

## **Introduction to the Apocrypha**

Torah in Motion

Dr. Malka Z. Simkovich

February–March 2021

Class 1: The History of the Second Temple Period I

### **Overview**

Historical Timeline: Jewish life under Persia, Greece, and Rome

When did Judaism become an “ism?”

Sectarian Life: Essenes, Pharisees, and Sadducees

The Dead Sea Scrolls

### **Words That I’ll be Avoiding this Course**

Ancient Judaism

Old Testament

Intertestamental Period

Jew/Judean/Judahite?

### **Second Temple Documents**

Josephus c.37-100

Antiquities of the Jews – 20 volume work, late 90s CE

The Jewish War – 7 volume work , 70s CE

Vita (Life) – autobiography

Against Apion – first systematic defense of the Jewish religion

Philo of Alexandria (20 BCE–50 CE)

New Testament

Dead Sea Scrolls

Pseudepigrapha

Apocrypha

### **Works of the Apocrypha**

Law:

[Jubilees]

Histories and Stories:

1 Esdras

Greek Esther

Tobit

Judith

1 Maccabees

2 Maccabees

3 Maccabees

Prophecies:

Letter of Jeremiah

Baruch

Additions to Daniel:

The Prayer of Azariah/The Song of the Three Companions

Susanna

## Bel and the Dragon

4 Ezra

### Poetry and Wisdom:

Psalm 151

Prayer of Manasseh

Wisdom of Solomon

Ben Sira

4 Maccabees

### Timeline

BCE

**1250:** approximate date of the Israelite Exodus

**722:** Northern Israelite kingdom is exiled by Assyria; these exiles comprise “the ten lost tribes”

**7<sup>th</sup> century:** Decline of Assyrian kingdom; rise of Babylonian empire

**587:** Babylonian destruction of the First Temple and the exile of Judea into Babylonia

**539:** End of exilic period; Persia has conquered Babylonia and permits Judeans to return

**525–515:** Building of the Second Temple

**334:** Alexander the Great dies

**200:** Judea transitions from being under Ptolemaic control to being under Antiochid control

**175:** High Priest Simon II dies, and conflict breaks out between supporters of his son Onias III and Jason (Onias’ son was probably the founder of the temple at Leontopolis)

**164:** Judea gains autonomy from the Greeks; Hasmonean dynasty begins

**63:** Pompey invades Jerusalem; Judea now controlled by Roman client kings

**62-61:** Preconsul of Asia Minor, L. Valerius Flaccus, seizes foreign funds designated by diasporan Jews to be sent to the Jerusalem Temple

**59:** Cicero delivers a speech defending Flaccus

**c. 20:** Philo of Alexandria is born

CE:

**6:** Judea becomes a province of Rome

**c.32:** Jesus is crucified by the Romans

**37:** Josephus is born

**38-41:** Riots against the Jews in Alexandria, supported by Flaccus the governor and largely ignored by Gaius Caligula the emperor

**40:** Philo writes *Embassy to Gaius*

**67-70:** Jerusalem riots; Temple destroyed by Romans

**135:** Bar Kokhba revolt: Jews expelled from Jerusalem (which Hadrian had renamed Aelia Capitolina); Rabbinic community moves to Yavneh and the Galilee

**200:** Mishnah edited and likely completed

**6<sup>th</sup> century:** Babylonian Talmud edited and redacted (it will still be subject to small revisions over the next three centuries)

Samples of the Latest Biblical Texts:

Sectarianism

1. Josephus, Life, 2:

At about the age of sixteen I determined to gain personal experience of the several sects into which our nation is divided. These, as I have frequently mentioned, are three in number—the first that of the Pharisees, the second that of the Sadducees, and the third that of the Essenes. I thought that, after a thorough investigation, I should be in a position to select the best. So I submitted myself to hard training and laborious exercises and passed through the three courses. Not content, however, with the experience thus gained, on hearing of one named Bannus, who dwelt in the wilderness, wearing only such clothing as trees provided, feeding on such things as grew of themselves, and using frequent ablutions of cold water, by day and night, for purity's sake, I became his devoted disciple. With him I lived for three years and, having accomplished my purpose, returned to the city. Being now in my nineteenth year I began to govern my life by the rules of the Pharisees, a sect having points of resemblance to that which the Greeks call the Stoic school.

2. Josephus, Antiquities, 13.5.9.

At this time there were three sects among the Jews, who had different opinions concerning human actions; the one was called the sect of the Pharisees, another the sect of the Sadducees, and the other the sect of the Essenes. Now for the Pharisees, they say that some actions, but not all, are the work of fate, and some of them are in our own power, and that they are liable to fate, but are not caused by fate. But the sect of the Essenes affirm that fate governs all things, and that nothing befalls men but what is according to its determination. And for the Sadducees, they take away fate, and say that there is no such thing, and that the events of human affairs are not at its disposal; but they suppose that all our actions are in our own power, so that we are ourselves the cause of what is good, and receive what is evil from our own folly. However, I have give a more exact account of these opinions in the second book of the Jewish War.

3. Josephus, Antiquities, 13.10.6.

What I would now explain is this, that the Pharisees have delivered to the people a great many observances by succession from their fathers, which are not written in the law of Moses; and for that reason it is that the Sadducees reject them and say that we are to esteem those observances to be obligatory which are in the written word, but are not to observe what are derived from the tradition of our forefathers; and concerning these things it is that great disputes and differences have arisen among them, while the Sadducees are able to persuade none but the rich, and have not the populace obsequious to them, but the Pharisees have the multitude of their side; but about these two sects, and that of the Essenes, I have treated accurately in the second book of Jewish affairs.

The Jews had for a great while three sects of philosophy peculiar to themselves; the sect of the Essenes, and the sect of the Sadducees, and the third sort of opinions was that of those called Pharisees; of which sects although I have already spoken in the second book of the Jewish War, yet will I a little touch upon them now. Now, for the Pharisees, they live meanly, and despise delicacies in diet; and they follow the conduct of reason; and what that prescribes to them as good for them, they do; and they think they ought earnestly to strive to observe reason's dictates for practice. They also pay a respect to such as are in years; nor are they so bold as to contradict them in anything which they have introduced; and, when they determine that all things are done by fate, they do not take away the freedom from men of acting as they think fit; since their notion is, that it hath pleased God to make a temperament, whereby what he wills is done, but so that the will of men can act virtuously or viciously. They also believe that souls have an immortal vigor in them, and that under the earth there will be rewards or punishments, according as they have lived virtuously or viciously in this life; and the latter are to be detained in an everlasting prison, but that the former shall have power to revive and life again; on account of which doctrines, **they are able greatly to persuade the body of the people; and whatsoever they do about divine worship, prayers, and sacrifices, they perform them according to their direction; insomuch that the cities gave great attestations to them** on account of their entire virtuous conduct, both in the actions of their lives and their discourses also.

But the doctrine of the Sadducees is this: That souls die with the bodies; nor do they regard the observation of anything besides what the law enjoins them; for they think it an instance of virtue to dispute with those teachers of philosophy whom they frequent; but this doctrine is received but by a few, yet by those still of the greatest dignity; but they are able to do almost nothing of themselves; for when they become magistrates, as they are unwillingly and by force sometimes obliged to be, **they addict themselves to the notions of the Pharisees, because the multitude would not otherwise bear them.**

The doctrine of the Essenes is this: That all things are best ascribed to God. They teach the immortality of souls, and esteem that the rewards of righteousness are to be earnestly striven for; and when they send what they have dedicated to God into the temple, they do not offer sacrifices, because they have more pure lustrations of their own; on which account they are excluded from the common court of the temple, but offer their sacrifices themselves; yet is their course of life better than that of other men; and they entirely addict themselves to husbandry. It also deserves our admiration, how much they exceed all other men that addict themselves to virtue, and this in righteousness; and indeed to such a degree, that as it hath never appeared among any other man, neither Greeks nor barbarians, no, not for a little time, so hath it endured a long while among them. This is demonstrated by that institution of theirs which will not suffer anything to hinder them from having all things in common; **so that a rich man enjoys no more of his own wealth than he who hath nothing at all. There are about four thousand men that live in this way, and neither marry wives,** nor are desirous to keep servants; as thinking the latter tempts men to be unjust, and the former gives the handle to domestic quarrels; but as they live by themselves, they minister one to another. They also appoint certain stewards to receive the incomes of their revenues, and of the fruits of the ground; such as are good men and priests, who are to get their corn and their food ready for them. They none of them differ from others of the Essenes in their way of living, but do the most resemble those Daciae who are called Polistae [dwellers in cities].

**But of the fourth sect of Jewish philosophy,** Judas the Galilean was the author. These men agree in all other things with the Pharisaic notions; but they have an inviolable attachment to liberty; and say that God is to be their only Ruler and Lord. They also do not value dying any kind of death, nor indeed do they heed the deaths of their relationships and friends, nor can any such fear make them call any man Lord; and since this immovable resolution of theirs is well known to a great many, I shall speak no farther about that matter; nor am I afraid that anything I have said of them should be disbelieved, but rather fear, that what I have said is beneath the resolution they show when they undergo pain; and it was in Gessius Florus's time that the nation began to grow mad with this distemper, who was our procurator, and who occasioned the Jews to go wild with it by the abuse of his authority, and to make them revolt from the Romans; and these are the sects of Jewish philosophy.

#### 4. Josephus, *The Jewish War*, II.8.2-14:

For there are three philosophical sects among the Jews. The followers of the first of whom are the Pharisees; of the second the Sadducees; and the third sect, who pretends to a severer discipline, and called Essenes. These last are Jews by birth, and seem to have a greater affection for one another than the other sects have. These Essenes reject pleasures as an evil, but esteem continence, and the conquest over our passions, to be virtue. They neglect wedlock, but choose out other persons' children, while they are pliable, and fit for learning; and esteem them to be of their kindred, and form them according to their own manners. They do not absolutely deny the fitness of marriage, and the succession of mankind thereby continued; but they guard against the lascivious behavior of women, and are persuaded that none of them preserve their fidelity to one man.

These men are despisers of riches, and so very communicative as raises our admiration. Nor is there any one to be found among them who hath more than another; for it is a law among them, that those who come to them must let what they have to be common to the whole order, insomuch, that among them all there is no appearance of poverty or excess of riches, but every one's possessions are intermingled with every other's possessions: and so there is, as it were, one patrimony among all the brethren....**they have no certain city but many of them dwell**

**in every city; and if any of their sect come from other places, what they have lies open for them, just as if it were their own; and they go into such as they never knew before, as if they had been ever so long acquainted with them...**

And as for their piety towards God, it is very extraordinary; for before sunrising they speak not a word about profane matters, but put up certain prayers which they have received from their forefathers, as if they made a supplication for its rising...

For their doctrine is this: That bodies are corruptible, and that the matter they are made of it not permanent; but that **the souls are immortal, and continue forever; and that they come out of the most subtle air, and are united to their bodies as in prisons, into which they are drawn by a certain natural enticement; but that then they are set free from the bonds of the flesh, they then, as released from a long bondage, rejoice and mount upward. And this is like the opinion of the Greeks, that good souls have their habitations beyond the ocean, in a region that is neither oppressed with storms of rain, or snow, or with intense heat, but that this place is such as is refreshed by the gentle breathing of a west wing, that is perpetually blowing from the ocean; while they allot to bad souls a dark and tempestuous den, full of never-ceasing punishments. And indeed the Greeks seem to me to have followed the same notion, when they allot the islands of the blessed to their brave men, whom they call heroes and demigods; and to the souls of the wicked, the region of the ungodly, in Hades...**

There are also those among them who undertake to foretell things to come, by reading the holy books, and using several sorts of purifications, and being perpetually conversant in the discourses of the prophets; and it is but seldom that they miss in their predictions.

**Moreover, there is another order of Essenes, who agree with the rest as to their way of living, and customs, and laws, but differ from them in the point of marriage, as thinking that by not marrying they cut off the principal part of the human life, which is the prospect of succession; nay rather, that if all men should be of the same opinion, the whole race of mankind would fail.** However, they try their spouses for three years; and if they find that they have their natural purgations thrice, as trials that they are likely to be fruitful, they then actually marry them...

**But then as to the other two other orders at first mentioned: the Pharisees are those who are esteemed most skillful in the exact explication of their laws,** and introduce the first sect. These ascribe to all fate [or providence], and to God, and yet allow, that to act what is right, or the contrary, is principally in the power of men, although fate does cooperate in every action. They say that all souls are incorruptible; but that the souls of good men are only removed into other bodies, but that the souls of bad men are subject to eternal punishment. But the Sadducees are those that compose the second order, and take away fate entirely, and suppose that God is not concerned in our doing or not doing what is evil; and they say, that to act what is good, or what is evil, is at men's own choice, and that the one or the other belongs so to every one, that they may act as they please. They also take away the belief of the immortal duration of the soul, and the punishments and rewards in Hades. Moreover, the Pharisees are friendly to one another, and are for the exercise of concord and regard for the public. But the behavior of the Sadducees one towards another is in some degree wiled; and their conversation with those that are of their own party is as barbarous as if they were strangers to them. And this is what I had to say concerning the philosophic sects among the Jews.

The Specifics:

**A. Pharisees:**

[Josephus, Antiquities, XIII.15:5-9]

New Testament: Matthew 12:34-39, 15:7-8, 23:2-33; Mark 7:5-13; Luke 11:39-49, 15:1-2, 18:9-13; John 5:39-40; 12:48-50

## **B. Sadducees:**

[Josephus, Antiquities, XIII.10:6]  
Matthew 23:23

### 5. Matthew 22:23-40

23 The same day some Sadducees came to him, saying there is no resurrection;\* and they asked him a question, saying, <sup>24</sup>“Teacher, Moses said, “If a man dies childless, his brother shall marry the widow, and raise up children for his brother.” <sup>25</sup>Now there were seven brothers among us; the first married, and died childless, leaving the widow to his brother. <sup>26</sup>The second did the same, so also the third, down to the seventh. <sup>27</sup>Last of all, the woman herself died. <sup>28</sup>In the resurrection, then, whose wife of the seven will she be? For all of them had married her.’

29 Jesus answered them, ‘You are wrong, because you know neither the scriptures nor the power of God. <sup>30</sup>For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels\* in heaven. <sup>31</sup>And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God, <sup>32</sup>“I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob”? He is God not of the dead, but of the living.’ <sup>33</sup>And when the crowd heard it, they were astounded at his teaching.

34 When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, <sup>35</sup>and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. <sup>36</sup>Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest? <sup>37</sup>He said to him, ‘“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” <sup>38</sup>This is the greatest and first commandment. <sup>39</sup>And a second is like it: “You shall love your neighbour as yourself.” <sup>40</sup>On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.’ (Trans. NRSV) (Cf. Mark 12)

### 6. Mishnah Yadayim 4:6-7:

The Sadducees said, "We blame [object to] you Pharisees, because you say, 'Sacred Scriptures make the hands unclean, but the books Hameram do not make the hands unclean.'" Rabbon Jochanan ben Zachai replied [ironically], "And have we nothing else to object to the Pharisees but this? They also assert that the bones of an ass are clean, but the bones of Jochanan the high priest are unclean." They [the Sadducees] replied, "According to their love [the estimation in which the bones are held] is their uncleanness, so that no one may turn the bones of his father and mother into spoons." He answered them, "In like manner [are] the sacred Scriptures; according to their love [the high estimation in which they are held] is their uncleanness; whereas the books Hameram, which are not beloved [held in no esteem], do not make the hands unclean."

The Sadducees said, "We blame [object to] you Pharisees, that ye declare the stream [which flows when water is poured from a clean vessel into an unclean one] to be clean." The Pharisees replied [with much better right], "We [may] blame [object to] you Sadducees, that ye declare a streamlet of water which flows from a burial ground to be clean." The Sadducees [further] said, "We blame [object to] you Pharisees, because ye say, 'If mine ox or mine ass cause any damage, I am bound [to make compensation], but should my bondman or bondwoman cause any damage, I am absolved [from making compensation];' if I am bound for mine ox and mine ass, respecting which there are no duties enjoined on me, [does it not follow that] for my bondman or bondwoman, respecting whom there are duties enjoined on me, it is just that I should [also] be bound [to compensate] for the damage he [or she] occasions?" [But] they [the Pharisees] replied, "Not the same rule which applies to mine ox or mine ass, that are not possessed of reason, can apply to my bondman or bondwoman, who are possessed of reason; for, should I offend them, they may [maliciously] set fire to the growing corn of another person, in order that I might be bound to pay for it." (Trans. Sefaria.Org)

## **C. Essenes:**

7. Philo of Alexandria, *Hypothetica*, 11:1-18

[The Essenes] live in many cities of Judaea and in many villages and grouped in great societies of many members. Their persuasion is not based on birth, for birth is not a descriptive mark of voluntary associations, but on their zeal for virtue and desire to promote brotherly love. Thus no Essene is a mere child nor even a stripling or newly bearded, since the characters of such are unstable with a waywardness corresponding to the immaturity of their age, but full grown and already verging on old age, no longer carried under by the tide of the body nor led by the passions, but enjoying the veritable, the only real freedom. This freedom is attested by their life. None of them allows himself to have any private property, either house or slave or estate or cattle or any of the other things which are amassed and abundantly procured by wealth, but they put everything together into the public stock and enjoy the benefit of them all in common.

**They live together formed into clubs, bands of comradeship with common meals, and never cease to conduct all their affairs to serve the general weal.** But they have various occupations at which they labour with untiring application and never plead cold or heat or any of the violent changes in the atmosphere as an excuse. Before the sun is risen they betake themselves to their familiar tasks and only when it sets force them selves to return, for they delight in them as much as do those who are entered for gymnastic competitions. For they consider that the exercises which they practise whatever they may be are more valuable to life, more pleasant to soul and body and more lasting than those of the athlete in as much as they can still be plied with vigour when that of the body is past its prime.

Some of them labour on the land skilled in sowing and planting, some as herdsmen taking charge of every kind of cattle and some superintend the swarms of bees. Others work at the handicrafts to avoid the sufferings which are forced upon us by our indispensable requirements and shrink from no innocent way of getting a livelihood. Each branch when it has received the wages of these so different occupations gives it to one person who has been appointed as treasurer. He takes it and at once buys what is necessary and provides food in abundance and anything else which human life requires. **Thus having each day a common life and a common table they are content with the same conditions, lovers of frugality who shun expensive luxury as a disease of both body and soul.**

And not only is their table in common but their clothing also. For in winter they have a stock of stout coats ready and in summer cheap vests, so that he who wishes may easily take any garment he likes, since what one has is held to belong to all and conversely what all have one has. Again if anyone is sick he is nursed at the common expense and tended with care and thoughtfulness by all. The old men too even if they are childless are treated as parents of a not merely numerous but very filial family and regularly close their life with an exceedingly prosperous and comfortable old age; so many are those who give them precedence and honour as their due and minister to them as a duty voluntarily and deliberately accepted rather than enforced by nature.

**Furthermore they eschew marriage because they clearly discern it to be the sole or the principal danger to the maintenance of the communal life,** as well as because they particularly practise continence. For no Essene takes a wife, because a wife is a selfish creature, excessively jealous and an adept at beguiling the morals of her husband and seducing him by her continued impostures. For by the fawning talk which she practises and the other ways in which she plays her part like an actress on the stage she first ensnares the sight and hearing, and when these subjects as it were have been duped she cajoles the sovereign mind.

And if children come, filled with the spirit of arrogance and bold speaking she gives utterance with more audacious hardihood to things which before she hinted covertly and under disguise, and casting off all shame she compels him to commit actions which are all hostile to the life of fellowship. For he who is either fast bound in the love lures of

his wife or under the stress of nature makes his children his first care ceases to be the same to others and unconsciously has become a different man and has passed from freedom into slavery. Such then is the life of the Essenes, a life so highly to be prized that not only commoners but also great kings look upon them with admiration and amazement, and the approbation and honours which they give add further veneration to their venerable name.

8. Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, 5.15: 1<sup>st</sup> century Rome.

(17.) Lying on the west of Asphaltites, and sufficiently distant to escape its noxious exhalations, are the Esseni<sup>29</sup>, a people that live apart from the world, and marvellous beyond all others throughout the whole earth, for they have no women among them; to sexual desire they are strangers; money they have none; the palm-trees are their only companions. Day after day, however, their numbers are fully recruited by multitudes of strangers that resort to them, driven thither to adopt their usages by the tempests of fortune, and wearied with the miseries of life. **Thus it is, that through thousands of ages, incredible to relate, this people eternally prolongs its existence, without a single birth taking place there;** so fruitful a source of population to it is that weariness of life which is felt by others. (Trans. John Bostock; Perseus.Tufts.Edu)

**D. Hasidim:**

[1 Maccabees 2:37-47]

i) 1 Maccabees 7:8-18

8 So the king chose Bacchides, one of the king's Friends, governor of the province Beyond the River; he was a great man in the kingdom and was faithful to the king. <sup>9</sup>He sent him, and with him he sent the ungodly Alcimus, whom he made high priest; and he commanded him to take vengeance on the Israelites. <sup>10</sup>So they marched away and came with a large force into the land of Judah; and he sent messengers to Judas and his brothers with peaceable but treacherous words. <sup>11</sup>But they paid no attention to their words, for they saw that they had come with a large force. <sup>12</sup>Then a group of scribes appeared in a body before Alcimus and Bacchides to ask for just terms. <sup>13</sup>The Hasideans were first among the Israelites to seek peace from them, <sup>14</sup>for they said, 'A priest of the line of Aaron has come with the army, and he will not harm us.' <sup>15</sup>Alcimus spoke peaceable words to them and swore this oath to them, 'We will not seek to injure you or your friends.' <sup>16</sup>So they trusted him; but he seized sixty of them and killed them in one day, in accordance with the word that was written, <sup>17</sup>'The flesh of your faithful ones and their blood they poured out all around Jerusalem, and there was no one to bury them.' <sup>18</sup>Then the fear and dread of them fell on all the people, for they said, 'There is no truth or justice in them, for they have violated the agreement and the oath that they swore.' (NRSV)

j) 2 Maccabees 14:1-11

3 Now a certain Alcimus, who had formerly been high priest but had willfully defiled himself in the times of separation, realized that there was no way for him to be safe or to have access again to the holy altar, <sup>4</sup>and went to King Demetrius in about the one hundred and fifty-first year, presenting to him a crown of gold and a palm, and besides these some of the customary olive branches from the temple. During that day he kept quiet. <sup>5</sup>But he found an opportunity that furthered his mad purpose when he was invited by Demetrius to a meeting of the council and was asked about the attitude and intentions of the Jews. He answered:

6 'Those of the Jews who are called Hasideans, whose leader is Judas Maccabeus, are keeping up war and stirring up sedition, and will not let the kingdom attain tranquillity. <sup>7</sup>Therefore I have laid aside my ancestral glory—I mean the high-priesthood—and have now come here, <sup>8</sup>first because I am genuinely concerned for the interests of



the king, and second because I have regard also for my compatriots. For through the folly of those whom I have mentioned our whole nation is now in no small misfortune. (NRSV)

## **The Dead Sea Scrolls**

### **Language:**

- 85% Hebrew
- 11-12% Aramaic
- 3-4% Greek

### **Content:**

- The Bible (except Esther)
- Rewritings of the Bible
- Documents About the Sect

### **Biblical Interpretation**

Pesher Habbakuk

Pesher Nahum

### **Bible Rewriting**

Genesis Apocryphon

Jubilees

### **Codes for Living in the Sect**

Damascus Document

Community Rule

### **Examples of Each Category:**

#### **I. The Genesis Apocryphon**

And I (Abram) departed....and I travelled towards the south...until I came to Hebron [at the time when Hebron] was being built; and I dwelt there [two years]. Now there was a famine in all this land, and hearing that there was prosperity in Egypt I went...to the land of Egypt...I [came to] the river Karmo, one of the branches of the River (Nile)...and I crossed the seven branches of the River...We passed through our land and entered the land of the sons of Ham, the land of Egypt.

And on the night of our entry into Egypt, I, Abram, dreamt a dream; [and behold], I saw in my dream a cedar tree and a palm tree...men came and they sought to cut down the cedar tree and to pull up its roots, leaving the palm tree (standing) alone. But the palm tree cried out saying, "Do not cut down this cedar tree, for cursed be he who shall fell [it]." And the cedar tree was spared because of the palm tree and [was] not felled.

And during the night I woke from my dream, and I said to Sarai my wife, 'I have dreamt a dream... [and I am] fearful [because of] this dream.' She said to me, 'Tell me your dream that I may know it.' So I began to tell her this dream...[the interpretation] of the dream...'...that they will seek to kill me, but will spare you...[Say to them] of me, "He is my brother," and because of you I shall live, and because of you my life shall be saved..."

And Sarai wept that night on account of my words...

Then we journeyed towards Zoan, I and Sarai...by her life that none should see her...

And when those five years had passed, three men from among the princes of Egypt [came at the command] of Pharaoh of Zoan to inquire after [my] business and after my wife and they gave...goodness, wisdom, and truth. And I exclaimed before them...because of the famine...And they came to ascertain...with much food and drink...the wine...

(During the party, the Egyptians must have seen Sarai, and on their return they praised her to the king).

'.....and beautiful is her face! How...fine are the hairs of her head! How lovely are her eyes! How desirable her nose and all the radiance of her countenance...How fair are her breasts and how beautiful all her whiteness! How pleasing are her arms and how perfect her hands, and how [desirable] all the appearance of her hands! How fair are her palms and how long and slender are her fingers! How comely are her feet, how perfect her thighs! No virgin or bride led into the marriage chamber is more beautiful than she; she is fairer than all other women. Truly, her beauty is greater than theirs. Yet together with all this grace she possessed abundant wisdom, so that whatever she does is perfect (?).' When the king heard the words of Harkenosh and his two companions, for all three spoke as with one voice, he desired her greatly and sent out at once to take her. And seeing her, he was amazed by all her beauty and took her to be his wife, but he sought to kill. Sarai said to the king, "He is my brother," that I might benefit from her, and I, Abram, was spared because of her and I was not slain.

And I, Abram, wept aloud that night, I and my nephew Lot, because Sarai had been taken from me by force. I prayed that night and I begged and implored, and I said in my sorrow while my tears ran down: "Blessed art Thou, O Most High God, Lord of all the worlds, Thou who art Lord and king of all things and who rulest over all the kings of the earth and judgest them all! I cry now before Thee, my Lord, against Pharaoh of Zoan the king of Egypt, because of my wife who has been taken from me by force. Judge him for me that I may see Thy mighty hand raised against him and against all his household, and that he may not be able to defile my wife this night (separating her) from me, and that they may know Thee, my Lord, that Thou art Lord of all the kings of the earth. And I wept and was sorrowful."

## II. Peshar Habakkuk:

*Moreover, the arrogant man seizes wealth without haling. He widens his gullet like Hell and like Death he has never enough. All the nations are gathered to him and all the peoples are assembled to him. Will they not all of them taunt him and jeer at him saying, "Woe to him who amasses that which is not his! How long will he load himself up with pledges?" (2.5–6)*

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

*Shall not your oppressors suddenly arise and your torturers awaken; and shall you not become their prey? Because you have plundered many nations, all the remnant of the peoples shall plunder you (2.7–8a)*

[Interpreted, this concerns] the Priest who rebelled [and violated] the precepts [of God...to command] his chastisement by means of the judgments of wickedness. And they inflicted horrors of evil diseases and took vengeance upon his body of flesh. And as for that which He said, *Because you have plundered many nations, all the remnant of the peoples shall plunder you:* interpreted this concerns the last Priests of Jerusalem, who shall amass money and wealth by plundering the people. But in the last days, their riches and booty shall be delivered into the hands of the army of the Kittim, for it is they who shall be the *remnant of the peoples*.

*Because of the blood of men and the violence done to the land, to the city, and to all its inhabitants (2.8b)*

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

*Woe to him who gets evil profit for his house; who perches his nest high to be safe from the hand of evil! You have devised shame to your house: by cutting off many peoples you have forfeited your own soul. For the [stone] cries out [from] the wall [and] the beam from the woodwork replies (2.9–11)*

[Interpreted, this] concerns the [Priest] who...that its stones might be laid in oppression and the beam of its woodwork in robbery. And as for that which He said, *By cutting off many peoples you have forfeited your own soul:* Interpreted this concerns the condemned House whose judgment God will pronounce in the midst of many peoples. He will bring him thence for judgment and will declare him guilty in the midst of them, and will chastise him with fore of brimstone.

*Woe to him who builds a city with blood and founds a town upon falsehood! Behold, is it not from the Lord of hosts that the peoples shall labor for fire and the nations shall strive for naught? (2.12–13)*

Interpreted, this concerns the Spouter of Lies who led many astray that he might build his city of vanity with blood and raise a congregation on deceit, causing many thereby to perform a service of vanity for

the sake of its glory, and to be pregnant with [works] of deceit, that their labor might be for nothing and that they might be punished with fire who vilified and outraged the elect of God.

*For as the waters cover the sea, so shall the earth be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord (2.14).*

Interpreted, [this means that] when they return...the lies. And afterwards, knowledge shall be revealed to them abundantly, like the waters of the sea.

*Woe to him who causes his neighbors to drink; who pours out his venom to make them drunk that he may gaze on their feasts (2.15).*

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

*You have filled yourself with ignominy more than with glory. Drink also, and stagger! The cup of the Lord's right hand shall come round to you and shame shall come on your glory (2.16).*

Interpreted, this concerns the Priest whose ignominy was greater than his glory. For he did not circumcise the foreskin of his heart, and he walked in the ways of drunkenness that he might quench his thirst. But the cup of the wrath of God shall confuse him, multiplying his...and the pain of...

*[For the violence done to Lebanon shall overwhelm you, and the destruction of the beasts] shall terrify you, because of the blood of men and the violence done to the land, the city, and all its inhabitants (2.17).*

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

### III. The Community Rule

The Master shall instruct all the sons of light and shall teach them the nature of all the children of men according to the kind of spirit which they possess, the signs identifying their works during their lifetime, their visitation for chastisement, and the time of their reward.

From the God of Knowledge comes all that is and shall be. Before ever they existed He established their whole design, and when, as ordained for them, they come into being, it is in accord with His glorious design that they accomplish their task without change. The laws of all things are in His hand and He provides them with all their needs...

All the children of righteousness are ruled by the Prince of Light and walk in the ways of light, but all the children of injustice are ruled by the Angel of Darkness and walk in the ways of darkness. The Angel of Darkness leads all the children of righteousness astray, and until his end, all their sin, iniquity, wickedness, and all their unlawful deeds are caused by his dominion in accordance with the mysteries of God. Every one of their chastisements, and every one of the seasons of their distress, shall be brought about by the rule of his persecution; for all his allotted spirits seek the overthrow of the sons of light.

But the God of Israel and His Angel of Truth will succour all the sons of light. For it is He who created the spirits of Light and Darkness and founded every action upon them...

These are the ways in which all of them shall walk, each man with his companion, wherever they dwell. The man of lesser rank shall obey the greater in matters of work and money. They shall eat in common and bless in common and deliberate in common.

Wherever there are ten men of the Council of the Community there shall not lack a Priest among them. And they shall sit before him according to their rank and shall be asked their counsel in all things in that order. And when the table has been prepared for eating, and the new wine for drinking, the Priest shall be the first to stretch out his hand to bless the firstfruits of the bread and new wine.

And where the ten are, there shall never lack a man among them who shall study the Law continually, day and night, concerning the right conduct of a man with his companion...

No man shall interrupt a companion before his speech has ended, nor speak before a man of higher rank; each man shall speak in his turn. And in an Assembly of the Congregation no man shall speak without the consent of the Congregation, nor indeed of the Guardian of the Congregation. Should any man wish to speak to the Congregation, yet not be in a position to question the Council of the Community, let him rise to his feet and say: "I have something to say to the Congregation." If they command him to speak, he shall speak.

(trans. Geza Vermes)