israel, the punishment of Israel by God by means of the Gentiles, and the eventual restoration of Israel. This restoration is to be accomplished through the Davidic King-Messiah.[4]

In the realm of politics the Pharisees tended to interpret events from a religious viewpoint, and their aim was the carrying out of the Law. If a government did not

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[1]Schürer, op. cit., p. 14.

[2]Ibid., p. 15.

[3]Manson, T.W., op. cit., p. 24.

[4]Cf. Ps. Sol. 17.

interfere with this goal, they could be largely content with that government. One school of thought in Pharisaism rebelled at the idea of a heathen government over them, no matter how benevolent; they held that the rule of a heathen government contravened Israel's election, an abnormality which must be corrected.

The Sadducees were the aristocrats of their day; the Pharisees ranked lower in social class, and were comprised mainly of upper middle class. They gave great emphasis to education, particularly the study of the Torah. Furthermore, the Pharisees were organized into communities with rules, officers, and regularly appointed meetings. In this way they were able to make their influence felt. "Though small in numbers they were a compact and disciplined body capable of united and decisive action."[1] A large distinction was made by the Pharisees between themselves and the "'amme ha-'ares", the common people. These masses were held to be woefully ignorant of doctrine and the minutiae of the Law, and as such were regarded with contempt.[2] This contempt extended to Jesus and the disciples because they failed to perform ablutions before meals, meticulous observance of the Sabbath, and the refinements of the traditional law.[3]

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[1] Manson, T.W., op. cit., p. 22.

[2] Cf. John 7:49.

[3] In spite of this separatist tendency, the Pharisees had the people on their side because they stood for religious

There are many items in the Ass. Mos which are common both to the Essenes and the Pharisees. Some of these are the high regard for Moses as Lawgiver, deep faith in the books of the Law, belief in the omnipotence of God, belief in the future life of glory for the elect and judgment for the Gentiles, and a conviction that the arrival of the Kingdom of Heaven was not to be accompanied by force of arms, but rather by waiting for God to institute this reign. Neither an Essene nor a Pharisee would object to any of these doctrines. But there are two significant ideas in the Ass. Mos. which render highly improbable Essene authorship, namely the attention given to the Temple and to animal sacrifice. These, on the other hand, tend to reflect Pharisaic doctrine. One doctrine which is conspicuously absent from this book, and which one would expect from a Pharisee, is the mention of a Messiah. The Ass. Mos. is completely silent on this issue.[1] Charles holds that the author was a "quietistic Pharisee of a fast-disappearing type", whose aim in this book was to call his party back to the pacifistic

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principles as set forth in the Torah. This consistency resulted in their eventual supremacy in Alexandra's reign and later. Josephus records ample testimony to the sway they held over the masses. (Cf. Ant. 13:10:6; 13:16:2; 17:2:4; 18:1:3, et al.) Moore (op. cit., p. 59) states that the Pharisees were solidly entrenched in a position of wide influence as early as the second century B.C. From that time on they took a leading part in the development of what has come to be known as 'normative Judaism'.

[1]Unless Lattey is correct that Taxo is to be regarded as a symbol for Messiah; see chapter 5.

doctrines of the old Hassidim. The idea of non-resistance is especially strong in the Ass. Mos.; the hero of the book chooses to "die rather than transgress the commands of the Lord of lords, the God of our fathers".[1] The appeal of the author was ignored, he was of a minority opinion within the party, and the secularization of the party continued unabated.

On the basis of all the evidence able to be adduced,[2] the author appears to have been, as Charles observed, a Pharisaic Quietist. This explanation best accommodates all the known facts, and Charles' conclusions, made before the discovery of the Zad. Work or the Dead Sea Scrolls, are not seriously challenged by any solid evidence brought to light from these finds. However, the entire history of the Essenes and the Pharisees is not yet known; new information is being brought forth concerning the Essenes and the Sect of the Covenant. No position can be stated with certitude when the knowledge of this movement is increasing almost weekly. This applies to conclusions about the authorship of the Ass. Mos. They can only be tentative conclusions for at least two reasons: the Ass. Mos. is a short book and it is difficult to extract a clear idea from such scarcity of evidence, and modern investigation into the inter-testamental period

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[1] Ass. Mos. 9:6.

[2] Cf. Marcus' brief discussion on relation between Essenes and apocalyptic Pharisees in JBL, (73) Sept., 1954, pp. 157-161.

may reveal new and radical factors. Charles states his conclusions about the author of the Ass. Mos. rather hastily. One significant item in the Ass. Mos. which points to Essene influence is the concern for the oath and the covenant, whereas if the book represents a strict Pharisaic viewpoint one would expect to find frequent reference instead to the Torah.

There is a danger in trying to force the Ass. Mos. to reflect some well-defined party doctrine. It is known that both the Pharisees and Essenes existed over a span of two or more centuries, and indeed, they may have had a common origin in the ancient Ḥassidim. There existed splinter parties which broke off for various reasons; the Essenes were generally celibate, but there was a schism which resulted in the "marrying Essenes". Therefore it is entirely possible that the Ass. Mos. represents a viewpoint of a splinter group which has greater affinity for older Pharisaic doctrine, but may have been influenced by Essene ideas such as covenant and grace.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER IV

Of indirect but highly relevant significance for the question of the authorship of the Ass. Mos. is the disputed text of Ant. 18:1:5. The discussion turns on the word οὐκ. If it is properly in the text, the Essenes do not offer sacrifice (and so agrees with Philo's statement), but if it is not well attested, the issue of the Essenes and their attitude to sacrifice becomes more complex.

The passage in question reads thus: εἰς δὲ τὸ ἱερὸν ἀναθήματα στέλλοντες θυσίας (οὐκ) ἐπιτελοῦσι διαφορότητι ἁγνειῶν ἃς νομίζοιεν, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο εἰργόμενοι τοῦ κοινοῦ τεμενίσματος ἐφ' αὑτῶν τὰς θυσίας ἐπιτελοῦσι. The matter is discussed fully, with respect to grammar, intrinsic evidences and external evidences, by J. Thomas.[1] His discussion is followed closely herein. Niese omits the negation from his edition of the Greek text of Josephus, and his reading is followed by W. Bauer and M.J. Lagrange.[2] Thomas argues principally against Lagrange's reasons for omitting the negation.

The first clause may mean that the Essenes avoided going into the Temple, but sent offerings instead. This is supported by the later statement that they avoided the common sanctuary. Therefore, it is inferred that they sent offer-

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[1] Thomas, J., Le Mouvement Baptiste en Palestine et Syrie. Louvain: Gembloux, 1935, pp. 12-19.

[2] Ibid., p. 12, n. 1.

ings, for if it was their habit to go themselves to the Temple, they would not have sent offerings. Further, the whole sentence makes no sense unless στέλλοντες and ἐπιτελοῦσι are in opposition, that is, it would be meaningless to say "they send. . .they offer".[1] A third argument for keeping the negation asserts that a participial form when used in preference to a finite verb indicates subordination which is either causal, temporal, or adversative. In this context στέλλοντες cannot be temporal because no time reference is given, and it cannot be causal because another cause is stated. Thus, it must be an adversative participle which requires the negation. Further, the δέ is probably to be read as an adversative in conjunction with the following οὐκ . Thomas' fourth argument states that the antithesis between ἀναθήματα and θυσία is accentuated by the movement of the sentence. On the other hand, if the negation is omitted, the sentence reads: "sending consecrated objects, they offer sacrifices"; this is not meaningful. Also, the anarthrous use of θυσία suggests a negation. If Josephus had meant ordinary Jewish sacrifices he probably would have used the article. Thomas' argument is partially modified by the fact that ἀναθήματα is a generic word and may include θυσία .

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[1]This argument is seconded by Mosbech, viz., that the negation should be retained in order to give coherence to the sentence. Cf. Mosbech, H., Essaeismen. Kobenhavn: 1916, p. 264.

All the foregoing is internal argument against Lagrange's case for dropping the negation. As to external evidences, Lagrange explains the negation was added in the translation from Greek to Latin because the translator failed to understand the phrase without it. (Lagrange assumes, of course, that the original did not have the negation). Thomas answers this hypothesis in three arguments. There are extant only three secondary Greek MSS without the negation; they are not the prime MSS of Josephus' writings. Secondly, the Epitome[1] contains the negation. The Epitome preserves a pre-Latin Greek MS, so its negation could not have come in through a translation. Thirdly, the negation agrees with Philo's testimony.

Having posited external evidences against Lagrange's hypothesis explaining how the negation appeared, Thomas proceeds to show how the negation was dropped, assuming, contrary to Lagrange, that the original did contain the οὐκ. Two hypotheses are advanced. Some translator failed to comprehend Josephus' thought and did not reckon with the possibility that some Jews, in this case the Essenes, would not offer sacrifices in the Temple. A second tentative theory states that some scribe saw οὐκ θυσίας on one line and simply θυσίας on the next, thought it was a contradiction, and for the sake of consistency dropped the negation.

The use of θυσία a second time in this passage

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[1]Cf. Thomas, op. cit., p. 12, n. 1.

presents a problem: how is it to be understood? These second sacrifices are ἐφ' αὑτῶν , suggesting that they are not regular Temple sacrifices but something peculiar to the Essenes. These may be the sacred meals which Josephus describes as cultic ceremonies. Thus when Josephus speaks of θυσία in reference to the Essenes he used the word as the Essenes used it. Lagrange maintains that they were willing to offer sacrifice but were unwilling to risk contamination in the common court. (Lagrange takes κοινός to mean "impure", not "common"). Thomas argues against this position, asserting that there is no point in calling the Temple impure. The text sets up a contradistinction between κοινός and ἐφ' αὑτῶν . Therefore κοινός is to be read as "common". According to Thomas τεμενίσμα is understood to mean the Temple itself, because it is opposed to ἐφ' αὑτῶν , the private place where the Essenes had their own private worship. The τεμενίσμα was common to all Jews. Further, if Josephus had wanted to say that the Essenes thought the τεμενίσμα was impure, he probably would have reported this unusual fact more fully. As it stands, he reports the Essenes as holding the Temple to be merely common, or inferior, i.e., inferior to their own idea of sacrifice.

Lagrange suggests that the Essenes had been assigned a special room in the Temple to execute sacrifices according to their concepts of purity. This was the room, according to Lagrange, of חסאים, Ḥassaim, "the silent". It was a place where timid people deposited their offerings in secret

and the poor helped themselves to these offerings. Thomas rejects this theory on several grounds. This room is spoken of in the Mishnah,[1] but it was used only for offerings, not for sacrifices as Lagrange holds. If the Essenes are designated by Ḥassaim, the reference would be to the ἀναθήματα they sent but not to the θυσία . Secondly, it is scarcely conceivable in the light of what is known of the Temple and the priestly prerogatives that a separate place of sacrifice would have been allowed where the regular priests did not perform the sacrifices. Lagrange admits that the Essenes did not burn sacrifices and did not pour out libations; they only killed animals and ate them. Lastly, concerning ἐφ' αὑτῶν , it is difficult to justify a reference to a special room, especially when it is in opposition to staying out of the κοινὸν τεμενίσμα . That is to say, it is easier to read ἐφ' αὑτῶν as meaning they stayed at home rather than meaning a special room in the Temple.

Lagrange theorizes that the negation may have been inserted to harmonize this passage with Philo.[2] It is known that Philo was prejudiced against external ritual and instead favors spiritual religion. Thomas recognizes this prejudice, but he states that Philo reports Essene doctrine at this point because they supported his view. If they had not supported his view, there would have been no reason

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[1] Chegalim 5:6.

[2] Quod Omn. prob. lib. 75.

for him to misrepresent them in order to enlist their support. Further, Philo himself, even though he inclined toward spiritual religion, was not consistent enough to oppose sacrifice. So even if he attributed to the Essenes, falsely, a spiritual religion like his own, he would not have said that the Essenes rejected animal sacrifices. Thus, in resumé, the only reason for his reporting this fact about the Essenes was that it was true.

In summation, it is reasonable to accept the concerted witnesses of Philo and Josephus: the Essenes abandoned the Temple sacrifice. They attributed to their own ablutions and sacred meals a cultic value. Josephus may be believed when he says they replaced the sacrifices by their baths and meals. Why did they substitute baths and meals for the Temple sacrifice? It may be that they were excluded from the Temple precincts by the priests and found compensation in their own rites. In this case the participle εἰεργόμενοι is understood as a passive: they were excluded. Or perhaps they simply preferred their rites to Temple sacrifice, in which case the participle is read in the middle voice, i.e., they stayed away from the Temple of their own accord. The text of Josephus tends to support the second hypothesis. Thus, they avoided the Temple because of disagreement with the regular priests in the Temple.

CHAPTER V

THE IDENTITY OF TAXO

Concerning the identity of Taxo Charles observes, "We have here the crux of the book. Scholars have to no purpose wasted their ingenuity upon it."[1] The history of critical investigation into the meaning of this mystical name dates from the work of Hilgenfeld and continues to the present. However, before the question of the identity of Taxo can be approached, the issue of chapter displacement must be dealt with first.

It has long been recognized that the historical sequence in the Ass. Mos. is broken at chapter five, and that chapter eight does not fit well into its present context. Of the older writers, Volkmar, Colani, and Philippi understood chapters eight and nine as a history of the rebellion led by Bar Kokhba under Hadrian in 136. Charles rejected this view as incompatible with the date of writing, and he proposed that these chapters describe the persecution of the Jews under Antiochus Epiphanes. Furthermore, this persecution is entirely omitted in between chapters five and six where it would be expected to be recorded. Such an omission is highly improbable. The present order of chapters of the Ass. Mos. is as follows:

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[1]Charles, R.H., The Assumption of Moses. London: Adam and Charles Black, 1897, p. 35.

Chapter 5, A description of the beginnings of persecution under the Seleucids, particularly Antiochus Epiphanes.

Chapter 6, The Hasmonaean and Herodian reigns.

Chapter 7, Indictment of Sadducees contemporary with author.

Chapter 8, Persecution under Antiochus Epiphanes.

Chapter 9, Taxo.

Chapter 10, The eschaton and arrival of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Charles gives three arguments for transferring chapters eight and nine to a place between chapters five and six.[1]

1. In chapter five Jewish history is brought down to the Hellenizing priests of the Seleucid period. Chapter six opens with description of the Maccabaean dynasty. Thus, the desecration of the Temple and persecution of the Jews is passed over in complete silence.

2. Elsewhere in the Ass. Mos. the fortunes of the Temple are closely followed. In view of this fact, the question may be raised why the author should omit any reference to the great desecration under Antiochus.

3. Chapters eight and nine neatly supply the missing historical details of this persecution, and Charles was convinced that chapter nine, which is solely concerned with Taxo, should be transferred along with chapter eight.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 28-30.

Most modern scholars agree with Charles that a transfer is necessary to complete the historical sequence, but several refuse to transfer chapter nine along with eight. Lattey[1] allows transposing chapter eight, and for the same reasons that Charles proposes. The chief difficulty with placing Taxo after the persecution by Antiochus Epiphanes, but before the Hasmonaean dynasty, is that Taxo's sacrificial death is virtually ignored in the march of history. Such a role for such a central figure is incongruous; he is obviously the hero of the book. Burkitt[2] also rejected Charles' removal of chapter nine, thus implying that there is no intrinsic relationship between chapters eight and nine. Torrey[3] agrees with Charles in transferring chapters eight and nine, but Rowley[4] agrees with Lattey and Burkitt, and bases his view on the supposition that Taxo was a contemporary or expected person. Rowley[5] points out that it is not clear why the death of Taxo and his sons should precip-

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[1]Lattey, C., "The Messianic Expectation in 'The Assumption of Moses'", CBQ, January, 1942, pp. 11-13.

[2]Burkitt, Art. "Moses, Assumption of", Hastings Dictionary of the Bible. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1900, Vol. III, p. 449.

[3]Torrey, C.C., The Apocryphal Literature. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1946, pp. 114-116. See also JBL 62 (1943), pp. 1-7, and JBL 64 (1945), pp. 395-397.

[4]Rowley, H.H., The Relevance of Apocalyptic. London: Lutterworth Press, 1952, p. 92. See also JBL 64 (1945), pp. 141-143.

[5]Rowley, Rel. Apoc., p. 138.

itate the kingdom, yet the idea that Taxo should follow the rule of Antiochus and disappear without further trace is improbable. If chapter nine is transposed with chapter eight, no divine intervention follows, and the sacrificial death of Taxo and his sons is brought to nought. He is instead succeeded by a rule of workers of iniquities, and the divine purpose is thwarted. If, however, only chapter eight is moved, Taxo's death is immediately followed by the vindicating wrath of God. The blood of Taxo is avenged and the kingdom is established.

Largely due to the studies on Taxo made by Burkitt, R.H. Charles changed his position on Taxo after his earlier work on the Ass. Mos., published in 1897. In his monumental work of 1913[1] he still maintained that chapters eight and nine were both displaced, but he abandoned his earlier identification of Taxo and accepted Burkitt's solution.

The attempts of the older scholars on the solution of the identity of Taxo are listed and criticized in Charles' earlier work on the Ass. Mos.[2] They will be treated only marginally in this chapter. These older scholars are Hilgenfeld, Volkmar, Colani, Carriere, Hausrath, Wieseler, and Rosenthal.

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[1] Charles, R.H., Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1913, Vol. II, pp. 420-421.

[2] Cf. Charles, Ass. Mos., pp. 35, 36.

All efforts to solve this problem fall into five categories: (1) transliteration, (2) no solution possible, (3) translation, either of the Greek or supposed Semitic word, (4) numerology, which is a specialized branch of gematria, and (5) gematria. They will be considered in this order.

The only attempt by transliteration was made by Wieseler.[1] He posited a Hebrew original תקפן, from the word תקפן, a kind of leather or skin, which Wieseler supposed to be a badger. Thus, Taxo means "a badger-like one", and the historical allusion is to II Macc. 10:6 where a description is given of the pious dwelling in the caves of the earth. Or perhaps it may refer to Judas of Galilee. But Taxo was a pacifist, a trait opposed to the character of Judas who was a man of war. No subsequent scholar has accepted either this result, or the method of transliteration.

The second category holds that no solution is possible; the data are too inconclusive. Deane[2] reviews several theories, and believes that Wieseler's hypothesis has much merit. He rejects all attempts by numbers, and finally says "Perhaps, after all, the simplest solution is to regard the word as a corruption of the text".[3]

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[1] loc. cit.

[2] Deane, W.J., Pseudepigrapha. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1891, pp. 118-120.

[3] loc. cit.

Prof. Rowley gives a carefully argued case for the possibility that Taxo is not able to be linked to any known historical figure.[1] The weaknesses of alternative positions are pointed out, and Rowley concludes that, because of the cryptic name, Taxo was a figure contemporary with the author. In the mind of the writer, Taxo was accorded an exaggerated importance which subsequent history did not justify. Therefore, according to Rowley, Taxo is not identifiable. However, in view of the broad scope of Jewish history which the book portrays, it is unlikely that Taxo was so insignificant a person, and a further effort must be made to disclose his identity and importance.

The third group of attempts is made by translation, usually preceded by emendation of the supposed prior texts. These attempts at translation are made at the level of the assumed Greek and Semitic texts. Schmidt-Merx were the first to try to identify Taxo by reconstructing the Greek.[2] They conjectured that Taxo is derived from the future participle τάξων, from τάσσω, and signified "the one who will order", "the orderer". Schmidt-Merx were followed in this

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[1] Rowley, H.H., Rel. Apoc., pp. 91-95, 134-141. See also "The Figure of 'Taxo' in the Assumption of Moses", JBL 64 (1945), pp. 141-143.

[2] Schmidt, M., and Merx, A., Archiv für wissenschaftliche Erforschung des Alten Testaments. Halle: 1869, pp. 111-136.

theory by Clemen,[1] but the question of the original Semitic words is not answered. Thus, the Greek translator rendered the Semitic, but the Latin translator transliterated the Greek participle, thinking it was a proper name.

Mowinckel[2] builds upon the previous work of Schmidt-Merx and Clemen. But he goes beyond the Greek participle and its meaning and hypothesizes the Hebrew word which lay behind the Greek. This Hebrew word, of which τάξων is a translation, he supposes to be פקדון, from the radical פקד, "to decree". The work of Aalen in relating τάξις and פקד and תפקד in Jewish-Greek religious philosophy is cited in support of his thesis.[3] Mowinckel lists several uses of τάξις in the Septuagint, but not one translates the Hebrew word in question. He then proceeds to try to establish a connection between this "Orderer" and the Teacher of Righteousness of the Covenanters of Damascus; he maintains that the author of the Ass. Mos. spoke for this group. The chief weakness of Mowinckel's theory is that it lacks any objective evidence for a Hebrew original word. He is undoubtedly advancing beyond the work of his predecessors, but using the

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[1] Clemen, C., Art. on Ass. Mos. in Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen des Alten Testaments, E. Kautsch, Ed. Tübingen: 1900, Vol. II, p. 326.

[2] Mowinckel, S., "The Hebrew Equivalent of Taxo in Ass. Mos. IX", SVT, Vol. I, 1953, pp. 88-96.

[3] Ibid., p. 90, n. 2.

present data in the Ass. Mos., solutions by way of translation are likely to be deficient. Furthermore, the "Orderer" delineated by Mowinckel does not fulfill this function of an orderer in the Ass. Mos., and the character of Taxo does not fit Mowinckel's qualifications for the מְתַקֵּן.

Zeitlin takes a completely new departure.[1] He agrees with Mowinckel that the meaning of Taxo is related to the Greek, and not Hebrew. But he regards the name as a transliteration of the Greek τόξον , meaning "bow". The Hebrew word back of bow is קֶשֶׁת, "bow" or "rainbow". Zeitlin makes much of the idea that this word "occupied a conspicuous place in early Jewish theology".[2] The passage in Zech. 6:12 is stated to have been in the mind of the author of the Ass. Mos. when he wrote the opening words of the description of Taxo. However, to make his point, Zeitlin supposes that the author substituted the word קֶשֶׁת for חָסִיד, a purely conjectural notion lacking any support. This is a very weak argument inasmuch as Zech. 6:12 is only vaguely similar to the wording of Ass. Mos. 9:1. Thus, Zeitlin has to emend the Hebrew text and presupposes a non-provable Hebrew word which the author may have substituted. This is very hazardous reasoning and is in want of sound support.

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[1] Zeitlin, S., "The Assumption of Moses and the Revolt of Bar Kokba", JQR, N.S. 38 (1947), pp. 4-9.

[2] Ibid., p. 6.

In his earlier work on the Ass. Mos.[1] Charles examines and rejects as unsatisfactory the prior attempts of German and French scholars to solve the problem of the identity of Taxo. But in the end Charles proposed a solution equally unsatisfactory. He approached the problem by an attempt at reconstruction of the original Hebrew, but his reconstruction involved a radical emendation of the proposed Hebrew spelling of Taxo. Basing his case on a passage in the Samaritan Legends of Moses,[2] he concludes that Taxo means "the zealous one". The proposed Hebrew תקסא is held to be a corruption of הקנא, "the zealous one". Then Charles states that this zeal is directed toward the keeping of the law. However, this emendation is too radical to be acceptable, and his conclusions regarding the zeal of this person are deficient. His theory was not followed by any scholar in this subject, and Charles himself gave it up later.

Thompson ventures to use the same method as that used by Charles, but he arrives at different results, equally as unsatisfactory as Charles'.[3] He accepts the corrected spelling of Taxio by Volkmar, and on this unsure foundation suggests that the original Hebrew spelling was מחסיה. Then from this spelling he conjectures a true spelling of מתתיה,

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[1]Charles, Ass. Mos., pp. 35, 36.

[2]loc. cit.

[3]Thompson, J.E.H., Books Which Influenced our Lord and His Apostles. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1891, pp. 335-336.

of which the former spelling is a corruption. By this devious route he assumes that Taxo in the Latin text really is Mattathias, the father of the Maccabaean revolt. Thompson attempts to reconcile the known facts about Mattathias with the events of Taxo by saying that Taxo's death indicates that the deeds of Mattathias were unworthy, and anyone who should repeat them would retire into a cave and die. This entire theory is so improbable as to need no further refutation.

Carriere made the same approach to the problem as that used by Charles and Thompson, but he differed in that he presupposed an Aramaic, not Hebrew, original.[1] He reconstructed an Aramaic equivalent to Ass. Mos. 9:1, and conjectured that אתכנ, "ordinance", was misunderstood as a proper name by the Greek translator, and so transliterated by the Latin translator.

The method of solution by numerology has been popular with several scholars, the first being Hilgenfeld. This method assumes that a word has numerical significance: aleph is one, beth is two, and so on to tau which is four hundred. Hilgenfeld[2] regarded Taxo as a corrupt form of τξγ΄, which by Greek number system is 363. He discovered that the number of the Messiah (המשיח) is also 363. Therefore, Taxo is the Messiah. Charles rightly rejects this on the grounds

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[1] Cf. Charles, Ass. Mos., p. 35.

[2] loc. cit.

that it is not allowable to change two letters out of four without some external documentary evidence. By this means "it is possible to make what we please out of anything". Volkmar and Colani both employ variations of this same method, but applied their results to the figures in the Bar Kokhba rebellion, but with complete lack of success.[1]

In modern times the chief exponent of solution by numerology is C.C. Torrey of Yale University.[2] His conclusions have been accepted by Pfeiffer[3] in his treatment of the apocryphal literature. Torrey's thesis is that the original language of the book may be established by a careful examination of this word Taxo. Taxo is said to be Mattathias; the Aramaic transliteration of Taxo is תקסו which has a numerical value of 415. The Aramaic spelling of "The Hasmonean", החשמונאי, also equals 415. Therefore, Taxo is a numeral cryptograph of Mattathias. Such a solution postulates an Aramaic original, and Torrey asserts that "there is no possibility of gaining a similar result, or indeed of forming any plausible theory, on the supposition of a Hebrew document".[4]

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[1] loc. cit.

[2] Torrey, C.C., The Apocryphal Literature. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1946, pp. 114-116. See also "'Taxo' in the Assumption of Moses", JBL, 62 (1943), pp. 1-7, and "'Taxo' Once More", JBL, 64 (1945), pp. 395-397.

[3] Pfeiffer, Robert, History of New Testament Times. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1949, p. 80, n. 20.

[4] Torrey, JBL, 62, p. 6.

Prof. Rowley[1] offers some telling objections to Torrey's theory. Mattathias had five sons, not seven as did Taxo. Nor does Taxo lead a revolt, but chooses to die instead, hardly in accord with the attitude and deeds of Mattathias. Torrey does not indicate why a cryptogram should have been used for Mattathias, now long dead. Some further criticism may be directed to Torrey's supposed Aramaic spelling of Taxo. Several other spelling combinations would be equally plausible; this would do away with the number 415. Also, other numbers could be derived from the supposed Greek spelling. Perhaps his weakest point is the strong assertion that the original language may be ascertained to be Aramaic on so little evidence. This ignores all the details of Hebrew idiom, syntax, and corruptions tentatively indicative of a Hebrew original which Charles and others have brought to light.

The last general method used in trying to solve this problem is by gematria, the most promising of any theory used. Gematria is defined as a "cryptograph which gives, instead of the intended word, its numerical value, or a cipher produced by the permutation of letters".[2] Numerological methods properly are classified under gematria, but were considered as a separate phenomenon in this chapter.

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[1] Rowley, JBL, 64, pp. 141-143.

[2] Art. "Gematria", Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. V, pp. 589-592.

The Jews developed this form of cryptographic writing to a very high degree, especially in the time of the Cabala. Using a short four or five-letter word, the number of possible results, by means of variations of gematria, numbers, and anagrams, would be very high.[1]

Hausrath[2] uses this kind of gematria to discover that the Hebrew שילה was permutated to תכמו. He then assumes that the Greek translator misread the mem for a samech, rendering the word as Takmo instead of Taxo. Shiloh was understood to represent the Messiah. Charles is scathing in his rejection of this theory: "This passage has as much to do with the Messiah as with the Emperor Barbarossa".[3] Immediately it is evident that Hausrath's theory is burdened with an emendation, only moderately plausible, in the middle of a conjectured Hebrew spelling. Rosenthal[4] accepts Hausrath's premise, but proposes on the basis of Deut. 18:18 that Taxo (Takmo) has a mystical reference to a second Moses who was to rise again.

The modern scholar who builds upon the hypothesis of Hausrath is C. Lattey of Oxford University.[5] Taxo is seen

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[1] See articles on "Anagram", "Numbers and Numerals" in the Jewish Encyclopedia.

[2] Cf. Charles, Ass. Mos., p. 35.

[3] loc. cit.

[4] Ibid., p. 36.

[5] Lattey, C., op. cit., pp. 9-21.

as an "ab-bag" anagram for Shiloh, the Massoretic spelling of this name in Gen. 49:10. Lattey prefers the older spelling shelloh (שלה) and reads "until he come whose they are". In this gematria each letter is moved forward one, so that shin becomes tau, and so on. Lattey accepts Hausrath's emendation of a mem for a samech, resulting in Takmo. The Shiloh of Gen. 49:10 belongs to the tribe of Judah, whereas Taxo is assigned to the tribe of Levi; Lattey readily admits this difficulty. Of signal importance to Lattey is the vicarious death of Taxo. He assumes his conclusions in the argument by saying that "What is striking in the Assumption is the vicarious death of the Messiah".[1] The sole purpose for Taxo is to suffer under persecution and die, and then the kingdom will come.

There is much in this theory which commends it. The conjectural emendation in the Hebrew to make a gematria for Shiloh is within the bounds of possibility. However, the real objections to this theory arise out of historical and theological considerations. Lattey states that "In general it must be remembered that Jewish ideas about the Messiah were very fluid".[2] However, it is extremely unlikely that Jewish ideas were fluid enough to accommodate the conception of a Messiah who fathered seven sons and died an ignoble death in a cave. Lattey attempts to explain Taxo's behavior

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[1] Ibid., p. 19.

[2] Ibid., p. 18.

by the idea of the Suffering Servant of Isa. 53, yet Taxo's death is radically different from the death of the Servant portrayed in Isa. 53. Taxo's death is by suicide, but the death of the Servant is at the hands of others. A further objection to the identification of Taxo with the Messiah is that no reason is given for the use of a cryptogram for Shiloh, a word admittedly difficult of understanding. Rowley points out[1] that Shiloh was not reckoned as a proper name until after most of the versions of Genesis were written. Another difficulty with Lattey's theory is the disparity in ethical tone between Ass. Mos. chap. 10, a description of the rejoicing of Israel in seeing the Gentiles in Gehenna, and that of Isa. 53. Therefore, even if the linguistic aspects of Lattey's theory were plausible,[2] it is unacceptable on the grounds of its theology and comparative exegesis. Taxo bears only a faint resemblance to any Messianic hope entertained by the Jews of the period in which the Ass. Mos. was composed.

It remained to Prof. F.C. Burkitt to propound by gematria a hypothesis for the identification of Taxo which best accommodates the data, both linguistic and historical.[3] His

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[1] Rowley, Rel. Apoc., p. 136.

[2] See Rowley, Rel. Apoc., p. 136, for a critical discussion of Shiloh.

[3] Burkitt, F.C., Art. "Moses, Assumption of", Hastings Dictionary of the Bible. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1900, Vol. III, p. 449. See also Jewish and Christian Apocalypses, The Schweich Lectures for 1913. London: Oxford University Press, 1914, pp. 37-40.

theory had sufficient merit to cause Charles to give up his ill-founded previous idea and to embrace that of Burkitt as the "right interpretation". Burkitt approaches the problem by assuming a Hebrew spelling of Taxo as תכסון, and further assuming that the final c in Latin was lost at some point in copying. It is possible that the final letter of the name may have been a q in the Latin translation. The following word qui begins with a q: hence Taxoq qui. The final q may have been dropped in the Latin text. Another possibility is that qui is supernumerary, having arisen from a final q in Taxoq. Thus, תכסון became τάξωκ and Taxoc or Taxoq, the last letter having been lost in the MS discovered by Ceriani. Then by gematria, whereby the following letter of the alphabet is substituted for each letter in the assumed Hebrew name, תכסון becomes אלעזר. In the present form of Taxo, if the Hebrew spelling be admitted, the resultant word is Eleaz, the resh having been lost in the Latin text. It is entirely reasonable to assume the loss of a final letter, a phenomenon not infrequent in texts which have undergone numerous copyings. Such emendation is more plausible than the alteration of a letter in the middle of a word.

II Macc. 6:18 ff. records the death of Eleazar, one of the earliest of the Maccabaean martyrs. In his prior work on the Ass. Mos. Charles made an attempt to relate Taxo to this Eleazar historically, but he failed to work out the relation of the names. Burkitt supplies the missing evidence.

II Macc. 7, I Macc. 2, and IV Macc. 1 all record historical references lying back of Ass. Mos. 9, though not in a quid pro quo correspondence.[1] These are to be regarded as historical materials which the author used in drawing the figure of Taxo.

Ass. Mos. 9 relates Taxo's speech to his seven sons wherein he tells them that they must fast for a period of three days and on the fourth day they will enter into a cave in the field and die. Josephus wrote of a man living in the time of Herod who bore some resemblance to Taxo.[2] This passage (Ant. 14:15:5) reads:

> One old man was caught within one of these caves with seven children and a wife, and rather than permit any of these to surrender he killed them all and finally himself, preferring, as he said, death to slavery, and reproaching Herod with the meanness of his family although he was king.

The individual cited by Josephus in this passage was martyred during Herod's cruel persecution of the Zealots.[3] Klausner at one time felt that these passages in Josephus were the clue to Taxo's identity.[4] But the correspondences are too slight to be of value. Hölscher agreed with Burkitt's identification of Taxo with Eleazar, but not the Eleazar of

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[1] Cf. Ant. 12:6:2.

[2] Ant. 14:15:5. Cf. also War 1:16:4.

[3] Cf. Art. "Taxo", Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. XII, p. 71.

[4] Klausner, J., Ha-ra'yon. 1927, p. 204.

the Maccabaean era.[1] Instead he applied this identification to the Eleazar associated with the Bar Kokhba revolution. The date of writing of the Ass. Mos. clearly militates against this choice.

There are objections, both to the linguistic and historical aspects of Burkitt's proposed explanation. Torrey[2] asserts that the transliteration is open to criticism. "If the initial letter had been Hebrew tau, we almost certainly should have had in the Greek θαξω, and in the Latin thaxo".[3] But this objection is not sound in view of the lack of consistency characterizing Greek transliterations of Hebrew names. Occasionally in the Septuagint Hebrew proper names beginning with tau are transliterated with the Greek tau: Num. 26:39 has Ταάχ for תַּחַן; II Ki. 23:10 has Ταφεθ for תֹּפֶת; Gen. 22:24 has Τόχος for תַּחַשׁ.[4] The Septuagint translators followed no systematic rule for transliteration. Therefore, Torrey's idea that tau would be rendered by theta is deficient. If he had stated that usually Greek tau represents Hebrew teth, this would be a correct appraisal, but it would still allow Hebrew tau to be

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[1]Hölscher, Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft, xvii, 1916, pp. 108 ff., and 149 ff.

[2]Torrey, JBL 62 (1943), p. 4.

[3]loc. cit.

[4]Cf. Hatch, E., and Redpath, H.A., A Concordance to the Septuagint. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1895, Vol.III, pp. 150-151.

rendered by Greek tau.

Both Rowley[1] and Torrey[2] have set forth a more serious objection to Burkitt's thesis. This is the relative insignificance in Hebrew history of this Eleazar. Rowley asks why the Maccabaean Eleazar should have been given this "exaggerated significance so long after his time". And why use a cryptogram for an insignificant martyr who had been dead for many years?

II Macc. 6:18 ff. and 7 relate in detail the death of Eleazar, the aged patriarch who preferred death at the hands of the Hellenizers to eating swine's flesh. After a grand speech stating why he will not submit to this foul practice, which was contrary to the laws of his fathers, he gave himself over to the instrument of torture to be put to death. In the light of the prominence given to this man and his noble character in II Macc. it is doubtful if he was as insignificant as Rowley and Torrey believe. Indeed, he may have assumed rather great significance in the mind of the author of the Ass. Mos. The author was searching for a figure in Jewish history who would best exemplify those traits of character most in accordance with his own quietistic and non-resisting philosophy of religious conduct. What other figure, known to the Jews of his own day, so admirably

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[1]Rowley, Rel. Apoc., pp. 134-135; JBL 64 (1945), pp. 141-143.

[2]Torrey, JBL 62 (1943), pp. 3-4.

suits the author's purpose? Furthermore, the record of Eleazar's death is immediately followed in II Macc. by an even lengthier account of the martyrdom of the seven brothers and their mother. So the total space in II Macc. devoted to Eleazar and the seven brothers and their mother is considerable, and these events cannot fairly be called unimportant. For the purposes of the author of the Ass. Mos. they were highly significant as the historical milieu out of which the story of Taxo was evolved.

The second serious objection of Rowley and Torrey concerns the use of a cryptogram for Taxo. This question too will disappear if one takes the standpoint of the writer. Chapter nine is a prophecy, yet Taxo represents a past figure, Eleazar, who does not correspond exactly with Taxo. So the author could not identify him openly, which would have been contrary to the practice of apocalyptic on other grounds. Apparently, then, the author of the Ass. Mos. sought to make Taxo serve a dual purpose. In setting an example of godly quietism for his secularizing party contemporaries, he reached back into familiar history and pointed to Eleazar whose conduct he greatly admires. The second purpose of Taxo was to suggest that a future ideal figure whose character and conduct would be like that of Eleazar and the seven martyred sons would, if not actually precipitate the eschaton, at least immediately precede this great event. When another like Eleazar and the seven martyred brothers (all ideally bound up in Taxo) arises, then God will

bring the end of history. Thus, the author used a cryptogram to suggest both the historical reference to Eleazar, and a future ideally quietistic martyr much like Eleazar; and the cryptogram successfully accomplishes this end, including both aspects in such a way that they are not mutually exclusive.

This proposed explanation of Taxo does no violence to the linguistic aspect of the problem; it comprehends the historical significance of Eleazar; and it leaves room for the use of a cryptogram which is entirely in keeping with apocalyptic practice.

In closing this discussion of Taxo a brief review is given of some of the problems and possibilities in the Hebrew spelling of Taxo. The possible letters which may be used are ז, ת, ח, כ, ק, ס, ש, א, and ו. Out of these letters the following possible Hebrew spellings occur, together with their numerical equivalents, all of which would probably, by phonetic equivalents, result in the spelling of τάξω in the Greek and Taxo in Latin:

1. זחסא (78)	9. זקסא (170)	17. תכסא (481)
2. זחשא (318)	10. זקשא (410)	18. תכשא (721)
3. זחסו (83)	11. זקסו (175)	19. תכסו (486)
4. זחשו (323)	12. זקשו (415)	20. תכשו (726)
5. זכסא (90)	13. תחסא (469)	21. תקסא (561)
6. זכשא (330)	14. תחשא (709)	22. תקשא (801)
7. זכסו (95)	15. תחסו (474)	23. תקסו (566)
8. זכשו (335)	16. תחשו (714)	24. תקשו (806)

Thus there are at least 24 ways that this Latin word may be

expressed in Hebrew. Then out of these 24 basic spellings several forward-shifting or reverse-shifting gematrias may be employed, including the numeral equivalents. So it is apparent that the possibilities are quite numerous.

From this array of spellings Burkitt has selected a supposed Hebrew spelling (no. 19) and constructed a theory which has the obvious merit of carrying the fewest difficulties. In the light of the data available this is the best possible explanation for the identity of Taxo.

PART II

CHAPTER VI

THE PRESENT LATIN TEXT

In chapter 1 the historical aspects of the MS of the Ass. Mos. were considered. In the present chapter a brief review will be given of the linguistic quality of the Latin text, and it should be stated that the work of R.H. Charles[1] is heavily depended upon, not only in this chapter, but also in the next two.

The Latin is manifestly crude and barbarous, and is much like the old Itala. Its dittographs, obvious intended corrections of an earlier text, and numerous solecisms mark it as the product of an unlearned and clumsy copyist. Charles has listed the palaeographical errors[2] in complete detail, noting that some arose because of misreading, some from incorrectly hearing the text, and some from the type of pronunciation current in Italy in the fifth century. Items of interest concerning orthography include the prefixing of the aspirate, as heremo (3:11), the insertion of n in Monses (the reverse of assimilation) (3:11; 11:2 passim), the insertion of t in Istrahel (3:8; 10:8), the omission of one of two doubled letters in tribum (3:6; 4:9), profetis (4:11),

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[1]Charles, R.H., The Assumption of Moses. London: Adam and Charles Black, 1897, pp. xxviii ff.

[2]Ibid., pp. xxx-xxxii.

and the doubling of the vowel in patruum (4:8). Another solecism is the use of irregular futures with the letters bo: stabilibis (2:2), tradibit (8:2), tremebit (10:4).

The Latin text of the Ass. Mos. has several irregular syntactical features. The greatest divergence from classical usage is in the use of prepositions. In 10:3 cum takes the accusative; in 1:9, 5:1 de takes the accusative (perhaps reflecting διά with the genitive); in 3:10 de takes the dative or ablative (ἐπί with dative case); in takes the ablative where normal usage would call for the accusative in 9:6 and 10:5, and it takes the accusative in 6:5 where it should be the ablative; in 1:10, 2:2, et al. secus is used as a preposition with the accusative;[1] and in 1:10 sine takes the accusative. These examples only illustrate the more pronounced solecisms and peculiarities of the Latin text.

Charles, in discussing the critical evaluation of the Latin text, points out that it is a slavishly literal translation from the Greek. Many of these Graecisms and the Hebraisms which underlie the Greek translation persist in the Latin translation. In spite of the large number of inaccuracies in the text, because of its literal translation

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[1]Burkitt notes that the use of secus for κατά, "according to", is of significance for the date of translation, and parallels of this use are found in the writings of Clement of Rome. Cf. Art. "Moses, Assumption of", Dictionary of the Bible, Ed. J. Hastings. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1900, Vol. III, p. 449.

it is a valuable text. The more obvious defects are omissions due to homoioteleuton (2:9) and other causes (10:10); interpolations (1:3-5); dittographies (5:6); transpositions such as ut et for et ut, testatus et for et testans; (cf. 10:5 for a complex case of transposition). The most prominent example of transposition is the case of the supposed dislocation of chapters eight and nine. Two other types of defects are to be noted; corruptions, many of which are cleared up by reconstructing the Greek or Hebrew which lie back of the Latin; and errors arising through simple carelessness by the copyist (3:11,13). Sometimes, in the case of the use of colonia, the copyist or translator is rendering the thought instead of the word.

CHAPTER VII

EVIDENCES OF GREEK TRANSLATION

One of the prime evidences of the existence of a Greek translation of the Ass. Mos. is the number of preserved citations from the Ass. Mos. in Greek. Chapter one lists some of these: Clement of Alexandria cited the Ass. Mos. in his Stromateis (6:15); Gelasius of Cyzicum quotes the Ass. Mos. in its Greek translation, and Severus of Antioch, Apollinarius and Ecumenius wrote in Greek, alluding to the Ass. Mos.[1]

The internal evidence in the Ass. Mos. for a Greek translation from which the Latin was made is very strong. First and most obvious evidences are the transliterated Greek words in the Latin text. Thus chedrio (1:17) is from κεδ-εύω; clibsis (3:7) is θλῖψις; heremus (3:11) stands for ἔρημος; and acrobistia (8:3) represents ἀκροβυστία. Ceriani's text reads acrosisam, but the context clearly demands Charles' emended acrobistia.

Secondly, Greek idioms persist in the Latin as well as word forms. In 1:7 scene looks to τῇ σκηνῇ (see also 1:9), in 5:3 quia is ὅτι. Greek word order is preserved in two instances: 3:13 and 4:2.

Thirdly, a reconstruction of the Greek which the Latin presupposes reveals the true sense, often obscured by the Latin translator. Several times nam is from δέ and thus

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[1]Cf. Charles, R.H., The Assumption of Moses. London: Adam and Charles Black, 1897, pp. 106-110.

cannot mean "for", but rather "and" or "but"; cf. 1:3; 2:4,5; 8:2,4 etc. In 7:7 ab oriente usque ad occidentam should reflect time, "from sunrise to sunset", not space. The Greek, ἀφ' ἡλίου ἀνατέλλοντος μέχρι δυομένου is ambiguous. See 11:3,12,18; 12:7 for similar instances.

Fourth and last, meaningless words which do not accord with the context in Latin may be resolved by a retranslation into Greek. In 2:7 ὄρον appears to be corrupt for ὅρκον, and was rendered finem by the Latin translator. Therefore Charles emends finem to jusjurandum. At the same verse adcedent was rendered for προσβήσονται, corrupt for παραβήσονται, "will transgress". In 5:6 in campo suggests ἐν ἀγρῷ, but the better sense is in argento from ἐν ἀργύρῳ. See also 3:4.

CHAPTER VIII

EVIDENCES OF A SEMITIC ORIGINAL

No scholar of first rank since Hilgenfeld has maintained that the Ass. Mos. was originally written in Greek. His argument against a Semitic original was based on the absence of the pronoun in the accusative after Deus creavit in 12:4, and the absence of the pronominal suffix after magistri in 5:5. Charles[1] points out the deficiencies in Hilgenfeld's main argument.

Although it is now widely recognized that the evidences for a Semitic original are overwhelming, scholarly opinion is divided, one group claiming Hebrew, and the other Aramaic, as the original language of the Ass. Mos. Charles[2] reviews the positions of the older scholars: Schmidt-Merx, Colani, Hausrath, and Carriere asserted an Aramaic original, whereas Rosenthal (and Charles) held to the Hebrew. Thompson[3] discusses the issue at some length and finally concludes that the Ass. Mos. was written in Aramaic:

> a view that is confirmed by the occurrence of the word horas itself, there being no equivalent to this in Hebrew, while there is in Aramaic, Dan. 4:19.

Deane holds that it cannot be determined if it was written

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[1]Charles, R.H., The Assumption of Moses. London: Adam and Charles Black, 1897, p. xxxix.

[2]loc. cit.

[3]Thompson, J.E.H., Books Which Influenced Our Lord and His Apostles. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1891, p. 446.

in Hebrew.[1] Burkitt says the original is Semitic, but does not decide for either Hebrew or Aramaic.[2] Schürer stated only a probable Semitic original, but did not commit himself to either Hebrew or Aramaic.

More recent scholars have demonstrated that the question still is not resolved. Those who hold to an Aramaic original are Pfeiffer[3] and C.C. Torrey;[4] Pfeiffer advances no evidences for an Aramaic original, but merely lists the Ass. Mos. among Palestinian Aramaic writings along with IV Ezra and the Apoc. of Abraham. He apparently follows the view of Torrey,[5] namely, that the original language of the book is to be determined from the name Taxo, which, when transliterated into Aramaic, is seen to be a gematria for Mattathias. This is a patently impossible argument.

A modern protagonist for a Hebrew original is Zeitlin,[6]

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[1]Deane, W.J., Pseudepigrapha. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1891, p. 104.

[2]Burkitt, F.C., Jewish and Christian Apocalypses. The Schweich Lectures for 1913. London: Oxford University Press, 1914, p. 38.

[3]Pfeiffer, R., History of New Testament Times. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1949, p. 61.

[4]Torrey, C.C., The Apocryphal Literature. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1946, p. 116. See also JBL 62 (1943), pp. 1-7.

[5]Pfeiffer, op. cit., p. 80, n. 20.

[6]Zeitlin, S., "The Assumption of Moses and the Revolt of Bar Kokba", JQR, Vol. 38, No. 1, July, 1947, p. 2.

but he apparently embraces *in toto* Charles' arguments, and adds nothing to his argument. Fairweather also maintains a Hebrew original, but offers no evidence in support.[1] Lattey appears to agree with Charles, but only indirectly.[2] Mowinckel casts his lot with Charles for a Hebrew original, and builds his theory for the identity of Taxo on the basis of an underlying Hebrew word.[3] Rowley wrote an extensive survey of the *Ass. Mos.* and especially of Taxo, but he does not mention the issue of the original language.[4]

A survey of the positions taken by scholars since Charles reveals that those who hold to an Aramaic original do so in the face of Charles' researches, and they have adduced no substantial support for an Aramaic original. On the other hand, the scholars who decide for a Hebrew original simply assume Charles' arguments *en bloc*. So the question of the Semitic original, whether Hebrew or Aramaic, must make Charles' labors the point of departure, for he has produced the only serious attempt to investigate this question. One must either agree or disagree with Charles, and if one

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[1]Fairweather, W., *The Background of the Gospels*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1926 (4th Ed.), p. 239.

[2]Lattey, C., "The Messianic Expectation in 'The Assumption of Moses'", *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, January, 1942, p. 19.

[3]Mowinckel, S., "The Hebrew Equivalent of Taxo in Ass. Mos. ix", *Supplements to Vetus Testamentum*, Vol. I, 1953, pp. 89-90.

[4]Rowley, H.H., *The Relevance of Apocalyptic*. London: Lutterworth Press, 1952, pp. 91-95, 134-141.

disagrees, his arguments must be more convincing than the evidence Charles has set forth.

In terms of sheer historical probability, the Ass. Mos. is likely to have been written in Hebrew, for this was the language generally reserved for holy writings. The popular speech among first century A.D. Palestinian Jews was Aramaic, but it tended to be a colloquial rather than literary language in this period. Such a statement can only be a broad generalization subject to many exceptions. The entire field of Aramaic studies is enlarging, and modern study is expected to shed much light on this area of linguistics. However, it is probable on historical grounds that the Ass. Mos., a quasi-holy writing, was written in Hebrew. But this at best is only a secondary consideration. Of prime significance is the linguistic character of the Latin text.

Charles' work on this question is brilliant, and no scholar since his time has done so thorough an investigation. However, in his enthusiasm for demonstrating the evidences for a Hebrew original he appears to have displayed a certitude which goes beyond the reasonable inferences from the data. He set forth five criteria for a Hebrew original:[1]

1. Hebrew idiomatic phrases survive in the text.
2. Hebrew syntactical idioms probably persist.
3. In some instances it is necessary to translate the

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[1]Charles, op. cit., p. xli-xlv.

presupposed Hebrew, not the Latin text.

4. Often it is solely through retranslation that the source of corruptions in the text may be understood and ultimately removed.

5. Retranslation into Hebrew reveals word-plays.

On the basis of numerous examples advanced, Charles asserts that:

> On the above grounds, I hold, therefore, that it is no longer possible to doubt the Semitic original of this book. It may reasonably also be concluded from what precedes, that that original was in Hebrew and not in Aramaic.[1]

A review will be given of some of the more compelling examples brought forward by Charles.[2] They are considered in the order of the criteria he established.

Under the criterion of surviving Hebraistic idiomatic phrases, Charles cites, among others, Ass. Mos. 2:7, 5:2 and 6:1. 2:7 contains the ~~strange~~ Latin word circumibo which is translated "I will protect". Tertullian used circumeo, "go around",[3] but it is infrequently used. Charles conjectures that Deut. 32:10 and Jer. 31:22 provide the correct Hebrew word אסובבנ. The LXX renders this by κυκλόω in Deut. 32:10. Charles states that this word "cannot be explained

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[1] loc. cit.

[2] These examples were selected by Prof. Walter Baumgartner as the more valid and plausible reconstructions made by Charles. This information was gained from personal consultation with Prof. Baumgartner in Basel in November, 1954.

[3] Souter, A., A Glossary of Later Latin to 600 A.D. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1949, p. 52.

from the Aramaic".[1] However, in the Targum of Psa. 32:10 חסד יסובבנו is translated by טיבותא יחזרינה. The Aramaic root חזר means "to surround" in the Aphel stem and thus could be rendered by circumeo, because the context allows the sense of "protect". Thus Charles' argument permits of exception. Secondly, Ass. Mos. 6:1 contains two significant Latin constructions which suggest a Hebrew original: in sacerdotes summi dei vocabuntur and facient facientes. The first phrase Charles emends to in summos sacerdotes Dei vocabuntur on the basis of the LXX reading of I Chron. 23:14, which looks back to וּבְנֵי מֹשֶׁה הָאֱלֹהִים נִקְרְאוּ עַל שֵׁבֶט. The Niphal here is used in the reflexive sense (cf. Isa.48:2), "to call himself". Therefore, the Latin text here presupposes a reflexive use of קרא in the Niphal. Charles implies that this construction cannot be paralleled in Aramaic. This example is clearly a Semitism, but it is not certain that it is Hebrew; it may be an Aramaism appearing in Chronicles. The second and more transparent Hebraism in this verse is facient facientes, which represents the frequent construction עשה יעשו. Charles expresses astonishment, and rightly, that Schmidt-Merx, Volkmar, Hilgenfeld, and Fritzsche attempt to explain away this clear Hebraistic usage.[2] Charles' argument is not significantly weakened by the fact that the

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[1]Charles, op. cit., p. xlii.

[2]Ibid., p. 75.

Targum at times uses a construction which resembles this emphatic use of the infinitive absolute in Hebrew, e.g., the Targum of Deut. 15:4 reads thus: יברכינך ברכא; 15:5 is קבלא תקביל, and 15:8 מפתח תפתח. The Babylonian origin of the Targum and the tendency toward Hebraicising are two factors which separate the Targum from the main stream of Palestinian Aramaic. Furthermore, Dalman holds that:

> The Hebrew mode of emphasizing the finite verb by adding its infinitive or cognate substantive, though still frequent in I Maccabees, is in the Palestinian Aramaic of the Jews - apart from the Targums - quite unknown.[1]

These facts tend to support Charles' claim that this construction is a Hebraism, because the exceptions in the Targum clearly reflect Hebrew influence.[2]

Charles cites passages in Ass. Mos. 4:9 and 5:5 as "impossible" Latin texts as they stand, and their corruptions may be removed only by retranslation into Hebrew. 4:9 reads devenient apud natos in tempore tribum; Charles emends this to read multiplicantur apud nationes in tempore captivitatis suae. This is a radical emendation, but the present

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[1]Dalman, G., The Words of Jesus. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1902, p. 34.

[2]Cf. Stevenson, W.B., Grammar of Palestinian Jewish Aramaic. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924, p. 9. He points out that the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan were "somewhat modified by Hebrew originals". See also Waxman, M., A History of Jewish Literature. New York: Bloch Publishing Company, 1930, Vol. I, p. 114. "In time, changes in style were introduced to suit the Eastern Aramaic dialect current in Babylon..."

text is meaningless. Charles first substitutes nationes for natos. Secondly, devenient was probably attempted as a parallelism with the prior verb crescent. This corruption arises out of misreading ירבו, multiplicantur, as ירדו, devenient. Errors of this same nature may be found often in translations of Hebrew writings. Thirdly, tribum should be read tribuum. Therefore, in tempore tribuum is ultimately derived from בעת שבטים. Finally, Charles conjectures that שבטים was misunderstood for שביתם. This reconstruction then agrees with Josephus' Ant. 11:5:2 and with IV Ezra 13:36-48. Thus, the corruption apparently arose in the translation from the original to the Greek, and the Latin translator perpetuated the error.

Ass. Mos. 5:5 reads: qui enim magistri sunt doctores eorum. Charles agrees with Hilgenfeld's reconstruction into Greek: the context does not suggest any mention of rabbis or teachers in this passage. Rather the context calls for the contrast between the "some" (5:4) and the "many", not "some" and "teachers". The Hebrew is reconstructed as follows: והרבים מוריהם. It is well known that הרבים may mean "many" or "the Rabbis". The context calls for the former.

> For whereas in ver. 4b it is said that some who are not true priests will defile the altar of God, it is here said that many will administer justice corruptly, the "some" and the "many" belonging alike to the Sadducean party, to the Sanhedrin, the chief council of the nation.[1]

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[1]Charles, op. cit., pp. 72-73.

Charles then explains מוריהם, doctores eorum, as a marginal epexegetical gloss inserted by some Hebrew copyist. Thus the copyist initiated the error by misunderstanding הרבים.

Ass. Mos. 12:7 contains "an inadmissible text": temperantius misericordiae ipsius. . . contegerunt mihi. This corruption is removed by retranslation into the following phrase: חסדו הואיל וקרא אותי. Temperantius is said to be a translation of ἐπιεικῶς which in turn is rendered from הואיל; cf. I Sam. 12:22 and II Ki. 6:3. Two alternatives then arise: (1) alter וקרא into הקרה, or (2) insert the preposition ב or ס before חסדו. The tone of the entire book accords with the second alternative; "He was pleased to call me in his compassion (or mercy)". Charles states positively of every reconstruction cited, except that in 5:5, that they would be "impossible on the assumption of an Aramaic original".[1]

One further very plausible removal of a textual corruption by Charles is found in Ass. Mos. 1:10; cf. also 10:15. A problem arises over the presence of the word promitte which does not accord well with the context of Moses' charge to Joshua immediately prior to his death. Charles rightly supposes that the author of the Ass. Mos. borrowed his phraseology from the parallel passages in the OT: Deut. 31: 6,7,23; Joshua 1:6,7,9,18. The phrase in the Ass. Mos. is

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[1] Ibid., pp. xlii-xlv.

recast into Hebrew, and the corruption is seen to have arisen over the verb נתן. The verb in the parallel OT passages is יצא, and thus it was misread by the Greek translator as נתן. Furthermore, he understood נתן in the rarer sense of "to promise"; cf. I Chron. 27:23 for such a usage.

Two phrases occur in the Ass. Mos. which have definite parallels in Aramaic, Hebrew, and Greek writings. The first is found in 1:13,14,17 and 12:4. It is ab initio orbis terrarum, and the Greek equivalent is preserved by Gelasius of Cyzicum in his Comment. Act. Syn. Nic. 2:18: πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου. This exact phrase occurs in John 17:24, Eph. 1:4 and I Pet. 1:20; it occurs with other prepositions (ἀπό, εἰς) in eight other NT passages. McNeile states in reference to the words ἀπὸ κτλ in Matt. 25:34 that it is "apparently unknown outside the NT".[1] Then he goes on to cite Ass. Mos. 1:14 and IV Ezra 6:1 (initio terreni orbis) as tentative parallels. Bernard notes that the Ass. Mos. contains the same phrase found in John 17:24.[2] In reference to these words in Eph. 1:4 Strack-Billerbeck cite Midrashic sources which have similar ideas.[3] Further Rabbinic and

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[1]McNeile, A.H., The Gospel According to St. Matthew. London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1915, in loc.

[2]Bernard, J.H., A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. John. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, (Reprint) 1949, Vol. II, p. 580.

[3]Strack, H., and Billerbeck, P., Kommentar zum Neuen Testament. München: Beck, 1926, Vol. 3, pp. 579-580.

Aramaic sources for this phrase outside the NT may be found in Buxtorf's Lexicon. Concerning the word בריה he cites מבריתן שׁל עולם - a creatione Mundi. In connection with his discussion of בריאה and בריתא he states:

> Creatura חדא לבריתא Ezech. 1:6. ובריא לקבל אפהא אזלא. Et creatura quaeq.; coram facie sua ambulabat, ibid. V. 12: גובי והא ברית. Et ecce creatura locustarum, Amos 7:1. Item Creatio: ושׁרויי ברית עלמא. Et principium creationis Mundi, Psalm 50:2. Plur. ארבע ברין. Quatuor creaturae, Ezech. 1:5 ודמות בריתא. Et similitudo creaturarum, v. 13.[1]

Thus it is clear that this phrase in the Ass. Mos. has significant Rabbinic parallels, and ושׁרויי ברית עלמא is certainly Aramaic.[2]

Another phrase in the Ass. Mos. which suggests an Aramaic background is found in 1:11, "the Lord of the world", Dominus orbis terrarum. Charles says nothing about this phrase. It has a somewhat unusual combination of words, not found in the Scriptures in this form. However, an Aramaic equivalent has to be seen in the words מרי עלמא. Cantineau notes this in his lexicon as "le maître de l'univers".[3]

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[1]Buxtorf, J., Lexicon Chaldaicum, Talmudicum, et Rabbinicum. Basileae: 1640, col. 350.

[2]For further discussion of בריאה with Rabbinic citations see Jastrow, M., A Dictionary of the Targumim. New York: Pardes Publishing House, Inc., 1950, Vol. I, p. 193.

[3]Cantineau, J., Le Nabatéen. Paris: Leroux, 1932, Vol. II, p. 118.

Lidzbarski cites לקדמא עלמא טבא ורחמנא as "Dem Herrn des Alls, dem Guten und Barmherzigen", a phrase from the inscriptions of Palmyra.[1] Ginzberg cites this phrase "Lord of the world" from the rabbinic accounts of Moses' death as contained in DR. 11.9, Petirat Mosheh 125 and 2 Petirat Mosheh 379.[2]

These Aramaic equivalents to phrases in the Ass. Mos. are not advanced as an attempt to demonstrate that the original language was Aramaic, but rather to show that Aramaic parallels do exist and were current among the writings of Judaism. Whether the original language of the Ass. Mos. was Hebrew or Aramaic, it is reasonable to assume that current Aramaisms could have found their way into the text.

It might be argued that the best case for a Hebrew original rests on the frequent use of OT phrases in the text. A rapid reading of the Ass. Mos. reveals many familiar OT phrases: tabernacle of the testimony, 1:7; oath and the covenant, passim; house of the Lord, 2:9; whoring after strange gods, 5:3; etc. But this cannot be even a supporting argument because many of these phrases had passed over into Aramaic from the Hebrew.

The difficulty which attends an investigation into the

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[1]Lidzbarski, M., Ephemeris für semitische Epigraphik. Giessen: 1908, Vol. II, p. 298. Cf. also Février, La Religion des Palmyréniens. Paris: 1931, p. 111.

[2]Ginzberg, L., The Legends of the Jews. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1938, Vol. III, p. 450, and Vol. VI, p. 152.

original language is profound. It is clear that the Greek translator of the Ass. Mos. frequently misunderstood and thus improperly rendered the text, e.g., 10:10. Only fragments of this Greek translation are extant. But the greatest difficulty is that this Greek translation was rendered into Latin by an individual who was apparently clumsy in his use of Latin, and deficient in his knowledge of Greek. Repeatedly he obscured the sense of the text and often produced a meaningless phrase. If the Greek and Latin translators had been skilled linguists the problem of determining the original language, though simplified, would have been difficult. But the attempt to demonstrate conclusively, as Charles feels he has done, that the Ass. Mos. was written in Hebrew is to fail to recognize the hazards involved. To argue a case on the grounds of word order of the Latin is manifestly impossible, for the word order could have been altered considerably through two translations. As to alleged Hebrew idiomatic phrases in the text even Charles admits that "it is true that the majority of these could be paralleled by Aramaic expressions..."[1]

In view of these facts it appears that Charles is too certain of his position when he declares that the original was in Hebrew. While admitting that his restorations are very clever, and in some instances quite compelling, it is evident that the data for certainty are insufficient. Where

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[1]Charles, op. cit., p. xlii.

there is such paucity of sound evidence, statements about the original must be made cautiously and only tentatively. It is far more judicious to say that the original language of the Ass. Mos. was probably Hebrew, but final conclusions must await further evidence, such as the finding of a substantial portion of the text in Greek, or an older and more reliable Latin text.

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PART III

CHAPTER IX

APOCALYPTIC AND THE ASSUMPTION OF MOSES

From the time of the discovery of the MS of the Ass. Mos. by Ceriani in 1861, it has been recognized as apocalyptic literature. In recent times much attention has been given to the nature of apocalyptic and wherein it differs from the earlier phenomenon of prophecy. It is acknowledged that apocalyptic is "the child of prophecy", but it developed certain distinctive characteristics which made apocalyptic a separate Jewish literary genre.

Rowley[1] gives a careful survey of this problem; the relation between prophecy and apocalyptic is examined in detail. Of course R.H. Charles has a summary of his life-long study of apocalyptic.[2] H. Wheeler Robinson[3] also has devoted attention to the distinctive elements of apocalyptic, as has F.C. Burkitt.[4] German scholarship in this area has been

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[1]Rowley, H.H., The Relevance of Apocalyptic. London: Lutterworth Press, 1952, pp. 23 ff.

[2]Charles, R.H., Art. "Apocalyptic Literature", Dictionary of the Bible, ed. Jas. Hastings. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1900, Vol. I, pp. 109-110.

[3]Robinson, W., Art. "Apocalyptic", Companion to the Bible, ed. T.W. Manson. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1939, pp. 307 ff.

[4]Burkitt, F.C., Jewish and Christian Apocalypses, Schweich Lectures for 1913. London: Oxford University Press, 1914, pp. 1-16.

very active, one of the earliest works being Hilgenfeld's Die jüdische Apokalyptik, published in 1857. Among the numerous German writings since Hilgenfeld on apocalyptic are Bousset's Die jüdische Apokalyptik, 1903; E. Lohmeyer's Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart, 1927 (edited by Gunkel and Zscharnack, second edition); and Volz' Die Eschatologie der jüdische Gemeinde im Neuetestamentlich Zeitalter, 1934.

Although there is difference of opinion among scholars over some details of the nature of apocalyptic, differences arising as to whether a characteristic is accident or essence, the significant elements of apocalyptic are generally recognized. Burkitt holds that the root idea of apocalyptic is "the notion that the Kingdom of God was an external state of things which was just upon the point of being manifested . ."[1] Whether this is the seed from which apocalyptic sprang, it is essential to its character. The idea of the imminence of the advent is clearly expressed in Ass. Mos. 10:12,13: "For from my death - (my) assumption - until His advent there will be CCL times. And this is their course which they will pursue till they are consummated". CCL "times" is 1750 years, reckoning one "time" as seven years. According to Ass. Mos. 1:2 Moses' death was 2500 years after the creation of the world; therefore, the advent was to be in the year 4250.[2]

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[1]Burkitt, op. cit., p. 12.

[2]Cf. also Sanhedrin 97b.

Thus it may be seen that the author of the Ass. Mos., writing soon after the death of Herod the Great, expected the advent to be near. This aspect of apocalyptic is an integral part of the Ass. Mos.

Apocalyptic writings are marked by a deep pessimism which saw no future kingdom or Golden Age arising out of the present. Instead they looked for a radically new and different order for the elect of God. These writers sought not ultimate reformation but cosmic annihilation and then a new kingdom. This attitude is in contrast with that of many of the prophets of Israel who called for reformation and revival here and now, who wanted wayward Israel to "get right with God". This is not to assert that the apocalyptists were indifferent to and did not seek spiritual revival in Israel, but their interest was primarily on the future. Revival could at best be only a prelude to the advent which was the ultimate objective. The Ass. Mos. reflects this aspect of apocalyptic, particularly in chapter ten. All the preceding "prophecy" describes the deterioration of world affairs, and Israel is downtrodden by heathen conquerors. Then the martyrdom of Taxo occurs, setting a noble example of the godly [i.e.] spirit of non-resistance. Immediately the kingdom arrives. The situation does not increasingly improve; quite the contrary - it reaches its nadir in Taxo's death, and "then His kingdom will appear throughout all His creation" (Ass. Mos. 10:1). The writer of the Ass. Mos. is not prophesying evolution, but revolution to be followed by a de novo

Golden Age.

The prophets and apocalyptists were both concerned with the eschaton, but they held philosophies about it which were basically at variance with each other. The prophets generally are understood to have looked for a fairer world which was to have evolved out of the present. Isa. 9 suggests a day when the nature of wild animals is changed so that the wolf and the lamb, leopard and the kid, dwell in harmony. And Isa. 2 speaks of a time when men should live as brothers and whose worship of Jahweh is the essence of their communion. In contradistinction with this view is the apocalyptists' idea, closely related to their pessimism, that the future would break into the present.

> The prophets spoke from the standpoint of the present, while from the time of the issue of the Book of Daniel it becomes a characteristic of the apocalyptists that they threw themselves back into the past, under an assumed name, and put in the guise of prophecy things that were past in their own day as the prelude to their unfolding of the grand denouement of history which they believed to be imminent.[1]

In accordance with this characteristic the putative writer is Moses and the scene is set at his death in the Ass. Mos. World history is viewed from Moses' standpoint, and it is to be brought to an end by cosmic disturbances. The future very clearly erupts into the present after the death of Taxo. In the Ass. Mos. the time-span embraces the greater part of the then-known (30 A.D.) history of the world, and

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[1]Rowley, op. cit., p. 36.

this history is expected to be ended abruptly.

Apocalyptists are deep in the debt of their precursors, the prophets, in their concept of the eschaton and the ensuing order for the righteous. Much difference exists between the prophets and apocalyptists, and between apocalyptists themselves, concerning the nature of this phenomenon. But it was the prophets who first spoke of the end times and made it a significant aspect of Israel's religion. Isa. 24-27 portrays the day when Jahweh will visit the earth in judgment and Israel shall dwell with Him in Zion. Joel's prophecy speaks in graphic terms of the "Day of Jahweh", and his cosmic descriptions are taken by Peter and applied to Pentecost (Acts 2:17-21). Zech. 9-14 describes the troubles of Jerusalem and the final restoration of the Davidic line. This eschatological strain runs through much of the prophetic writings and constitutes the source of much inspiration of of apocalyptic material. The eschaton in apocalyptic is viewed from several aspects, but the dominant theme is the end of the world, accompanied by tremendous cosmic and celestial upheavals, judgment of the nations, and finally the glorification of the righteous. It is the launching of the Golden Age. There is no uniformity among the apocalyptists with respect to the role of the Messiah in this program, nor are they agreed upon whether the kingdom will reside in Heaven or upon a renovated earth, or who will be the subjects in this kingdom. The Messianic expectation was more pronounced in later apocalypses.

The Ass. Mos. stands firmly in this traditional attitude about the imminent eschaton. Chapter ten describes in graphic detail the nature and sequence of the end, and its resultant benefits to Israel. Satan, angels, earth, sun, moon, stars, sea, and the wrath of Jahweh all play a part in the final drama. The breadth of vision of the book is universe-wide. In a later chapter of this paper the question of the absence of a Messiah will be taken up.

A distinguishing feature common to all apocalyptic is its view of history. Whereas the prophets were generally concerned with a single event or time, the apocalyptists took into view the entire range of history known to them. Jubilees is concerned with history from the creation of the world to the time of the writer. Furthermore, apocalyptists were fond of dividing history into separate ages which possessed a distinctive character. Burkitt[1] points out that Daniel has "a philosophy of universal History", and "there is something cosmopolitan about his outlook on the world". The author of the Ass. Mos. followed this pattern, for he surveyed all of world history, mainly Jewish history from Moses to his own time. A review of Jewish history is given, alledgedly spoken by Moses to Joshua, and it covers principally the entry into Canaan, the rupture of the kingdom, the rule of Nebuchadnezzar and the role of Daniel, the Herodian era, the persecution of the Jews by Antiochus Epiphanes, and

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[1]Burkitt, op. cit., p. 7.

the eschaton followed by the theocracy, or Golden Age. The author of the Ass. Mos. frequently introduces a new stage in his history by the word tunc, "then".

In connection with this philosophy of history the apocalypses generally present a pacifism coupled with a profound conviction of the ruling hand of God in history. God was seen as not only knowing the course history was to take, but He also determined that course. The corollary of this conviction was that any human attempt to interfere in the divine program was improper, hence the strong quietistic strain in much apocalyptic. It would be difficult to find an apocalypse which reflects this characteristic more fully than does the Ass. Mos. The governing hand of God is implicit in the whole book, and the hero, Taxo, dies rather than transgress the law of his fathers. The keynote is non-resistance. This pacifism of Taxo resembles the pacifism of the saints in the Revelation.

Another significant trait of the apocalyptic literature is the esoteric element. "Its message is represented as something to be kept from general knowledge, and to be handed down in secret".[1] Daniel, Enoch, Slavonic Enoch, and IV Ezra contain this secretive note. The Ass. Mos. displays this idea in Moses' words to Joshua (1:16,17):

> And receive thou this writing that thou mayst know how to preserve the books which I shall deliver to

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[1]Rowley, op. cit., p. 14.

> thee. And thou shalt set these in order and anoint them with oil of cedar and put them away in earthen vessels in the place which He made from the beginning of the creation of the world.

Closely associated with this esoteric feature was the well-known pseudonymity of apocalyptic. To the popular mind this is one of its outstanding characteristics. Both the pseudonymous and esoteric traits must be understood in the light of the historic milieu from which apocalyptic arises. It is very unlikely that these falsely-ascribed names deluded anyone, and it is also improbable that they were so designed. Rather, it must be recognized that apocalyptic was the religious literary expression of a subject people living in desperate times. Early apocalyptic is associated with political and religious movements which sought to secure Israel's freedom to the end that she might practice the religion of Jahweh without restraint. Because of the political implications of direct attack upon the conquerors, pseudonymity was employed. Also many mystical literary devices were developed to hide the identity of a pilloried ruler; only the few saw through these devices to the true identity of the person. Thus the use of the name of some long-dead worthy would assure a measure of authority to a book, and at the same time successfully conceal the identity of the true author.

The Ass. Mos. fits neatly into this pattern of apocalyptic practice. It purports to be not only a description of Moses' death, but this description comes from Moses himself.

The author could hardly have selected a more respected and revered name by which he might attract a reader. The esoteric nature of the Ass. Mos. is further confirmed in the person of Taxo. Presumably the identity of this mysterious figure would have been readily known by the inner circle of the faithful, but quite meaningless to the Roman rulers, and to subsequent generations of readers.

Two well established characteristics of apocalyptic are its prose style interpolated with sections of poetic material, and its reverence for the law. The Ass. Mos. is chiefly prose in form and nature, except for chapter ten which is unquestionably an example of Semitic poetic form. While the Ass. Mos. says little about the Torah, it uses such terms as oath, covenant, and commandment throughout the book.

This examination of the several characteristics of apocalyptic literature and the evidence adduced from the Ass. Mos. is not made to refute any argument, for it is universally recognized that this book is apocalyptic. This is done in order to demonstrate that the Ass. Mos. fits squarely in this tradition in every particular by which it may be examined. In this light, the Ass. Mos. is seen as embodying these traditions in a book which was addressed to the multitudes to whom Jesus spoke. It affords a keen insight into the contemporary, though not universal, theological and historical Sitz im Leben which Jesus addressed. Perhaps the chief significance of the Ass. Mos. for our day is drawn from this fact.

Charles proposes that the ultimate objective of apocalyptic is continuous with one of the main problems of theology, namely, an attempt to solve the vexing "Problem of Evil". In terms of her ethnic and historical context, Israel's apocalyptists were trying to reconcile the righteousness of God with the cruel fact of their suffering under the heels of pagan rulers.

> The righteousness of God postulated the temporal prosperity of the righteous, and this postulate was accepted and enforced by the law. But the expectations of material well-being which had thus been authenticated and fostered, had in the centuries immediately preceding been falsified, and thus a grave contradiction had emerged between the old prophetic ideals and the actual experience of the nation, between the promises of God and the bondage and persecution they had daily to endure at the hands of their pagan oppressors.[1]

Apocalyptic tried to present the final and conclusive vindication of the righteousness of God both in the nation and in the individual. In this way it produced a Semitic philosophy of history and of religion. In this sense the problem of apocalyptic is coterminous with that of theology in general.

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[1]Charles, op. cit., (HDB) I, p. 110. On this same question see Fairweather, W., The Background of the Gospels. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1926, pp. 245-246.

CHAPTER X

PRIMARY THEOLOGICAL ELEMENTS

It is to be recognized at the outset that neither the Ass. Mos. nor any of the apocalypses were written with a view to producing a system of theology. These writings were not consciously theological, but were rather intended to provide encouragement, and fortify the hope of Jews living under oppression, whether Greek or Roman. They outlined, admittedly with many variations, the larger hope of Israel for a Golden Age wherein the righteous, usually conceived to be Israel, would dwell in peace forever.

The modern mind finds some difficulty in reading these apocalypses in that they evince a remarkable disregard for the Law of Contradiction, consistency, and coherence, whether in argument or in their presentation of future history. Ordinary rules of historical chronology cannot be applied to apocalyptic materials. It is obvious that these writers were not metaphysically inclined. Writing of the modern approach to apocalyptic, Burkitt observes:[1]

> It is all done by the most scientific methods, and the chief danger now is that too strict a standard of consistency and rationality may be exacted from writers to whom consistency and rationality were quite secondary considerations. Consistency and rationality belong to the past, and to the course of events of this world: the Apocalyptist's part is to stimulate

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[1] Burkitt, F.C., Jewish and Christian Apocalypses, The Schweich Lectures for 1913. London: Oxford University Press, 1914, p. 48.

> his comrades by sketches of the future. And a future in which everything is consistent and in which, nevertheless, universal justice is done is a Vision which the heart of man has not conceived.

Because these writers were not given to systematic presentation it is sometimes difficult to separate the various strands of theological elements. Indeed, in many instances a discussion of one idea immediately involves another closely related idea, e.g., the ideas of transcendence and determinism or the eschaton and the kingdom. This constitutes a limitation in the study of these strands of thought, and it is acknowledged that this separation of ideas is simply an analytical device.

I. The Doctrine of God

A. Transcendence.

Perhaps the highest expression among the prophets of the transcendence of Yahweh is to be found in Isa. 6. There the prophet describes the Lord as "high and lifted up; and his train filled the Temple"; He is worshipped by the seraphim, and His presence overcomes the Prophet. This same concept of the transcendence of God is continued through the rest of the prophets of Israel; Dan. 7:9 ff. expresses the thought in apocalyptic terms. The apocalyptists stood firmly in this tradition; Frost speaks of "an increasing emphasis on the transcendence of God. . .in the minds of the Jewish people in the first two centuries before Christ".[1]

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[1]Frost, S.B., Old Testament Apocalyptic. London: The Epworth Press, 1952, p. 227.

The Ass. Mos. expresses this attitude throughout in such phrases as "the Lord of the world" (1:11), "God of Heaven" (2:4), "Lord of lords, the God of our fathers" (9:6), "the Heavenly One" (10:3), "the Most High. . .the Eternal God" (10:7). One of the longer passages imbued with this spirit is the prayer of Daniel in 4:2 ff.:

> Lord of all, King on the lofty throne, who rulest the world, and didst will that this people should be thine elect people, then (indeed) Thou didst will that Thou shouldst be called their God. . . Regard and have compassion upon them, O Lord of Heaven.

Where transcendence is not explicit in the Ass. Mos., it is implicit in the spirit of the entire book, and its current runs most strongly where the author expresses his own feelings as in chap. 10. The concept of immanence is wholly absent from the book.

Early Hebrews accepted a transcendental view of God as a natural corollary of Gen. 1:1 ff., and they speculated little about the relationship of God and His creation. By the time of the apocalyptists, however, this transcendentalism was corrupted into a view which removed God almost from accessibility to men. I Enoch 14:17 ff. is representative of this attitude. Another manifestation was the care taken to avoid referring to God in terms of humanity. Thus I Macc. 3:50, 4:10, et al., speak of "heaven" as God; men prayed "to heaven". It must not be thought that either the author of the Ass. Mos. or the apocalyptic school as a whole had a deistic view of God. Their transcendentalism did not

assume this form. Deism, the belief in a personal God who exerts no influence on men or on the world He created, runs counter to the mass of evidence in all apocalyptic of a God who not only created the world, but also foresaw and predetermined the course of its history.

One of the significant outgrowths of the apocalyptists' transcendental view of God was the development of the ideas of mediating beings between man and God. Orders of angels and spirits were felt to be necessary to bridge the gap, and in many writings these orders became a veritable angelic hierarchy.

> But in view of the altered conception of God prevalent in the post-exilic period, and under the stimulus of Persian influences, the Jews came to think of Him as governing the world through hosts of angelic intermediaries, divided into different ranks and classes, with special functions assigned to each.[1]

This question as it applies to the Ass. Mos. will be considered in greater detail in the next chapter.

Probably the outstanding factor arising out of this concept of transcendentalism is the development among the apocalyptists of a dualistic view of God and Satan. While the apocalyptists had not accepted a basic philosophy of dualism, nonetheless the concept manifested itself in several forms, this being the principal form. Burkitt, quoting IV Ezra 7:50, "The Most High hath not made one world, but two",

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[1]Fairweather, W., The Background of the Gospels. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1926, p. 281.

goes so far as to say that "This is the essential thing, the central doctrine that animates all the Apocalypses".[1]

Most modern scholars[2] hold that dualism colored Hebraic thinking at the time of the Exile, for it was there that Persian and Hebrew religion came into sustained contact. Dualism provided a tentative, and to some apocalyptists a certain, answer to the much-vexed problem of evil. The older Hebrew solution is represented by Isaiah 45:6,7 where Yahweh is given the responsibility for ultimate evil as well as ultimate good. But the apocalyptists sought to relieve this responsibility by asserting that ultimate evil can be traced to the fallen angels of Gen. 6:1-8. Thus, Hebrew monotheism was preserved intact, and an explanation was found to answer the question of the origin of evil.

While acknowledging that Persian dualism affected subsequent Hebrew religious thought, it is important to recognize that these apocalyptists did not hold to an ultimate or permanent dualism. Such a permanent dualism would conceive of Yahweh and Satan drawn up on opposite sides and balanced in moral equilibrium forever. The dualism of the apocalypses is only a modified or contingent dualism; Yahweh has the ultimate authority and sovereignty over Satan and his forces.

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[1]Burkitt, op. cit., p. 32.

[2]Cf. e.g., Rowley, H.H., The Relevance of Apocalyptic. London: Lutterworth Press, 1952, pp. 40,66: Fairweather, op. cit., p. 259 ff.; Frost, op. cit., p. 234; Volz, P., Die Eschatologie der jüdischen Gemeinde. Tübingen: Mohr, 1934, p. 87.

To hold that the moral power of Satan is as great as that of Yahweh would issue in spiritual paralysis. One of the persistent ideas of the apocalyptists was that immediately before the end of the world the forces of evil would exert an extraordinary effort against the people of God. Referring to Shelley's Prometheus Unbound wherein the tyrant's defeat is foredoomed, Frost concludes: "when we speak of the 'modified dualism' of the apocalyptists we must give full value to the adjective".[1]

The authors of the NT employed this concept of a modified dualism, for Satan and his hosts are accorded the status of personalities not only by Jesus but also by the Apostles. Traditional Christian theology has not stumbled over this idea because ultimately it does not invalidate Biblical monotheism; the apocalyptists and later NT writers saw a final unity. Prof. Rowley has finely drawn the issue:

> When we say that God is good, we mean that in Him is no evil; when we say that He is light, we mean that in Him is no darkness. In that sense the idea of evil is logically involved in the affirmation of the goodness of God. But this is far other than affirming that evil is co-eternal with the goodness of God, or that from all eternity to all eternity it must be embodied in a personal being standing over against God. In that sense neither the apocalyptists nor Christian theologians have been dualists.[2]

The Ass. Mos. stands apart from this general apocalyptic-dualistic tradition. Satan is mentioned only once in

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[1]Frost, op. cit., p. 241.

[2]Rowley, op. cit., p. 159. Cf. Albright, W.F., From the Stone Age to Christianity. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1946, p. 280 ff.

the entire book: "And then Satan will be no more, and sorrow will depart with him" (10:1). Sin is mentioned in numerous passages in the book, but it is never attributed to Satan or to his angels or cohorts. In 2:5-9 the author dwells at some length on the iniquitous deeds of the Ten Tribes; 3:5 says "ye have sinned"; 5:1,3,5; 7:7,9; 12:6,11 all contain references to sin, usually in a personal sense. The passage dealing with the deeds of Antiochus Epiphanes' persecutions suggests that God caused Antiochus to initiate them:

> . . .He will stir up against them the King of the kings of the earth and one that ruleth with great power, who will crucify those who confess to their circumcision.[1]

The regular dualistic view of the apocalyptists is well expressed in I Enoch 6 which explains Gen. 6 in dualistic terms; Test. Jos. 20:2, Test. Sim. 5:3, Test. Naph. 2:6; Apoc. Bar. (II Bar.) 70:1 ff. all follow in the same tradition. However, the fifth book of I Enoch (91-108) represents a new departure on the question of the responsibility for sin. In 98:4 the burden of the sin of man rests upon man himself. "This is for apocalypticism a most revolutionary idea. . ."[2]

The author of the Ass. Mos. appears to stand between these two extremes of dualism and personal responsibility, but he inclines more to the view of I Enoch 98:4 which asserts that "man of himself has created it (sin)". This

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[1] Ass. Mos. 8:1.

[2] Frost, op. cit., p. 215.

question was perhaps not so live an issue with him, and his thoughts are not explicit at this point. His standpoint suggests an affinity for the older Hassidic teaching and perhaps even for the OT prophets.

B. Determinism.

One of the radical elements in all apocalyptic thought is the profound conviction that the history of the world, from beginning to cataclysmic end, with respect to its physical changes and the rise and fall of individuals and nations, was in every particular predetermined by God before time began. IV Ezra 4:36,37 expresses well this idea:

> For He hath weighed the age in the balance,
> And by number hath He numbered the seasons;
> Neither will He move nor stir things,
> Till the measure appointed be filled.[1]

It is difficult to separate this conviction of the absolute rule of God over history from the apocalyptists' transcendental view of God; these are merely two facets of their general view of God. The modern idea of a finite God, which is another attempted solution to the problem of evil, would have been totally unacceptable to the Apocalyptists. They believed in a God who had a purpose in creation, and who also had the forces at His command to consummate that purpose.

This concept of determinism did not spring de novo with the rise of apocalyptic. It was probably after the Baby-

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[1]Quoted from Oesterley, W.O.E., The Books of the Apocrypha. New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1914, p. 98.

lonian exile and the contact with the Chaldeans that determinism, especially beginning with the first book of Enoch, came to the fore. However, Rowley points out the deep roots of this concept which go back to the prophets.[1] Isa. 10:5 ff. suggests belief in the divine initiative and control over history; in this instance the Assyrians were used at Yahweh's behest to punish Israel which had been disobedient. The prophets sometimes spoke of the nations as puppets in the hands of God. So it is clear that the apocalyptists owed a greater debt at this point to the prophets than to the Chaldeans, though the latter may have stimulated a tendency which they inherited from the prophets.

It has been said that the apocalyptists were "poor theologians". This judgment is made in reference to the moral problem of man's freedom of the will and the sovereignty which God exercises over history. The problem is not settled with unanimous satisfaction even today. The apocalyptists did not invent this problem; they inherited it from the OT. But the problem appears not to have disturbed either the prophets nor the apocalyptists.

> They were able to hold within the unity of a single idea the certainty that men and nations were themselves responsible for their acts, and the certainty that without their knowing it they were serving divine purposes.[2]

When Israel was punished by Assyria and Babylon, Isaiah saw

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[1]Rowley, op. cit., p. 152.

[2]loc. cit.

them as the instruments of God's choosing which and were used to chasten Israel. But this does not ~~alleviate~~ lessen the responsibility for sin either of Israel or Assyria and Babylon. As God's act the punishment was due, but as man's act it involved the Assyrians in condemnation, for in persecuting Israel they were seeking their own ends. This same concept undergirds the thinking of the apocalyptists, and no inconsistency or injustice was felt to be ~~implicated~~ involved. Where the apocalyptists differed to a degree from the prophets was in the matter of the eschaton. The apocalyptists saw an intensifying of both the forces of God and those of Satan (or Beliar or Mastema, etc.) immediately prior to and in the eschaton. They saw the final end as the singular and unique act of Yahweh. In fine, the apocalyptists placed sovereignty and free will cheek by jowl. But they were usually implicitly careful to assert divine initiative in such a way as to avoid compromising human responsibility. Rabbi Akiba saw the problem in its philosophical dimension, but he did not offer a solution: "All is foreseen and free will is given".[1]

The very nature of apocalypse is integrally related with a deterministic, though not fatalistic, view of God and history. From this fact the apocalyptists derived their mission, for they not only held that the future is determined by the sovereign act of God, but that they were the possessors of

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[1] Pirke Aboth 3:19. Cf. also Josephus' Ant. 18:1:3.

insights into this future, especially the cluster of events of the end time. Apocalyptic is freighted with the idea of history divided into time-spans, covering time from the Creation into eternity. Enoch's well-known Apocalypse of Weeks is a prime example of this phenomenon. Thus it is clear that their name of "Apocalypses" is derived from these insights; apocalypsis signifies a "revealing" or a "disclosure", and these writers alone are capable of seeing into the future and of describing it. This esoteric nature of apocalypse often meant that only a select few were admitted into the inner circle of readers; the common man was often if not usually excluded.

Because the apocalyptists thought they knew the future and the time-spans into which history was divided, they frequently yielded to the temptation to fix the date of the eschaton. Although many tried, their efforts were best characterized by a notable want of unanimity. In NT times Jesus stated that even He Himself did not know the hour,[1] but this statement has not deterred some from attempting even yet to fix the date. Frost has well said that "the 'when' of the eschaton is not a matter of arithmetic or of dates but of the mercy and judgment of God".[2]

One corollary of belief in determinism which appears in a few apocalypses is pacifism or quietism. Pacifism is

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[1] Mark 13:32.

[2] Frost, op. cit., p. 255.

merely a symptom of an underlying conviction that men and history are under the complete control of God, and that human effort either to hinder or abet the Kingdom of God is not only useless, it is sinful. This is a reasonable result of a high determinism. Daniel 2:32 speaks of a "stone cut without hands" that smashed the image, and eventually the stone became a mountain that covered the whole earth. Taxo, the hero of the Ass. Mos., with his sons resolves not to strike back at the oppressors, but urges them to fast with him for three days, and on the fourth day they will die in a cave in a field. Taxo concludes his remarks with the conviction that "our blood will be avenged before the Lord".[1] This is a reflection of the thought of Deut. 32:35.[2]

Excessive dependence upon determinism leads to a view of history that approaches fatalism. Such an attitude tends to relieve human beings of any responsibility for action.[3] While the apocalyptists generally avoided descending to fatalism, still their committal to determinism is one of its greatest weaknesses. Its inability to correlate human free-will and God's sovereignty may be a contributory factor in its decline as a literary genre.

A belief in determinism is woven into the very fabric of

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[1] Ass. Mos. 9:7.

[2] Cf. also Rom. 12:19.

[3] See the parody on a hymn in Rowley, op. cit., p. 170, n. 1.

the Ass. Mos. In the opening words of this apocalypse the author commits himself to a deterministic view of history in the reckoning of date of Moses' death. The attempt to date the advent of God is made in 10:12,13:

> For from my death - (my) assumption - until His advent there will be CCL times. And this is their course which they will pursue till they are consummated.[1]

Furthermore, the Ass. Mos. unequivocally teaches not only foreknowledge but also predetermination. In the dialogue between Moses and Joshua at the end of the book Moses says (12:4):

> All the nations which are in the earth God hath created as He hath us, He hath foreseen (praevidit) them and us from the beginning of the creation of the earth unto the end of the age, and nothing has been neglected by Him even to the last thing, but all things He hath foreseen and caused (promovit) all to come forth.

Thus the author of the Ass. Mos. shows himself standing squarely in the apocalyptic tradition with respect to determinism. In another passage (2:1) the very word "determine" is used in Charles' English translation:

> (And now) they will go by means of thee into the land which He determined (decrevit) and promised to give to their fathers.

Many more passages in the Ass. Mos. may be brought forth to show how this idea permeates the book. God "designed and devised" Moses to be the mediator of His covenant, 1:14; God will "put it in the mind of a king" (Cyrus) to have compassion on Israel, 4:6; "He will stir up against them the

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[1]See also Ass. Mos. 7:1 ff., and Volz, op. cit., p. 144.

King of the kings of the earth (Antiochus Epiphanes), 8:1; all of chapter ten, describing the eschaton, is a witness to determinism and the unilateral action of God in setting up the Kingdom. The closing words of the book as it breaks off at 12:13 are in this same vein:

> For God will go forth who has foreseen (praevidit) all things forever, and His covenant has been established and the oath which. . .

In discussing the apocalyptists' attitude towards the will, Hughes writes of the Ass. Mos. that "The emphasis in this book is on the divine foreknowledge and predetermination rather than on the freedom of the will".[1] However, the charge of fatalism cannot be laid to the Ass. Mos., for there is ample evidence that the author saw responsibility playing a role in history alongside sovereignty. Joshua is encouraged to obedience (1:10; 10:15); Taxo urges his sons to "die rather than transgress the commands of the Lord of lords" (9:6); the necessity of prayer is implied throughout chap. 11; and 12:10,11 plainly states this responsibility of the will:

> Those, therefore who do and fulfill the commandments of God will increase and be prospered: But those who sin and set at nought the commandments will be without the blessings before mentioned, and they will be punished with many torments by the nations.

In this passage the OT concept of rewards and punishments is repeated. Thus the author of the Ass. Mos. places himself

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[1]Hughes, M., The Ethics of Jewish Apocryphal Literature. London: Robert Culley, 1909, p. 234.

in this deterministic tradition but yet allowing for human responsibility. However, the apocalyptists did not have the last word on this issue, for it remained to the writers of the NT to take it up again but with greater spiritual insight.

C. Oath and Covenant.

This pair of words, which occurs frequently in the Ass. Mos., probably looks back to שׁבע, to swear an oath, and ברית, covenant. In the OT an oath could be sworn between two or more men, as in Gen. 26:28 ff., 50:25, or it could be sworn between Yahweh and man, as in Gen. 22:15 ff. The swearing of an oath was a solemn affair and not to be entered into in a light or casuistic spirit, for it invoked the name of God Himself. However when Yahweh swore an oath He could swear by nothing higher than His own Name and Person. The principal guarantee in an oath sworn between God and man was the firm conviction of faithfulness on God's part.

> When God is represented as taking an oath to the fathers, it is meant that those with whom He entered into relation gained the assurance that His fidelity to them and to His promise was unalterable.[1]

Because of Pharisaical manipulation of oaths, their use had come into complete disrepute, and Jesus forbade their use altogether.[2]

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[1]Ferries, G., art. "Oaths" in Hastings Dictionary of the Bible, ed. Jas. Hastings. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1900, Vol. III, p. 576.

[2]Matt. 23:16.

As in the case of oaths, in the OT a covenant may be made (often in the OT the verb כָּרַת, to cut) between two or more men, or between God and man. In the OT the initiative for the establishment of a covenant between God and man is taken by the former, and as such were unilateral. A covenant creates a new relationship not previously existing, and it also implies a jus, a law, which sets up a code for appeal. The three great covenants of the OT are: (1) the Abrahamic (Gen. 22:17 ff. and 26:3 ff.) which gave Israel the perpetual and inalienable right to the possession of Canaan; (2) the Levitical (Exod. 32:29) which initiated the perpetual priesthood in the family of Levi; (3) the Davidic (II Sam. 7; see also Psa. 89:3 where this covenant is referred to as an "oath") which sets up the perpetual monarchy in the house of David.

When establishing a covenant with man God swore an oath to affirm to man that God was binding Himself to this covenant. All that is meant by "The Name" was invoked to guarantee the pact, for Yahweh could swear by nothing higher.[1] Closely allied with the OT concept of covenant is the word chesed (חֶסֶד) which is used of God to define His "covenant-love" towards Israel.[2] God is a righteous God who is faith-

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[1] Cf. also Davidson, A.B., art. "Covenant" in HDB, Vol. I, and Behm, D.J., art. διαθήκη in Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testaments, ed. G. Kittel. Stuttgart: 1935, Vol. II, pp. 105-137.

[2] Cf. Snaith, N., Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament. 1944, chap. 5 and pp. 175-176.

ful in keeping His covenants with Israel.

The Ass. Mos. borrows heavily from this cluster of OT concepts of the relation between Yahweh and His people Israel. Contrary to expectation, the author of the Ass. Mos. lays not so much emphasis upon the Torah as he does upon the "oath and the covenant". The Law, conceived of as the Torah, receives little attention in this apocalypse, and this is a distinct departure from regular apocalyptic of Pharasaic origin and coloring. The oath and/or the covenant are mentioned nine times: 1:9,14; 2:7; 3:9; 4:2,5; 10:15; 11:17; and 12:13. The Torah as such is not referred to, but the author speaks of following "the truth (veritatem) of God" (5:4); "laws" (leges) (8:5); "transgress His commands (mandata)" (9:4,6).

In his understanding of the place of the oath and the covenant in its relation to Israel, the author rises to a high moral level, for he is at this point on the ground of Grace, not Law. The author, differing from his Pharasaic contemporaries, upholds the "Moral Ideal" not as strict observance of the Torah, but rather as the responsibility of Israel to maintain faithfully her obligations incurred in the covenant which Yahweh had established with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

> The moral life demands the fulfillment, on Israel's side, of the conditions of the Covenant made between God and it. The Covenant presupposes, on the divine side, love and grace, and the expression of the demands of the moral life in terms of such a covenant saves the writer from the narrowness and

> arid legalism characteristic of the majority of his fellow-Pharisees.[1]

It is, then, from this starting-point, which is more of Grace than of Law, that the author urges following the "truth of God", fulfillment of God's commands, and living blamelessly unto God. The obvious converse of this sentiment is that sin is regarded as a violation of the covenant.

In the Ass. Mos. the presupposition of Grace is enlarged so that it touches at least two other ideas in the book: election and good works. The election of Israel and of individuals is conceived to be originating solely in divine grace. Both Israel's and Moses' election based on grace are found in 12:7,8:

> For not for any virtue or strength of mine, but in His compassion and longsuffering was He pleased to call me. For I say unto you, Joshua: it is not on account of the godliness of this people that thou shalt root out the nations.

An inconsistency at this point is seen in Taxo's almost smug assurance that Israel's forefathers had not tempted God or transgressed His commandments (9:4). Hughes suggests that perhaps the author was referring only to Judah, "since its adversities are attributed not to its own sins but to those of the ten tribes".[2] However, this does not nullify the main emphasis on divine grace evident in the book; 1:14; 2:2; 4:4; 10:15 all suggest this theme.

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[1] Hughes, op. cit., p. 117.

[2] Ibid., p. 118.

Charles treats the author's attitude toward good works as a separate phase,[1] but points out that the viewpoint is closer to that of the OT than to the "rabbinic doctrine of man's righteousness". This absence of a doctrine of merit of works is related to the larger spirit of non-legalism, or grace, that runs through the book. The covenant relation is based not on human merit or ability to fulfill the requirements of God but rather on divine grace. However, as has been noted previously, the author of the Ass. Mos. has no patience with an antinomian spirit; 12:7,8 witness to the need for human response to the commands of God.

> Thus in the most ethical and spiritual circles of Judaism, the inadequacy of the external method of salvation was being realized, and the need of a gospel of faith and grace was being felt.[2]

D. Theodicy.

The older OT prophets gave special emphasis to the need of repentance for sin, but the later post-exilic prophets shifted emphasis to theodical considerations. Increased persecution of Israel brought to the fore such questions as: When would God punish Israel's oppressors? When would the state of bliss promised by the prophets come to pass? Could a righteous God be indifferent to the sufferings of His chosen people? These questions prepared the way for later

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[1]Charles, R.H., The Assumption of Moses. London: Adam and Charles Black, 1897, p. lxi.

[2]Hughes, op. cit., p. 144.

apocalyptic writers who sought to answer them in terms of a glorious and dazzling future, but imminent, Golden Age. The old Hebrew view of suffering is distilled in the arguments of Job's friends, namely, that the sufferings of the righteous are a consequence of sin. But with the apocalyptists came a new answer to the age-long question. The sufferings of the righteous are simply a necessary link in the unfolding of history, and these miseries are to be seen as integral with the world order. "History is treated as a theodicy in which present and future have their necessary place".[1] The apocalyptists' solution to the problem was postulated on a radical dualism: the present world is inherently evil, being dominated by Satan and his cohorts, and the Golden Age is the only hope for the surcease of sorrows. In that time and place all mysteries will be revealed. Frost has summed it up well:

> . . .it was the concern of these writers to substitute the hope of a Golden Age for the present despair and to present a theodicy whereby Yahweh's dealings with Israel might be shown to be righteous.[2]

I Enoch 1, one of the earliest of the apocalypses, implicitly proclaims this theodical theme. It constitutes one of the undergirding raisons d'etre of the entire school, and the Ass. Mos. is wholly committed to it also. Taxo sets the tone when he asks his sons (9:3):

For what nation or what region or what people of

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[1]Fairweather, op. cit., p. 273.

[2]Frost, op. cit., p. 18.

> those who are impious towards the Lord, who have done many abominations, have suffered as great calamities as have befallen us?

Here again is the theme of the suffering of Israel; in Taxo's question the context is very probably the persecution under Antiochus Epiphanes. The vindication of God appears in the eschatological section of the Ass. Mos., chapter 10. Vs. 3 speaks of the wrath of God which "will burn on account of His sons", and vss. 7-10 portray the ultimate doom of the Gentiles who have oppressed Israel, and of the glorification of Israel. Thus the Ass. Mos. presents a theodicy, a vindication of the justice of God in permitting evil to exist, in terms of Israel's destiny in the Golden Age.

II. The Eschaton

A. The Nature of the Eschaton.

One of the distinctions between the prophets and the apocalyptists lay in their differing views of history, particularly with respect to the end time.[1] The prophets generally tended to see the eschaton *in* history whereas the apocalyptists held it to be the end *of* history.[2] To the latter group the idea of the eschaton was, as Frost refers to it, "the *ultima thule* of thought",[3] and as such was marked by a sense

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[1] See *supra*, chap. 9.

[2] For a discussion of the philosophical and theological aspects of this problem see McCown, C.C., "In History or Beyond History", Harvard Theological Review, Vol. 38, 1945, pp. 151-175.

[3] Frost, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

of complete conclusion of history as it is ordinarily understood. A cosmic disturbance of nature is one of the leading characteristics of apocalyptic eschaton. To the prophets, history would continue after the eschaton, but the apocalyptists saw the eschaton as an irruption into history, and beyond it history can be seen no longer, but only super-history, that is, the Golden Age. Among the later prophets there was a preparation for the eschatology of the apocalyptists,[1] but it was the latter group which refined this idea.

Another apocalyptic development which had fore-gleams in the prophets is the concept of the double eschaton. In the NT this idea is employed in Revelation 20:3,7-10. The prophet Ezekiel propounded the origin of the double eschaton, but in him it existed solely as a parallelism. However, the idea became crystallized in Enoch 1-36 and was copied by subsequent apocalypses. The need for a double eschaton arose in order to accommodate two periods of the Golden Age, and two judgments. In Enoch 1-36 the writer anticipates a millenium of happiness for the righteous, and a later judgment of the Watchers. The concept comes to full flower in the "Apocalypse of Weeks" (Enoch 91:16,17) where two variant notions about the Golden Age are harmonized. First to come was a Golden Age on earth which was to be eventually brought to a close, and then the "Age to Come" was to be ushered in, and to this age there was no end, or, as Enoch 91:17 puts it:

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[1] e.g., Amos 5:18-20, Joel 2, Zeph. 1:15-16.

"And after that there will be many weeks without number for ever". Frequently this preliminary Golden Age on earth is related to the place of a Messiah; for example, IV Ezra 7:28-30 speaks of the role of the Messiah, but he is to die at the end of four hundred years. However, the prominent idea of the double eschaton is not its relation to the Messiah, but its provision for the Age to Come, the Age which will continue without end. The double eschaton is possible when an earthly millenium or Golden Age occurs. When an apocalypse describes increasing persecution to be followed by an eschaton in eternity (or Heaven), then there is only a single eschaton. This question is closely related to that of the nature of the Kingdom.[1]

Concomitant with all the foregoing is the apocalyptists' treatment of the doctrine of the resurrection and immortality. There is little doubt that they were indebted in the largest degree to the OT for their belief in immortality. But the issue of the resurrection is not so readily resolved. The complex of ideas in apocalyptic necessitated an eventual doctrine of resurrection; it was devised to provide an ultimate hope in the face of persecution and martyrdom. Whenever the Age to Come appears, the martyr will have a part in it by virtue of the resurrection. The belief in a future life and in the resurrection was a natural result of the deep despair of this life. The OT doctrine of Sheol was no

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[1]Cf. Volz, op. cit., pp. 63-135.

longer satisfying. Further, the resurrection was an integral part of the vindication of divine righteousness.

Dan. 12:2 is one of the early clear statements among the apocalyptists which expresses a belief in bodily resurrection, but the writer had in mind only the Israelites. Enoch 51:1 speaks of a resurrection of all mankind to be followed by a separation of the wicked and the righteous.[1] Generally the apocalypses represent the resurrection as confined to Israel, but the purview, time and nature of the resurrection were not understood alike. One writer will see only the resurrection of the righteous, or of the exceptionally righteous, or of all Israel, or of the exceptionally wicked, or of all men. This resurrection may be to another life on earth, or to a new earth, or to a spiritual existence in Heaven.

> But through all these forms is the firm assurance of the writers that they who are loyal to the will of God shall not be excluded from the life of the kingdom of God. . .Whether on earth or in heaven they shall be where God's will alone is done, and therein lies the secret of their joy.[2]

Acceptance of the doctrine of resurrection gave rise to another apocalyptic sine qua non, the idea of future rewards and punishments, or the Grand Assize. Again, theodicy plays a part in this concept, for rewards and punishments are but another expression of the vindication of the righteous acts

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[1]Cf. also IV Ezra 7:32; II Bar. 50:2, 51:1 ff.; Sib. Or. 4:181 ff.

[2]Rowley, op. cit., p. 174.

of God in history. And again, the apocalyptists were not agreed upon the nature of this judgment. But the common conviction was that men and nations were finally responsible to God and the account must be settled with Him. God is not seen as wholly arbitrary, but wholly just, "for the judgment that He passes is fundamentally the judgment we have already passed on ourselves".[1] Out of this idea of judgment came the doctrine of separation of men into classes of good and evil, and a resultant destiny of eternal life in bliss and eternal condemnation.

The tenth chapter of the Ass. Mos. is par excellence the apocalyptic section of this book. In the light of the foregoing discussion the eschaton in the Ass. Mos. may be assessed. Does the Ass. Mos. view the eschaton as taking place in history, or as constituting the end of history? The entire passage is introduced by the word tunc, "then". "And then His kingdom will appear throughout all His creation" (10:1). But the later verses, 4-7, give a more significant indication that the author has in mind the end of history, for the eschaton is accompanied by tremendous cosmological upheavals involving the earth, high mountains, the sun, moon, stars, the seas, and rivers. Charles notes the parallels in the OT and apocryphal literature to this description.[2] Manson translates these verses as follows:

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[1] Ibid., p. 175.

[2] Charles, op. cit., pp. 40-41.

> And the earth will tremble: to its utmost bounds it will be shaken;
> And the high mountains will be brought low and shaken;
> And the forest will fall.
> The sun will not give light and will turn to darkness.
> The horns of the moon will be broken and she will be turned all to blood;
> And the circle of the stars will be thrown into disorder.
> And the sea will sink into the abyss;
> And the water springs will fail,
> And the rivers will be afraid.[1]

From a reading of these verses one could scarcely conclude that life would continue on earth. This is a cataclysmic phenomenon which suggests the doing away with the present order of the universe. It is not an eschaton _in_ history that is envisaged here, but rather the denouement _of_ history.[2] Volz cites this passage along with other apocalyptic descriptions as being connected with the judgment.[3]

As to the question of a single or double eschaton, the _Ass. Mos._ suggests the former. The entire eschaton - cosmological disturbances, judgment, and glorification - is conceived of as a unified event. There is no millenium on earth or second eschaton. The author is chiefly concerned with God's going forth in judgment, the manifestations of the eschaton in the natural sphere, and the subsequent destiny of Israel. No such finely worked-out eschaton appears here as that in _I Enoch_ 91:16,17 (_Apocalypse of Weeks_).

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[1] Manson, T.W., _The Servant-Messiah_. Cambridge: University Press, 1953, p. 31.

[2] Cf. _IV Ezra_ 7:39-42.

[3] Volz, _op. cit._, p. 278.

This single eschaton concept in the Ass. Mos. accords with the absence of a Messiah, for there is no millenium in the Ass. Mos. requiring the agency of a Messiah.

Some apocalypses, such as II Baruch 50, go into careful detail in explaining the nature of the resurrection body. In the passage cited men are said to receive the identical body at the resurrection that they had in life, the purpose being to establish their identity beyond doubt. But the Ass. Mos. contains no concise scheme but only the vague presupposition of immortality. Nothing is said of a resurrection of the body, either of the righteous or the wicked. Ass. Mos. 10: 8-10 gives clear indication of immortality.

> Then happy wilt thou be, O Israel!
> And thou wilt mount above the neck amd wings of the eagle,
> And...wilt be filled.
> And God will exalt thee
> And make thee to cleave to the heaven of the stars,
> To the place of their habitation
> And thou wilt look from the highest (place),
> And wilt see thy enemies in the dust;
> And wilt recognize them and rejoice,
> And wilt give thanks and confess thy Creator.[1]

Thus the author is presenting here an older, pre-Hellenistic or pre-Chaldaic, point of view concerning resurrection and immortality. It is certain, however, that Israel will have a conscious existence in its immortality, for happiness, joy, exaltation and vengeful satisfaction are declared to be in store.

While the Ass. Mos. lacks a doctrine of resurrection it

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[1]Manson, op. cit., p. 31.

has a well-articulated idea of judgment, or a Grand Assize. First to come under judgment is Satan, and his dispatch is abrupt and final (10:1b): "And then Satan (Zabulus) will be no more, and sorrow will depart with him". There is no place for Satan as chief of a post-eschaton community of the damned; he is simply extinguished. The portrayal of the judgment in 10:3 and 7 is a one-sided affair and is drawn along ethnic lines. Questions of personal righteousness or wickedness, whether in a Gentile or Jewish individual are irrelevant considerations. The issue is clean and simple: the Gentiles will be utterly cast down, and Israel will be exalted to the "heaven of the stars". In a sense this Grand Assize is the aim of the entire book, for throughout its length the author is preoccupied with Israel's oppressors, and in chapter ten he gives vent to this passionate hatred of the Gentiles.[1] The author asserts that God "will destroy all their (the Gentiles') idols" (10:7), thereby pointing out that the God of Israel alone is supreme, and the final authority is his.

> . . .it will be made unmistakably plain that what happens to these nations is not accident or bad luck, but retribution; not vengeance taken by their former victims, but a sentence passed by God and executed by him. . .[2]

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[1]Cf., Ass. Mos. 2:7-9; 3:5,13 where the sins of Israel are mentioned. However, this does not nullify the author's overriding conviction of the righteousness of Israel.

[2]Manson, T.W., "Miscellanea Apocalyptica", JTS, January-April, 1945, Vol. 46, no. 181-2, p. 44.

Although Israel does not bring about this judgment, it takes great pleasure in the fate of the Gentiles (10:10), and it is truly said that this is one of the least pleasing aspects of the book.[1]

B. The Nature of the Kingdom.

In the OT the idea of a future kingdom for Israel was given impetus by the prophets. The decline in the fortunes of Israel and Judah through internal strife and captivity resulted in the discontinuation of the line of kings, and the hope of Israel ceased to rest in the resuscitation of the older pattern of government. Politically considered, Israel was finished. The vacuum caused by this situation revived interest in the older prophetic message which spoke of a coming "Day of Yahweh", the "latter days". Among the prominent prophetic statements is the vision of Isa. 2:2-4 and 9,11 which promises the final glory of Israel and of her God. Joel 3, Amos 9:11-15, and Zech. 8 are but a few of the many prophetic expressions of this hope for Israel. Frequently the bliss of this future day is spoken of in terms of agricultural prosperity; Micah 4:4 prophesies that "they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree". War will be abolished, universal peace will be the order of the day, and Yahweh will reign supreme. It was to be an ideal kingdom.

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[1]Rowley, op. cit., p. 95.

By the time of the early apocalyptists the concept of the kingdom, or Golden Age, began to be hardened, and definite notions about it were set forth. Dan. 12:2 ff. describes this age as an earthly kingdom of a political hue. Daniel continues the essential element of the Golden Age, viz., a place where the will of God is perfectly accomplished. The prophets had made this the heart of their doctrine of the kingdom, and it was continued as such by the whole apocalyptic school. Whatever divergent theories they entertained about the Golden Age, the common denominator was the conviction that God would reign supreme, and His will would be unchallenged. Furthermore, it was almost universally acknowledged that the kingdom would be established by divine decree and initiative, not by human exertion.

Concerning the external details of the Golden Age, opinion was varied. Messel[1] holds that the locale of the Golden Age was uniformly conceived to be on earth, but this is contrary to the facts. Admittedly, most of the apocalypses speak of the Golden Age as being on earth, but others saw it on a renovated earth, and some saw it in heaven. Sometimes it was reckoned to be a temporary kingdom, and sometimes eternal. Others thought of the kingdom as being ruled by the Messiah or some group of persons, and yet others maintained that it was governed directly and solely by God Him-

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[1]Messel, N., Die Einheitlichkeit der jüdischen Eschatologie. Giessen: 1915, p. 72.

self. As was mentioned above, Dan. 12:2 ff. describes an earthly political kingdom governed by Jewish saints. Enoch 25:5 sees an earthly Golden Age with the capital at Jerusalem. Jub. 23:27 speaks of a day when men would finally grow to be a thousand years old in an earthly kingdom. A new Jerusalem on earth is the seat of government in the earthly kingdom as Test. Dan. 5:12 suggests. Sib. Or. 3:767 ff. likewise foretells a Golden Age on earth, much in the same language of Isa. 11:6-8. Ps. Sol. 17 (31(28)) also speaks of an earthly kingdom for Jews, the capital being Jerusalem. The Life of Adam and Eve, or more briefly Vita, is a short Jewish apocalypse with some later Christian glosses. It too envisions a Golden Age on earth wherein the accoutrements of the old Israelite kingdom would be restored. All this foregoing scheme is reversed in IV Ezra 7:36 where Gehenna and Paradise are designated as the places of judgment. Thus, the Golden Age is to be in heaven. II Baruch, otherwise the Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch, which has many affinities with IV Ezra, reverts to an earthly kingdom. Many of his descriptions of the luxuries of that day are concerned with the facile production of wine (II Bar. 29:4 ff.; cf. also 73:1 ff.).

The issue of the nature of the kingdom or Golden Age reduces to three questions: (1) Is it earthly or heavenly? (2) Is it theocratic or Messianic? (3) Is it temporary or permanent? The last question is closely allied with the double-eschaton concept, for ultimately the kingdom must be eternal. It can be a temporary kingdom on earth such as

IV Ezra 7:26 describes, but this Messianic kingdom will endure for only four hundred years. In reference to the place and duration of the Golden Age Frost argues for three groups of ideas: an earthly kingdom with abundant natural benefits, a heavenly eternal kingdom which was necessitated by the total despair of the present world, and lastly, a combination of these two ideas which "tries to have the best of both worlds".[1] This third scheme accommodates a temporary earthly kingdom to be followed by a permanent celestial bliss. Frost asserts that the removal of the "Future Age" from earth to heaven was necessitated on the grounds that after the resurrection Palestine would suffer from excessive overpopulation.[2] It is questionable whether such geometric and spatial considerations are accountable for this idea; it is more likely that the complex of doctrines of transcendentalism and determinism form the seed-plot for the concept of the Golden Age in heaven.

The locale of the Golden Age in the Ass. Mos. is clearly implied in 10:8-10 where Israel's future "on high" is prophesied. However, some discussion has arisen over Charles' emendation of 10:10 and the resultant meaning of the verse. The crux of the matter is in the first line of the verse, which reads as follows in Ceriani's text: "et conspiges (conspicies) a summo et vides inimicos tuos in terram. . ."

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[1] Frost, op. cit., pp. 21,22.

[2] Ibid., p. 243.

Charles[1] emended *in terram* to *in Gehenna*; thus, "And thou wilt look from on high and wilt see thy enemies in Gehenna." Charles reasoned that if Israel is pictured in heaven after the judgment it would be incongruous to suppose that her enemies are still on earth, for the judgment implies a consequence of heaven and hell, not heaven and earth. Accordingly *in terram* had to be emended to *in Ge(henna)* on the presupposition of an original Hebrew בגי הנם. The second word was lost in copying, and the Greek translators rendered בגי as γῆ and finally it appeared as *in terram*. This is a clever but too radical reconstruction. Klausner[2] has put forth a more plausible understanding of the text; he supposes an original Hebrew בעפר, "in the dust". II Sam. 16:13, Micah 7:17, Psa. 72:9, and Isa. 49:23 use this word with a connotation of humiliation of one's enemies. Often the OT uses this word to imply death as in Job 30:19, and Psa. 30:9. It is also employed to mean worthlessness as in Job 22:24 and Zeph. 1:17.[3]

Following the suggestion of Messel that all Jewish apocalypses portray an earthly kingdom, Manson argues that the *Ass. Mos.* adheres to this pattern.[4] He interprets

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[1]Charles, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

[2]Klausner, J., *Ha-Ra'yon*. 1927, p. 205.

[3]Cf. LXX Lev. 17:13, Num. 5:17, Deut. 32:24, where עפר = γῆ.

[4]Manson, *JTS*, pp. 44,45.

10:8-10 as a symbolic description of the fall of Rome and Israel's subsequent ascendancy over the power of the empire, and the entire passage speaks of an earthly scene. This understanding is based on the use of the word "eagle" (aquila) in 10:8, for the eagle was one of the insignia of Rome. Charles admits that the Latin text is not trustworthy and concludes that the source of this imagery may be found in Isa. 40:31 instead of the symbols of Rome.

Manson's conclusion that Ass. Mos. 10:8-10 describes Israel's rise to power over Rome does not harmonize well with the exalted and other-worldly temper of the passage. After the destruction wrought not only upon the earth but on the universe in the preceding verses, it is scarcely possible that the author can revert to the earth and subjugate Rome. The dimensions of the author's descriptions far exceed temporal affairs with Rome; this is a new heaven for the site of the long-awaited Golden Age.

The best option, then, is to take this to be a heavenly Golden Age. It is not clearly stated that Israel's enemies are in hell, but all that is implied by "in the dust" is tantamount if not equal to being in hell. Israel's ascendancy over her enemies is assured, but this superiority consists in her being in heaven.

> Nach Ass. Mos. 10:9 f. sieht das an den Sternenhimmel erhöhte Israel seine Feinde "in terra". d.h. ausgeschlossen vom Glück und vom Heil. . .[1]

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[1]Volz, op. cit., p. 357.

Is the Golden Age in Ass. Mos. 10 a theocratic or a Messianic administration? Few questions in this book may be answered with such certitude as this, for the Golden Age is definitely a theocratic government. There is no Messiah in this apocalypse.[1] The entire eschaton in all its aspects is clearly a work of God alone. The author is specific that the initiative will be taken by God, and the kingdom will conform to His will (10:7):

> For the Most High will arise, the Eternal God alone, and He will appear to punish the Gentiles, and He will destroy all their idols.

The "theocratic kingdom" in Ass. Mos. 10 implies a government of the Golden Age administered immediately by God.[2] An angel plays a part in the service of vengeance, but this is a specialized function.

The last question about the kingdom, whether it is temporary or permanent, is answered in that there is no teaching of an earthly millenium. Therefore the Ass. Mos. knows only one eschaton, one judgment, and one everlasting exaltation in heaven.

C. The Place of Israel.

With the advent of Greek culture through the breach created by Alexander the Great there came an emphasis on individualism which colored Israel's thinking. Among these

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[1] See chap. 11.

[2] Cf. Hughes, op. cit., p. 119.

Hellenistic influences was a universalistic spirit, a cosmopolitanism, which was quite different from Israel's rather parochial view of the world. Jesus' ministry reflected this new attitude (John 10:16), and Paul continues the theme repeatedly (I Cor. 12:13, Gal. 3:28, Col. 3:11).

Not all elements of Judaism were willing to surrender a long-cherished conviction in the primacy of Israel as the special and exclusive object of divine grace. Apoc. Abrah. 29 ff. describes the coming to power of God's Elect, or Israel; vengeance shall be brought to those who have despitefully used Israel. Enoch 90:28-42 modifies this concept so that some Gentiles will survive, but solely for the purpose of serving and worshiping the "sheep", i.e., Israel. IV Ezra 5:31-40 and 8:45 betray this same spirit of the special and exclusive place of Israel. However, universalism had its spokesmen also: Enoch 10:21 expresses the hope that "all the children of men shall become righteous,"[1] and Enoch 48:4 asserts that the Messiah shall be "the light of the Gentiles".[2] Test. Levi 14:3,4 takes a mediating position, regarding Israel as the chief of nations, but also the means of their salvation.[3]

Against this pattern of oscillation between particularism

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[1]Charles, R.H., Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913, Vol. II, p. 195.

[2]Ibid., p. 216.

[3]Cf. also Test. Levi 2:11.

and universalism the attitude of the Ass. Mos. stands out in clear relief. The author unabashedly and unequivocally testifies to the absolute supremacy and ultimately exclusive salvation of Israel. In tracing the history of Israel the author declares that "God created the world on behalf of His people" (1:12),[1] an idea not restricted to apocalyptic writings alone. The Rabbinic materials contain numerous allusions to this thought. Ginzberg cites several Rabbinic passages on Esther: ". . .God created heaven and earth, whose continuance depends on Israel's existence".[2] "The sun and moon will refuse to shed their light abroad, for they were created only for the sake of Israel".[3] At first appearance this attitude borders on unbridled arrogance, but this is not the case, for it is more indicative of the Hebraic view of man.

> The view occurring frequently in rabbinic and pseudepigraphic literature that the world was created for the sake of Israel does not owe its origin to national pride, but is closely connected with the ethical concept of creation. Man was the purpose of creation. . .[4]

It is not just any man, but man who devotes himself completely to the Torah who is the goal of creation. Without the Torah man is nothing.

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[1]Cf. IV Ezra 6:55.

[2]Ginzberg, L., Legends of the Jews. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1936, Vol. IV, p. 399.

[3]Ibid., p. 424. See also ibid., Vol. V, p. 8, for additional Rabbinic references.

[4]Ibid., Vol. V, p. 8.

> If the Jewish nation is destroyed, the world itself will cease to be, for the world exists only for the sake of the Torah studied by Israel. . .More than this, all other nations beside Israel are designated as 'strangers' by God, but Israel He called in His love 'a people near to Him', and His 'children'.[1]

The key phrase is "the Torah studied by Israel". Therefore the syllogism runs as follows: 1. man is able to fulfill the purpose of creation as he studies the Torah wholeheartedly; 2. only Israel has the Torah; 3. therefore only Israel realizes this goal. This train of thought was taken over by the early Church Fathers and applied to the Christian.[2]

The main body of the Ass. Mos. is a rapid review of Israel's history, including the rupture of the kingdom in 2:5 ff. In 10:8-10 the book reaches its climax, for in this passage Israel is reunited, her enemies utterly cast down, and Israel rejoices in heaven whence they see their erstwhile oppressors in humiliation under the judgment of God. To the author the issue of heaven was very simple: it was to be inhabited eternally and exclusively by Israel.

D. The Place of the Gentiles.

The history of Israel is a history of oppression. From Egypt to Herod Israel had been alternately subjugated, oppressed, exiled, and exploited. Except for periods of internecine strife, all Israel's troubles were attributable to

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[1] Ibid., Vol. IV, pp. 407-408.

[2] Cf. Cyprian's Epistola ad Donatum 1:14; Justin Martyr's II Apologia 7.

Gentile conquerors. The great powers of Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, Persia, Greece, and Rome conducted military campaigns using Israel's land as a place of battle or as a path to further conquest, for Palestine forms a bridge between the continents of Europe, Africa, and Asia Minor. When there was respite from the ravages of the greater powers, Israel was continually beset by border attack from her nearer and smaller rivals such as Edom, Moab, and Aram. From the time of the Exile to the brief period of hazardous independence following the Maccabean revolt Israel was under the domination of a foreign power.

Thus, the first reason the Jews had for hating the Gentile was a patriotic reason. But their hatred also had a theological aspect, for the prime sin of the Gentiles was, to the Jew, his idolatry. To the Jew, especially after the Exile, idolatry signified something unclean, which was abhorrent to the Jew, and which challenged the sovereignty and supremacy of Yahweh. The Gentile mode of living was corrupt, and this corruption sprang from the things they worshiped. Gentile idols came to be regarded by Jews as spiritual beings in revolt against Yahweh; they were thought to be bent on the destruction of the Jews as a nation.

> The Gentiles were not regarded as themselves the cause of Israel's miseries, but rather as the willing instruments who had gratuitously increased her sufferings and who took a vicious delight in doing so. That was what stung.[1]

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[1]Frost, op. cit., p. 10.

Thus the strong Jewish antipathy to the Gentile arose from a nationalistic and a theological basis.

After the conquests of Alexander the Great and the subsequent impact of Hellenism and eastern philosophies, Jewish thought underwent certain significant changes. It has been mentioned before that the Greek ideas of universalism and individualism influenced Jewish eschatology. But the change did not occur rapidly, and the intertestamental literature bears evidence of this state of flux in its attitude towards the Gentiles. The older Jewish view is stated in Isa. 34 which looks for the sure and complete destruction of the Gentiles. Owing to the cultural intercourse of Israel with other nations she began to assume a more catholic view of the world and her religion. The Gentiles came to be regarded as fellow human beings who also had an eternal destiny and who also had to bear some relationship to Yahweh. This shifting change of attitude finds expression in Enoch 91:8,17: "The roots of unrighteousness. . .will be destroyed from under heaven". . ."and sin will no more be mentioned forever". The fourth book of Enoch, chaps. 72-90, declares for the supremacy of Israel, but also holds out hope for the Gentiles,[1] a distinct advance over the older view. II Bar. 72:4-6 also promises salvation to the Gentiles who have "not trodden down the seed of Jacob", but those who have ruled over Israel

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[1]Cf. Enoch 90:30.

will be put to the sword. This new attitude toward the Gentiles gave rise to a missionary effort designed to bring the Gentile into the pale of the Covenant, and a large part of their literature carried the message. If Yahweh was the one true God, Judaism had to become a world-religion to be embraced by the Gentiles.

If the Ass. Mos. reaches its highest ethical level in its concept of the Covenant and election based on divine grace, it reaches its lowest level in its regard for the Gentiles. Heaven is not only reserved exclusively for ethnic Israel, it will also echo the rejoicing of Israel as she sees her enemies in the dust.

> And thou wilt look from the highest (place),
> And wilt see thy enemies in the dust;
> And wilt recognize them and rejoice,
> And wilt give thanks and confess thy Creator.[1]

The Ass. Mos. refers to the Gentiles five times; generally the Latin is gens (1:13; 8:3; 10:7), but once in 4:9 the Latin is nationes (Charles emends the obviously corrupt natos to nationes). In 9:3 and 12:4 Charles renders gens by "nation", but the word "Gentile" would not be an apt translation. After Moses tells Joshua that the world was created on behalf of Israel, he says (1:13):

> But He was not pleased to manifest this purpose of creation from the foundation of the world, in order that the Gentiles might thereby be convicted, yea to their own humiliation might by (their) arguments convict one another.

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[1] Manson's translation; cf. Servant-Messiah, p. 31.

This verse demonstrates a strong predestinarian strain in that God is said to have blinded the minds of the Gentiles to the purpose of creation. This information was discernible only to the Jews by revelation; thus the Gentiles were put to shame in their rational attempts to discover this purpose. Moses is the designated agent of the true revelation.

The Ass. Mos. teaches that the Gentile kings are the instruments of divine chastening of Israel (5:1 ff., 8:1 ff.). In 5:1 the suggestion exists that Israel's punishment is conformed to the nature of the offense, for Israel suffers at the hands of the very same people whose idolatrous practices Israel had aped to the detriment of her own religion. The fact that the Gentiles were the instruments of chastening does not relieve them of the responsibility for sin, for they were willing tools. Therefore, the author of the Ass. Mos., taking an older exclusive Hassidic view of Israel and the Gentiles, summarily consigns them to eternal banishment from the joys of heaven.

E. Individual and Corporate Personality.

This question is included under the general heading of the eschaton because of its implications in that event. However, it immediately enlarges to embrace the nature of the entire Hebrew community in its individual and societary aspects.

The prominent men who have made valuable contributions to the understanding of the Hebrew concept of society or the

'am are Robinson,[1] Pedersen,[2] Volz[3] and Johnson.[4] The OT does not view man solely as an individual but as an integral part of a larger unit or society. The prophets gave greater emphasis to individualism than did the earlier writers of the OT, but even this new thrust did not transcend the Hebrew societary concept of man. In the OT the covenant is a national covenant between Yahweh and the 'family' of Israel, and when the actions of individual members are judged they are held as the actions of the entire *'am*. The individual achieves significance only as a member of this *'am*. However, this is not to say that the individuality of the person is submerged and his identity lost in the whole community; rather, this relationship gives him the *esprit de corps* of the common character of the community. Further, his membership in the *'am* was not limited to the contemporary group, for he was heir to the tradition of his predecessors, and he was likewise bound up with the future community as well. Thus the individual members of the corporate *'am* were possessed of a sense of continuity in their covenant relationship with one another and with Yahweh. This cluster of

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[1]Robinson, H. Wheeler, *The People and the Book*, Ed. A.S. Peake. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925.

[2]Pedersen, J., *Israel*. London: Oxford University Press, 1926.

[3]Volz, *op. cit.*, pp. 77-83; 97-117.

[4]Johnson, A.R., *The One and the Many in the Israelite Conception of God*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press Board, 1942.

ideas when merged with OT eschatology yielded a hope of a redeemed community; no need existed for a large emphasis upon individual eschatology because, to the Hebrew, the entire 'am participated in the redemption.

In the prophets the seed of individualism was planted, and Greek thought brought the seed to flower in the inter-testamental period, principally in the apocalypses. The issue of national supremacy and the covenant ~~were~~ was still paramount, but individualism had its spokesmen. Ideas of rewards and punishments were altered to accommodate this new individualism, so that many apocalyptists taught that at the Grand Assize the crucial issue is not the supremacy of Israel over the Gentiles, but rather the personal righteousness, or lack thereof, of individual men. The Test. Abrah. appears to take a mediating position: it presents the viewpoint of an individual eschatology, but of a nationalistic judgment, "inappropriate to the individual interest of the rest of the book".[1] No such ambiguity exists in IV Ezra 7:102-105 where the thought is highly individualistic. Jub. 5:13 and II Bar. 85:9-15 follow in the same vein, and Enoch 10:16 and 84:6 refers to the "plant of righteousness" which appears to have an individualistic rather than corporate sense.[2]

While individualism did not transcend the corporate

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[1] Rowley, op. cit., p. 114.

[2] Cf. Charles, Apoc. and Pseud., Vol. II, p. 194 where he takes "plant of righteousness" to be Israel.

concept, its influence may be traced in most of the apocalypses. Hughes cites two exceptions to this general pattern: Bar. 4:5-5:9, and the Ass. Mos. Throughout the Ass. Mos. the stress is upon the people, or Israel, not on the individual. 1:12 speaks of the world being created on behalf of "His people", and the continuity of the covenant relationship is expressed in 2:1 where Moses commands Joshua to lead Israel "into the land which He determined and promised to give to their fathers". The author is deeply distressed over the rupture of Israel in 2:5 ff. and 3:6; in 4:8 it is said that the two tribes will be sad and lamenting. But the climax is reached in 10:8 ff. where it is clear that Israel is restored.

Although the Ass. Mos. was written long after Greek individualism had been able to influence Jewish thought, it appears to have rejected Hellenistic influences and clung instead to an older concept of Jewish solidarity. Retribution for individuals and for the nation took place in Israel's history, but the end in view is the complete restoration and glorification for Israel the nation, thus consummating the covenant relationship.

CHAPTER XI

SECONDARY THEOLOGICAL ELEMENTS

I. Messianism

It is not within the scope of this study to examine the rise and complex development of Messianism. That is a very wide subject and the literature in this field is extremely copious. Scholars are still far from a unanimous view on the Messiah in the OT, the Son of Man, and many related problems. It is rather the intent in this chapter to review the intertestamental literature, chiefly the pseudepigrapha, with respect to its teachings on the Messiah, and to examine the Ass. Mos. against this background.

Students of eschatology have frequently used the terms 'messianic' and 'eschatological' interchangeably, to the end that two originally distinct concepts have been merged. This has arisen undoubtedly because in the NT the terms are in fact synonymous, or at least inseparable, for it is impossible to study NT eschatology apart from its radically messianic implications. However, in the history of doctrines of eschatology there are non-messianic passages. Even in late times (i.e., first century B.C. and A.D.) there are eschatological writings which neither contain the name of a Messiah nor does the author presuppose him implicitly. With the ascendancy of apocalyptic the two ideas of Messianism and eschatology were wedded; the advent of the Messiah came to be associated with the coming of the Kingdom of God and the

eschaton itself. The popular hope of a Messiah had been nurtured by the prophets, but discouraged by the priests. When, however, the apocalyptic school, especially the Enoch corpus, directed attention again to a Messiah, the popular expectation re-awakened, and many of the apocalyptists conjectured about the nature of the Messiah, but with widely varied opinions.

A majority of the apocalypses are messianic; some are explicitly committed to a doctrine of a Messiah, while others are quite vague. Among the earliest of the messianic apocalypses is Enoch 37-71, or the Similitudes of Enoch, which introduces the famed term "Son of Man". This term, used alongside other names for the leader of the kingdom, cannot be understood as strictly messianic, for the Similitudes do not speak of a Messiah as a human deliverer. There is no mention of a Davidic or Levitical descent. Rowley says "there is nothing whatever here to associate that Old Testament hope, which the New Testament expresses by the word Messiah, or Christ, with the Son of Man".[1] Thus the Messianism of Enoch 37-71 is not in accord with later apocalyptic teaching. It is freely acknowledged that Enoch is a composite work, so it is not surprising to find some parts of the book messianic and others are non-messianic. In Enoch 83-90 another kind of Messiah appears, but the term "Messiah" is

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[1]Rowley, H.H., The Relevance of Apocalyptic. London: Lutterworth Press, 1952, p. 58.

not used. Enoch 90:37 speaks of a white bull who is a symbol for a Messiah; he receives petitions and ultimately all creatures are transformed into his image. Jubilees, properly not an apocalypse but containing apocalyptic strands, teaches an evolutionary Kingdom of God, has only one reference to a Messiah (31:18) and he is to arise from the tribe of Judah: "A prince shalt thou be, thou and one of thy sons, over the sons of Jacob."[1] Although the name of Messiah is not mentioned, the functions of this individual are vaguely messianic. This person is to be of the stock of Judah, and thus constitutes one of the early apocalyptic claims for the Messiah from a particular tribe of Israel.

The Test. XII Pat. clearly teaches a Messiah and he shall be of the tribe of Levi; cf. T. Judah 24:1, T. Levi 8:14, et passim. Some of his functions are to initiate a new priesthood, be a mediator to the Gentiles, war against Beliar, and bring sin to an end. Sib. Or. 3:652 ff. teaches that a Messiah will come, but it is not so concerned with his lineage. He is to establish an earthly kingdom and is an earthly figure, and finally he disappears from the scene. The Pss. Sol., especially psalm 17, the messianic passage, portrays a Messiah ben David who is spoken of as a king, not a Messiah. But the sense of the psalm is that of a future deliverer who would free Israel from bondage to Rome, and it

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[1]Charles, R.H., Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913, Vol. II, p. 61.

is a Messiah in the technical sense that is envisioned. The Zad. Work (9:10B,29B; 15:4) looks for a Messiah ben Aaron who shall be preceded by the Teacher of Righteousness. But the attention of the book is directed to the Teacher of Righteousness rather than the Messiah. That there exists a remarkable continuity of thought concerning the Messiah "from Aaron and Israel" between the Zad. Work and the Dead Sea Scrolls, particularly the War of the Sons of Light and the Manual of Discipline, is now well recognized.[1]

IV Ezra consists of seven visions, two of which speak of a Messiah, though these two accounts differ on the nature of the Messiah, thus suggesting that IV Ezra is a composite work. The Third Vision, 7:27 ff., describes a Messiah who will be revealed for four hundred years, "and it shall be, after these years, that my Son the Messiah shall die, and all in whom there is human breath".[2] This Messiah, then, is mortal; he shall live for a short time. IV Ezra 13:32 (the Sixth Vision), on the other hand, speaks of the revealed Son "whom thou didst see as a Man ascending",[3] suggesting a transcendent being quite different from the mortal Messiah of 7:27. This figure of the Sixth Vision has affinities with the Son of Man of Daniel and Enoch. II Baruch contains

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[1]Cf. Rowley, H.H., The Zadokite Fragments and the Dead Sea Scrolls. Oxford: Blackwell, 1952, pp. 37-38.

[2]Charles, op. cit., p. 582.

[3]Ibid., p. 618.

a Messiah but only indirectly, for the focus is on the messianic age which is described in sensuous language. The Messiah is mentioned (30:1), but the details are vague. The Apoc. Abrah. also suggests a Messiah, but so little is said of him that precise definition is impossible, except to note that the Messiah appears to stand for the Elect.

The non-messianic books are much fewer. It is generally admitted that Daniel is non-messianic (although Dan. 7:13 ff. may have deep messianic implications along with 9:25,26), for no mention is made of a leader of the stock of David or Levi. Following in this tradition is Enoch 6-36, the first major section of the book. 10:17 ff. delineates an earthly messianic kingdom wherein a man will father a thousand children who shall "compete in peace", but there is no Messiah in the scene. Slavonic Enoch, or II Enoch, also conceives of a millenium of the kingdom, but, as in Enoch 6-36, there is no place for a Messiah. The Life of Adam and Eve, or Vita, contains a reference to a Messiah at 42:2 which reads as follows:

> When five thousand five hundred years have been fulfilled, then will come upon earth the most beloved king Christ, the Son of God, to revive the body of Adam and with him to revive the bodies of the dead.[1]

However, this and the following verses are patently a later Christian interpolation. If Vita 42:2-5 are excised the passage makes sense because Seth is being addressed in 41:3

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[1]Charles, op. cit., p. 144.

and 43:1, and the intervening passage simply does not accord with the general tone. If it is admitted that these verses are an interpolation, then Vita is to be classed as non-messianic. A messianic age or kingdom is represented, but it is effected without a Messiah. The Test. Abrah., probably a Jewish work of the first century A.D., relates the vague idea of world ages, but omits any reference either to a messianic kingdom or a Messiah.

With respect to Messianism the Ass. Mos. stands in this minority tradition in apocalyptic literature, for there is no Messiah in the book. In fact, the author appears to be not only non-messianic, but positively against the notion of a Messiah, for in 10:7 he states that "the Most High, the Eternal God alone (solus)"[1] will punish the Gentiles and destroy their idols. This is saying, in effect, that the process of judgment and punishment will be accomplished without the help of either Michael or a Messiah.[2] Charles opines that the absence of a Messiah arises from the writer's hostility to a rising conviction among his own party, the Pharisees, that a coming Messiah would be a warrior (cf. II Bar. 72:1 ff.) who would liberate Israel.[3]

The idea that Taxo is the Messiah is propounded in

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[1] Ibid., p. 422.

[2] Cf. also IV Ezra 6:6.

[3] Charles, op. cit., p. 412.

modern times by Lattey,[1] and the deficiencies of his theory are considered earlier in chapter six. At this point nearly all students of apocalypse are agreed; attempts to equate Taxo with the Messiah have ended in failure. Volz states:

> Von einem Messias weiss die ass. Mos. nichts; der "Taxo" ist also, wenn er wirklich als Vorläufer gedacht ist, nicht Vorläufer des Messias, sondern Vorläufer Gottes.[2]

Ass. Mos. has in common with some of the messianic apocalypses, especially the Test. XII Pat., a concern for the tribe of Levi. Ass. Mos. 9:1 states: "Then in that day there shall be a man of the tribe of Levi, whose name will be Taxo. . ."[3] This attention to the tribe of Levi serves to confirm the Ḥassidic tendency of the author, for this movement originated from the priestly line. The Ass. Mos. is an attempt to reverse the popular trend of high messianic expectations, and to call the Pharisaic party back from secularization to an older faith in the complete sovereignty and authority of God.

II. Angelology and Demonology

The origin of Hebrew thought about angels and demons is to be found in the OT. "The Angel of Yahweh" is a

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[1] Lattey, C., "The Messianic Expectation in the 'Assumption of Moses'", CBQ, January, 1942, pp. 9-21.

[2] Volz, P., Die Eschatologie der jüdischen Gemeinde. Tübingen: Mohr, 1934, p. 201.

[3] Charles, op. cit., p. 421.

familiar figure in the earlier sections of the OT; cf. Gen. 16:7-13; 31:11-13; Judges 13:2-22. Often the Angel of Yahweh is apparently a theophanous figure who speaks and acts as God himself, and those who have seen the Angel of Yahweh have seen God. The result is that the Angel of Yahweh is a projection of a personality of God in physical form in a sense able to be comprehended by men. The OT is rich in this concept and it is fruitless to insist that the Hebrew mind adopted these ideas at a late date. As to demonology the OT is indifferent to the idea of orders of demons and speaks instead of Satan who is cast in the rôle of one of the angels of Yahweh whose chief function is that of an accuser.[1] But by the time of Zechariah 3 the Hebrew concept of Satan had enlarged so that he was held to be not merely an accuser but an enemy, the Adversary of Yahweh, an idea which is fully developed in the NT.[2] In the NT he is the Adversary of God and he commands hosts of his own subordinates to do his bidding; the book of the Revelation is dedicated to the premise that Satan's end is foredoomed, and God is vindicated in and beyond history.

The OT is the source of Hebrew angelology and demonology, but these concepts were given impetus by Hebrew contact with Persian religion at the Exile. After this period the apocalyptists developed the theme and added many refinements. One

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[1]Cf. Job 1:6 ff.

[2]Cf. Rev. 12:9.

of the prominent additions to Hebrew thought was the fact of names and personalities being assigned to angels and demons. The apocalypses do not speak simply of the Angel of Yahweh, but instead have names such as Michael, Jaoel, Raphael, Gabriel, Phanael, and many others, each name having some special significance to the author. Angels were not only given names but also were ranked in orders, the highest rank being an archangel. Earlier it was suggested that this hierarchy of angels was brought about because of the transcendent nature of God, and it came to be necessary to have ranks of angels to act as mediators between God and men. The moral gap between the holiness of God and the sinfulness of man was bridged by angels who acted on behalf of God.

In apocalyptic literature the angel Michael appears first in Dan. 10:13 where he is referred to as "one of the chief princes", suggesting a hierarchy of angels. It is noteworthy that Rev. 12:7 continues this tradition about Michael, speaking of "Michael and his angels" warring in heaven against the dragon. T. Dan. 6:2 and T. Levi 5:6 are, according to Charles,[1] veiled allusions to Michael, but this is not certain. The Test. Abrah. names Michael as the angel who announced to Abraham his coming death.[2]

The present text of the Ass. Mos. does not contain Michael's name, but it is fairly sure that he figured in the

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[1]Charles, op. cit., in loc.

[2]Test. Abrah. 1.

larger work. Origin's De Principiis implies that the original Ass. Mos. related the dispute between Michael and the devil; it is this passage, not now extant in the one MS of the Ass. Mos., which is quoted in Jude 9.[1] In this account preserved in Jude 9 and by Origen Michael performs about the same function as that in Test. Abrah. wherein he serves as the emissary of God at the death of one of Israel's great heroes. In the case of the Ass. Mos. it is Michael's duty to take the body of Moses to heaven, and in so doing he fell into the dispute with the devil.

In the rabbinic literature much attention is devoted to angels, particularly the archangels Michael and Gabriel. Michael was held to be the chief prince of Israel, as her guardian angel, the angel who presents the soul of the deceased to God, the angel who escorted Enoch to heaven, and who wrestled with Jacob.[2] Of special interest, however, is the rabbinic testimony about Moses and Michael. Michael and Samael disputed about the soul of Moses as he was about to die,[3] and at Moses' death Michael and Gabriel along with lesser angels ministered to him.[4] It would be difficult to maintain that the author of the Ass. Mos. made direct use of

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[1] Cf. chapter 2.

[2] Cf. Ginzberg, L., The Legends of the Jews. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1938, Vol. VII, pp. 311-312.

[3] Ibid., Vol. III, p. 449.

[4] Ibid., Vol. III, p. 472.

rabbinic materials, but it is quite clear that there was a large body of traditional lore about Moses and Michael, and the Ass. Mos. and some of these rabbinic writings of various dates are preserved literary evidences of this tradition.

The word "angel" appears only once in the Ass. Mos.; in 10:2 it says "Then the hand of the angel will be filled." Manson[1] draws attention to the Latin word nuntius which Charles renders as "angel". Usually the word "angel" presupposes the Latin angelus, whereas nuntius is used to indicate a messenger. Most commentaries on this passage identify the nuntius with Michael on the strength of Dan. 12:1 which reads: "At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people." But Manson holds that the nuntius is Elijah who, according to Mal. 3, is to precede the Advent of God. Further, the phrase qui est in summo constitutus speaks of Elijah's location in heaven at the present time. Lastly, Manson translates vindicabit as "liberate" rather than "avenge" on the basis that 10:7 teaches that God alone will do the work of vengeance.

At least three difficulties beset this theory. In view of the linguistic carelessness displayed by the Latin copyist it is hazardous to build a theory on so uncertain a foundation. It cannot be asserted that the translator deliberately chose nuntius over angelus. Secondly, Manson points out

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[1]Manson, T.W., "Miscellanea Apocalyptica", JTS, January-April, 1945, Vol. 46, no. 181-182, pp. 43-44.

the conflicting ideas of 10:2 and 10:7, but Charles holds that it is quite probable that 10:1,2 are not from the same author who composed the remainder of the chapter.[1] Lastly, even if verses one and two are a gloss, the context of verse two more strongly suggests Michael than Elijah, for Dan. 12:1 and the corpus of rabbinic literature indicate that Michael was the patron saint of Israel. Thus, Manson's theory is possible, but not probable. Conclusions about the nuntius in 10:2 can at best be only tentative because of the lack of corroborative evidence in the Ass. Mos.[2]

The Ass. Mos. also has a simple view of Satan. Contrary to Jubilees and other apocalypses, there is no elaborate hierarchy of demons ruled by Mastema. Instead, Satan appears to stand alone, occupying a subordinate role in the apocalypse as a whole. It is known from Jude 9 and Origen's writing that Satan, simply called "the devil", appeared in the lost section disputing with Michael. All the author of the Ass. Mos. says of Satan is that when his end comes, "sorrow will depart with him". Volz says of this word "sadness":

> in dieses Eine Wort Tristitia ist alles Leid der Gegenwart gelegt und durch die Verkettung mit dem Teufel in seiner ganzen Schwere dargestellt.[3]

Insofar as the Ass. Mos. lacks an elaborate hierarchy

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[1]Charles, op. cit., p. 421.

[2]Cf. Ass. Mos. 11:17 where Charles translates nuntius by "messenger".

[3]Volz, op. cit., pp. 385-386.

of angels and demons it appears to represent a viewpoint different from and earlier than much of the apocalyptic literature. The figure of Michael is almost certainly taken from Daniel 12:1 or some apocalypse which built upon this passage. But generally the author's attitude towards angels and demons is closer to the regular OT pattern than to that of his contemporaries in the first century A.D.

III. The Supremacy of Moses

A. Pre-existence.

Ass. Mos. 1:14 reads as follows:

> accordingly He designed and devised me, and He prepared me before the foundation of the world, that I should be the mediator of His covenant.

This verse clearly teaches that the soul of Moses was pre-existent and that God shaped his life for a special function. It is not clear whether the author implied that Moses' personality was pre-existent, or whether merely his ruach was involved. Since the Ass. Mos. generally presents a pre-Hellenistic point of view it is improbable that Moses' personality is thought of as pre-existing. Because of the adulation accorded Moses here and throughout the book it is apparent that Moses' pre-existence is exceptional and ordinary beings were not so regarded.

The idea in apocalyptic literature of pre-existence of the souls of great personages is not peculiar to the Ass. Mos. Enoch 39:6,7; 48:2,3; and 62:7 teach the pre-existence of the Son of Man in heaven, again, a phenomenon reserved for

special beings. Wis. Solomon 8:19,20 reflects the new Hellenistic thought of the pre-existence of the soul, which is a persistence of Plato's teaching on the subject, and it was through the Alexandrian Jewish literature that the attitude of Judaism shifted. The Ass. Mos. and Enoch[1] betray an older position that only the souls of the favored pre-exist, but later Judaism held this to be true of all souls, and this view became prevalent.

According to Ass. Mos. 12:6 Moses was not only pre-existent, but even after death he was to fulfill a ministry of intercession for Israel to pray for their sins. This is a pre-Christian doctrine, but not accepted universally in Judaism.

B. Mediator.

The verse cited above, Ass. Mos. 1:14, is preserved by Gelasius of Cyzicum[2] in the Greek translation. This is of interest because it contains the Greek parallel to the Latin arbiter, or mediator. Thus Moses is a μεσίτης whose duty is to intercede on behalf of Israel before God. This thought is found repeatedly in the book either explicitly as in 1:14 and 3:12, or as an implicit thought in the entire passage as in chapter 11.

The Ass. Mos. is not the only Jewish writing to proclaim

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[1]Cf. also Josephus War 2:8:11 where the Essenes are said to have taught pre-existence.

[2]Cf. Comment. Act. Syn. Nic. 2:18.

this idea; rather it appears to have been a popular theme of the intertestamental period. Philo's Vita Mosis 3:9 speaks of Moses as μεσίτης. The rabbinic literature, enlarging upon Deut. 5, promoted the idea of Moses as mediator, an office he filled especially after the receiving of the Decalogue at Mt. Sinai.[1]

In the NT the word μεσίτης is used four times in relation to Moses; these passages are Gal. 3:19,20; Heb. 8:6, 9:15; and 12:24.[2] Moses is not mentioned by name in any of these passages, but the historical allusion to the covenant established between Yahweh and Israel at Mt. Sinai where Moses acted as a mediator is sufficiently clear, particularly in the passages in Hebrews which contrast the two covenants and the two mediators. Concerning the use of μεσίτης in Gal. 3:19 Burton notes that "The mediator is self-evidently Moses",[3] a point on which NT commentaries are generally agreed. Of the passages in the epistle to Hebrews, 8:6 calls most clearly for Moses as the contrasting figure to Jesus; Moses is named in the previous verse. Discussing who the first mediator is, Delitzsch writes: "Denn Mittler des A.B.

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[1]Cf. Ginzberg, op. cit., Vol. III, pp. 106-109, and Charles, R.H., The Assumption of Moses. London: Adam and Charles Black, 1897, pp. 6,7.

[2]Cf. I Tim. 2:5 where it appears, but not in relation to Moses.

[3]Burton, E., A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1921, p. 189.

ist nicht Ahron, sondern Moses. . ."[1]

It is not seriously asserted by any scholar that these NT passages are in any way dependent upon the Ass. Mos.; rather, both the Ass. Mos. and the NT writers were dependent upon the teaching of the OT where Moses assumes paramount importance in the giving of the Law to Israel, and the Ass. Mos., the rabbinic corpus, and these NT passages are but a witness to the signal significance of that event, which occupies so large a place in both the OT and NT.

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[1]Delitzsch, F., Commentar zum Briefe an die Hebräer. Leipzig: 1857, p. 339.

CONCLUSIONS

There has been little new light in recent years on the question of the history of the text and biblical and patristic citations of the Ass. Mos. This material has been carefully sifted and evaluated by earlier scholars of this book. Difference of opinion has arisen concerning the extent of the dependence of the NT writers upon the Ass. Mos. It is plain beyond doubt that Jude made use of the book, but it is seriously open to question whether a vague similarity of passages on the Ass. Mos. and the NT, especially in the Gospels and Acts, implies a dependence of the NT upon the Ass. Mos.

Charles has stated the case for Palestine, probably more exactly Jerusalem, as the place of origin of the book. No recent scholar has deviated from this well-founded argument. Concerning the date of composition judgment has oscillated between the early date of the first half of the first century A.D. and the period of the revolt of Bar Kokhba in 135 A.D. With one exception modern scholarship has taken the earlier date, generally confining it to 6-30 A.D. Zeitlin's preoccupation with the Bar Kokhba period leads him to place the Ass. Mos. in that era, and in so doing he ignores all the facts which point strongly to the earlier date.

The issue of the authorship of the Ass. Mos. is one of the knottiest aspects of this study. It is presumed that the book speaks for one party or sect of the plethora of

political and religious groups of first-century A.D. Palestine. The problem is rendered difficult because of the lack of sufficient and unambiguous evidence of a distinct party viewpoint in the Ass. Mos., because of the number of closely allied but differing parties of this period, and because these parties underwent change in received doctrine with the result that it is often impossible to ascertain which era or doctrine is definitive for a given group. Charles maintained that the Ass. Mos. represents an old Pharisaic viewpoint. The Sadducees are not a live option because of their denial of the super-natural. The Essenes are also eliminated because of their position with respect to the Temple and animal sacrifice. To this may be added the fact of disparity of messianic expectation. Several of Charles' minor points of objection to Essene provenance are not well established (i.e., Essene denial of pre-existence of the soul), but his general thesis appears not to be overthrown by the discoveries of the Zadokite Documents in Cairo or the recent finds near the Dead Sea. It may still be asserted that the Ass. Mos. differs from the Essene group on the points of their attitude to the Temple, animal sacrifice and Messianism. But conclusions in this area must be cradled in caution because so much new information is being brought to light almost daily. It is becoming increasingly clear that the rise and development of Jewish parties in the two centuries before and after Christ is a very complex phenomenon, and definite conclusions are difficult to achieve.

The identity of Taxo has proved to be a vexing problem. This cryptogram has produced a wide variety of opinions, most of them highly speculative. Charles himself changed his mind about this figure and accepted Burkitt's solution which posited that Taxo represents Eleazar who was martyred under Antiochus Epiphanies. This theme of the Jewish martyr dying with his sons re-appears in Josephus' writings but there it is reported to have taken place in the Roman period. It may have attained the status of a minor epic, and the author of the Ass. Mos. appropriated and idealized this figure for purposes peculiar to apocalyptic.

The present Latin text has been examined carefully by Charles and his predecessors who have pronounced it to be a manifestly crude Latin version. It is demonstrable that a Greek version lay back of the Latin text. Greek fragments of the Ass. Mos. have been preserved (Jude, Origin and others), and many of the solecisms of the Latin text become explicable on the basis of a prior Greek version.

Not since Hilgenfeld has any scholar held to a Greek original of the Ass. Mos. It is now universally recognized that the book was originally written in a Semitic language, either Hebrew or Aramaic. The controversy arises between the proponents of these two options. Charles opted for a Hebrew original, and his arguments for and reconstructions of such an original demonstrate the work of a first-class logician and linguist. However, he is too certain of his case, for some of his arguments against an Aramaic original

permit exception. He himself admitted that many of his Hebrew reconstructions could be paralleled in Aramaic. Therefore it appears safer to assert that the Ass. Mos. was probably written in Hebrew, but any attempt to state this positively on the basis of a second version is burdened with difficulties which render positive conclusions precarious.

Charles did little work on the theology of the Ass. Mos., limiting his treatment to a few remarks on such items as Moses, Israel, the messianic or theocratic kingdom and good works. In the present study a new approach was made which examines in greater detail the theological elements of the Ass. Mos., and places this theology against the contemporary Jewish scene of the intertestamental period. The doctrine of God in the Ass. Mos is close to that of other apocalypses of this general age. It has a strongly transcendental view of God, and this is involved also in a modified dualistic Weltanschauung. Further, the Ass. Mos. has a pronounced deterministic view of history; God is sovereign over men and things, but not in such a way as to compromise human responsibility. A curious note in the book is the stress on grace, not law, particularly in the covenant relationship between Yahweh and Israel. The eschaton occupies a large place in the Ass. Mos. It signalizes the end of history, the redemption of ethnic Israel, and the utter destruction of her enemies, the Gentiles. In opposition to the general trend, the Ass. Mos. is non-messianic, perhaps even anti-messianic. God alone will bring about the eschaton and will rule in the

Golden Age which is to take place in heaven, not earth. Contrary to most current apocalypses, the Ass. Mos. has a simple conception of angels and demons. It evinces none of the complex scheme of angels and demons that are found in Daniel, Enoch and others. As to the author's attitude to Moses, the title of the book is an indication. The last third of the book is a long panegyric to the numerous qualities and functions ascribed to Moses. This was probably written with a view to assuring good circulation of the book by using the name of one of Israel's most illustrious heroes.

The conclusions of R.H. Charles have frequently been the focal point of discussion in this thesis for the reason that his work on the Ass. Mos. is the most comprehensive in English. It was imperative to deal with his studies more than with those of any other writer. While the evidences in some crucial places have suggested conclusions either differing from or modifying those of Charles, his main arguments have stood the test of time and re-investigation. His general thesis as to date, author, identity of Taxo, and language has been verified, and his critics have been found not to have materially damaged his position.

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