

## THE TEACHER OF RIGHTEOUSNESS AND THE MESSIAH IN THE DAMASCUS DOCUMENT

BARBARA THIERING, *University of Sydney*

The re-issue of Schechter's 1910 publication of the Zadokite Work<sup>1</sup> reminds us that there are certain controversial passages in this document, concerning the identity of the Teacher of Righteousness with the Messiah. Schechter's original translation supported the view that the two were one and the same. It would be worthwhile looking at subsequent treatments of the relevant passages in translations that have appeared since the discovery of fragments of the same work among the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Schechter published a transcription and translation of two manuscripts, A and B, found in the Cairo Genizah. A is dated 10th cent. A.D., B in the 12th cent. Schechter was criticized severely by R. H. Charles for withholding the manuscripts from other scholars, and for the careless nature of his work.

Fragments of the same document came to light in Cave IV at Qumran. It became clear that it and the other sectarian writings were closely related, although possibly representing different stages in the development of the Qumran sect. The new fragments were sufficient to indicate an altered order of the columns, but translations still depend on the Cairo MSS, photographs of which were published by Zeitlin in 1952.<sup>2</sup> The work is now usually called the Damascus Document.

The controversial passages are 2:12, 5:21-6:1, 7:19, 6:11, 8:13-15, 20:1 (= 8:23).

2:12 reads: *wayyodi'em b'eyad m'esiho ruah qodso*. Schechter gives the obvious translation: 'And through his Anointed He made them know his Holy Spirit'. This is in accord with his view that the Teacher of Righteousness, the founder of the sect ('them') was the Messiah.

R. H. Charles<sup>3</sup> makes it a prophecy, reading the verb as a Iussive (*w'eyodi'em*): 'and through his Messiah he shall make them know his Holy Spirit'.

1. As *Documents of Jewish Sectaries*, Vols. I and II (Two Volumes in One), with a Prolegomenon by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J., Ktav Publishing House Inc., 1970.
2. *The Zadokite Fragments*, S. Zeitlin. Philadelphia, 1952.
3. *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, Vol. II.

Rabin<sup>4</sup> and Cothenet<sup>5</sup> correct the clear *m<sup>e</sup>siho* of the MS to *m<sup>e</sup>sihe*, making it plural construct (by the change of Waw to Yod). Rabin translates: 'and he made them known by the hand of those anointed with his Holy Spirit' (taking the verb as Hophal). Cothenet: 'Et il les instruisit par les consacrés de son esprit de sainteté' (taking verb as Hiphil).

Sutcliffe<sup>6</sup> and Vermes<sup>7</sup> do not change the Waw, but insert a Yod: 'He made known his Holy Spirit to them by the hand of his anointed ones'.

Gaster<sup>8</sup> translates according to Schechter, but in a footnote explains that 'his anointed' (sing.) means 'the anointed priests, custodians and teachers of the Law'. Burrows<sup>9</sup> translation is ambiguous.

The photograph has a very clear Waw, which may be contrasted with a Yod in the same word. This is admittedly a 10th cent. copy of the Qumran scribal hand, in which the two letters were often difficult to distinguish. But there seems to be an *a priori* at work in the succession of emendations (for which there is not the slightest textual justification); namely, that the Teacher could not have been called the Messiah. (Charles' translation, reading a Iussive, is not acceptable because of the context of the passage, the history of the foundation of the sect).

In 5:21-6:1, the problem recurs: *ki dibb<sup>e</sup>ru sarah <sup>e</sup>al miswat 'el b<sup>e</sup>yad moseh w<sup>e</sup>gam bim<sup>e</sup>siho haqqodes*. Schechter reads: 'because they have spoken rebellion against the commandments of God through Moses and also against his holy Anointed One'.

Charles is not sure if the phrase is genuine, but if it is it probably refers to Aaron, or else is a prophecy, as in his reading of 2:12. Cothenet, Vermes, Sutcliffe and Burrows all read a plural and Habermann<sup>9a</sup> prints a plural in his edition of the text. The phrase would then refer to the prophets, 'the holy anointed ones'. Gaster reads a singular, and interprets it as Aaron.

There is a difficulty in the MS here, the last letter being partly obliterated, but the photograph shows the clear outlines of a Waw.

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4. C. Rabin, *The Zadokite Documents*, Oxford, 1958.
  5. In J. Carmignac, E. Cothenet et H. Lignée, *Les Textes de Qumran Traduits et Annotés*, Paris, 1963, pp. 131-204.
  6. Sutcliffe, *The Monks of Qumran*, London, 1960.
  7. G. Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, Pelican, 1962.
  8. T. H. Gaster, *The Scriptures of the Dead Sea Sect*, Secker & Warburg, 1957.
  9. M. Burrows, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, Secker & Warburg, 1956.
  - 9a. A. Habermann, *Megillot Midbar Yehuda*, Israel, 1959.

In the absence of strong confirmatory evidence that the Teacher was regarded messianically, it is right to be cautious about accepting the text. But such evidence is not altogether lacking. M. de Jonge and A. S. van der Woude have studied the 11Q Melchizedek fragment,<sup>10</sup> and find evidence that a singular figure is both a prophet and the Anointed One. They show that the one 'anointed by the Spirit' (*(m<sup>e</sup>)siah harua(h)*) in line 18 of the fragment is the Prophet who would appear together with the two Messiahs at the end of days. The three figures are grouped together in 4Q Testimonia and 1QS ix 11.

It has frequently been argued that the Teacher was identified with the Prophet,<sup>11</sup> the one like Moses who had appeared as a forerunner of the messianic age, and who would again appear in this role in the future. Cf., for instance, CD 20:1 (=8:23), 'from the day of the gathering in of the Teacher until the standing up of the Messiah out of Aaron and Israel'. The term 'anointed one', in the sense used in 4Q Melch. 18, could then have been applied to him.

This does not of course mean that he was *the* Messiah, as a technical term. 'The anointed one', the holder of a messianic office, is a term that can be applied to the community itself, and presumably therefore to its founder. This is shown by the hymn in 1QH iii 6-18, describing the birth of a man to whom unmistakable messianic language is applied ('Wonderful Counsellor'). That the 'man' is the community, the future redeemed Israel that would be born out of the sufferings of the present community, is widely accepted.<sup>11a</sup> Similarly, in 1QH viii 5ff, the community is secretly nurturing the messianic Shoot in its midst, as in a secret garden. The community itself has messianic potentiality. It is messianic, as Israel itself is messianic. It will bring forth the Messiah, as the focus and representative of its own identity. The Teacher was the

10. *N.T.S.*, vol. 2, No. 4, July, 1966, pp. 301-326.

11. M. Black, *The Scrolls and Christian Origins*, Nelson, 1961, p. 159; M. Delcor, 'Le Docteur de Justice, Nouveau Moïse, dans les Hymnes de Qumran'. *Le Psautier*, Etudes présentées aux 12es Journées Bibliques, 1961, Louvain, 1962, pp. 407-423.

11a. M. Black, *The Scrolls and Christian Origins*, Nelson, 1961, p. 150: 'A closer study of this remarkable hymn (1QS iii 6-18) has yielded the quite certain result that it is not of the birth of any particular individual of which the author is speaking, but of the birth of a whole community of people. . . . The reference to the begetting of 'sons' (*banim*) makes it quite evident that it is of a *people* and not of an individual the author is thinking. But it is clearly a people with a 'messianic' mission ('Wonderful Counsellor') and the eschatological setting of the hymn suggests that its subject is the 'birth-pangs of the Messiah' in the sense of the emergence through trial and suffering of the redeemed Israel'.

means of giving the Holy Spirit to the community for this distinctive purpose, and so was himself an Anointed One.

But Schechter goes too far when he equates the Teacher with *the* Messiah who would come in the future. In 6:11, he translates *ʿad ʿamod yoreh hassedeq bʿahʾarit hayyāmin* as ‘until there will arise the teacher of righteousness at the end of the days’. In his introduction he says: ‘Moreover, the Only Teacher, or Teacher of Righteousness, is identical with *mʿsiah* or the Anointed One from Aaron and Israel, whose advent is expected by the sect through whom He made them known His Holy Spirit, and in whose rise the sect saw the fulfilment of the prophecy, ‘there shall come a star out of Jacob’.

On this, M. Black comments:<sup>12</sup> ‘we would then already have in the Messianic doctrine of the sect the conception of the Incarnation and Second Advent of the Messiah’. Lagrange<sup>13</sup> pointed out in 1912 that *yoreh hassedeq* ‘need have no more significance than that of a general title applied to the Messiah’. (The Teacher was called *moreh hassedeq*, and this also is only a title, not a proper name). Subsequent translators have therefore rendered ‘until he comes who shall teach righteousness at the end of days’ (Vermes, Burrows, Cothenet—who argues that the verb may possibly mean ‘cause to rain’ and refer to God, who in the era of salvation will cause justice to rain plentifully on his people, cf. Hos. 10:12). Gaster: ‘until such time as the true Expositor arises at the end of days’.

In 7:19 Schechter again translates in terms of a Messiah who has come. The ambiguous *wʿhakkokāb huʾ dores hʿttorah habbāʾ dammaseq* is rendered: ‘The Star is he who explained the Law who came to Damascus’ (The particle *habbāʾ* could have either a past or fʿʾ reference). This is supported by 6:7-9, which speaks of the Interpreter of the Law as a figure who had come. Cothenet quotes the phrase ‘*Olām habbāʾ*’, the world to come, to justify a future reference, and also argues that the context requires the future, as the Star and the Sceptre are paralleled in the following quotation, and the Sceptre (the prince) is still to come. Charles retains the past tense, as do Sutcliffe and Burrows. Vermes gives a future; Rabin gives alternatives, and suggests that if it is a past tense, Elisha may be meant (II K. 8:7).

The use of the phrase ‘Interpreter of the Law’ as a past figure in 6:7 tends to support a past tense. But in its own context, the

12. *op. cit.* p. 160, note 1.

13. *R.B.*, N.S. 9 (1912), p. 223, n. 4.

phrase is quite ambiguous. Independent evidence is needed that the Teacher could be called 'the Star'.

In 20:1, the *moreh hayyahid* is translated by Schechter as 'the only teacher'. Charles follows him: 'the Unique Teacher'. Vermes translates 'the Teacher of the Community', assuming that *yahid* is no different from *Yahad*, which occurs frequently meaning 'the Community'. The same situation occurs in 20:14 and 32. The spelling *yahid* occurs only in col. 20, part of the 12th cent. alternative MS B, and only in that part of the column which has no parallel in MS A. The word *yahad* does not appear anywhere else in B, and there would be good reason to assume that *yahid* is therefore simply a scribal variant for *yahad*, were it not for the fact that *yahad* does not appear anywhere else in CD. It cannot therefore be automatically assumed that this is the word intended in B. There is one reason for the assumption, in that the unparalleled passage in B, which contains it, is somewhat closer to the other sectarian writings than the rest of CD. E.g. line 9, 'who placed idols upon their hearts and walked in the stubbornness of their hearts', echoes the Covenant curses of IQS ii 11, 14. But the difference in spelling is sufficient to preclude an easy assumption of identity.

The 'only Teacher' seems the best translation. It would give to the Teacher no more than the status of another Moses, a unique lawgiver, the founder of the true Israel.

Another passage where Schechter's translation varies markedly from the others, 8:13-15, may perhaps have helped to give rise to the Margoliouth-Teicher<sup>14</sup> theory about the identity of the Man of Lies (although only accidentally, as Schechter accepted the 2nd cent. B.C. date). It should be mentioned in the present context, as it does appear to support the theory.

These writers saw an irresistible parallel to known facts of Christian history in the fact that a certain Jewish Messianic sect, opposed to Rabbinic Judaism and in particular to the Jerusalem Temple, had been founded by a revered Teacher, and was subsequently troubled by a rebel from its own ranks, one who was condemned from the Torah-centred point of view of the original sect. The 'Man of a Lie' must be the Apostle Paul, and the Teacher was Jesus himself.

14. G. Margoliouth, *Athenaeum*, No. 4335, November 26, 1910, p. 657. J. L. Teicher, *Journal of Jewish Studies* 2 (1951), pp. 67-99; 3 (1952), pp. 53-55, 111-118, 128-132, 139-150; 4 (1953), pp. 1-13, 49-58, 93-103, 139-153; 5 (1954), pp. 38, 93-99.

Teicher developed this view by identifying the 'true Teacher' of the Scrolls with the 'true Prophet' (Jesus) of the Pseudo-Clementines (writings of the Christian Ebionites, with whom Teicher identified the Qumran sect). He suggests that *yhd* where it appears should be vocalised *yahid* = *monos* = the Only One, referring to Jesus. The terms *dikaios* and *dikaioatos*, 'just' and 'the most just', used of Jesus in patristic literature, also reflect the Teacher of Righteousness. The 'hateful man' and the 'pseudapostolos' (Paul) of the Pseudo-Clementines also reflect the 'Man of a Lie' and 'he who drips lies'. "The part assigned to the 'Man of Lies' and the 'Man of Scoffing' in the Zadokite Work and the Habakkuk Scroll reflects exactly the Ebionites' attitude to the Apostle of the Gentiles."<sup>15</sup>

Schechter's translation of 8:13-15 may well have suggested this idea, by its apparent equation of the renegade from the sect with one who taught a doctrine of justification by grace. He reads:

'But upon all these things they meditated not who builded the wall and daubed it with untempered mortar. For one confused of spirit and who dropped lies prophesied to them that (<sup>a</sup>*ser*) the wrath of God was kindled against all his congregation and what Moses said (*w<sup>a</sup><sup>a</sup>*ser* amar moseh*), 'Not for thy righteousness or for the uprightness of thine heart dost thou go to inherit these nations, but because He loved thy fathers and because He would keep the oath.'

The 'one who drops lies' is elsewhere identified as a renegade from the sect, and 'the builders of the wall' are his followers (CD 1:14-15, 4:19-20). The attribution to him here of the quoted words of Moses, by making all the words after <sup>a</sup>*ser* indirect speech depending on 'prophesied', implies that he taught a doctrine of justification apart from works.

Schechter in a footnote does suggest the possibility of breaking the connection between the words of Moses and the Man of a Lie by conjecturing that the words 'and they remembered not (what Moses said)' are missing before the quotation. This takes account of the fact that the words can be seen as relevant to the following sentence ('And so is the law for the captivity of Israel who turned out of the way of the people'). But the translation, by punctuating as it does, leaves the suggestive link standing.

R. H. Charles interprets the syntax differently:

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15. *op. cit.* 2 (1951), p. 98.

'But despite all these things they who builded the wall and daubed it with untempered mortar perceived not—For one who was perturbed of spirit and talked lies talked to them—that the wrath of God was kindled against all His congregation; nor that Moses said, 'Not for thy righteousness or for the uprightness of thine heart dost thou go in to inherit these nations, but because He loved thy fathers and because He would keep the oath'.

The words translated as indirect speech by Schechter are here made those of the narrator, who uses them to condemn the false teachers. But Charles follows Schechter in not making a formal connection with the sentence that follows.

Cothenet takes *'a<sup>ser</sup>* as meaning 'with the result that', and the parallel *w<sup>a'a<sup>ser</sup></sup>*, introducing the words of Moses, as 'as'. He reads:

'Ils n'ont pas compris tout cela, les Bâtisseurs de Muraille et les Crépisseurs de Plâtre, parce que celui qui pèse le vent et bave le mensonge, l'a bavé pour eux, *en sorte que* la colère de Dieu s'est enflammée contre toute sa congrégation'. He goes on to make the words of Moses introduce a new section, relating them to what follows concerning the converts of Israel. It is they who have inherited the land because of God's love for their fathers. This disregards the spacing found in MS A, where there is a distinct space between the quotations from Moses and the following sentence concerning the converts of Israel, while there is no space at the beginning of the line where the words *w<sup>a'a<sup>ser</sup></sup>* *amar moseh* appear. It follows, however, the spacing of MS B, where there is a stop mark and a large space before the words 'and as/what Moses said'. The following words concerning the converts of Israel follow this directly, separated by a punctuation mark but no space.

Other translators (Vermes, Burrows, Rabin, Gaster, Sutcliffe) all separate the words of Moses in the same way, following in this the spacing of B. No connection remains between the 'Man of Lies' and these words.

The matter cannot be decided on the question of the use of *'a<sup>ser</sup>* to introduce indirect speech: this is rare but possible (Est. 3:4, and introducing direct speech I Sam. 15:20, II Sam. 1:4). But it is decided in favour of the later translators by new evidence not available to Schechter: the regular use of *w<sup>a'a<sup>ser</sup></sup>* *amar* to introduce a quotation of Scripture, even at the beginning of a sentence. This is a normal feature of Qumran style. The quotation from Moses is to be taken as a comment by the narrator, and not as part of the preaching of the Man of Lies.

The Margoliouth-Teicher theory, and similar extreme views, may have led to a certain over-reaction, which has caused subsequent scholars to modify the text unjustifiably to remove any use of the term *m<sup>e</sup>siah* and related terms to apply to the Teacher of Righteousness. It would be better to leave the text as it stands, and adopt the natural readings, in order to allow a fact to emerge which is already known from other sources: that the Teacher was the Anointed One in the sense of the Moses-like founder of a new Israel which would eventually bring forth the Messiah. The Messiah was potentially present in the community, which was itself messianic. The Holy Spirit had been given to it by the Teacher, he was *the* Anointed Prophet, the one bringing good tidings of the coming King. But *the* Messiah (or Messiahs) was still to appear in the future, after the Age of Wrath had been completed and the new supernatural Aeon had commenced.