

THE SADDUCEAN CHRISTIANS OF DAMASCUS.

THE Zadokite document published by Dr. Schechter, of New York, through the Cambridge University Press towards the end of last year has now entered on the stage of full discussion. The history of the controversy so far is as follows: In the Introduction to his edition of the text, Dr. Schechter considered the Teacher of Righteousness spoken of in the exordium, of which a translation is given in this article, to be identical with the Messiah descended from Aaron and Israel, who is first mentioned near the beginning of the same portion of the text. The historical, or rather traditional, person meant by this Messiah was, according to him, a certain Zadok, the reputed founder of the Zadokite sect, whom the learned editor is inclined to place somewhere early in the second century B.C.

Instead, however, of identifying the sect of the document with the Sadducees, he holds that his new find emanated from the Dositheans, a body of sectaries whose history is admittedly as vague and uncertain as anything can be, but whom Dr. Schechter supposes to have been an offshoot from the second century Zadokites. The character styled by the sectaries Belial, "the man of scoffing," and "the man of lies," is according to him merely a personification of the Hellenistic persecutions which preceded the Maccabean revolt. On November 26 last year the present writer published a signed article in *The Athenæum*, in which Dr. Schechter's explanations were disputed all along the line, and the theory was put forward that the Messiah from Aaron and Israel, who must on mere grounds of correct construing be regarded as different from the Teacher of Righteousness, represents none other than John the Baptist, that religious

leader being described as one who caused the people "to meditate over their sin" so that they knew themselves to be "guilty men." The Teacher of Righteousness, by whose agency the gift of the Holy Spirit was (according to this reading of the document) bestowed on His followers, could, after the first identification, be applied to no one but Jesus Himself. That, furthermore, St. Paul should have been stigmatised by the fanatical Judaisers, from whom the document emanated, as Belial who led the people away from the observance of everything that to them was most sacred, could, in the light of all that we know of early Christian history and of the Apostle's difficulties and struggles, not be in the least surprising.

Such a view of the document had naturally something startling about it. The notices of the discussion which appeared in the general Press left, of course, the matter exactly where it stood before. But scholars set to work at once keenly to study the text itself. In a spirited review which appeared in *The Jewish Chronicle* for December 9, 1910, Mr. Israel Abrahams contrasted Dr. Schechter's theory with that advocated in *The Athenæum*, without, however, arriving at a sufficiently definite conclusion on the matter. The next longer article on the subject appeared early this year in *Reformation* (No. 7) from the pen of Professor H. L. Strack. As he, however, promises a fuller treatment of the subject after a more searching examination ("nach genauerer Untersuchung") of the text, his final judgment yet remains to be made known. In the article referred to¹ he provisionally accepts Dr. Schechter's Dosithean theory, but refers the events in question to B.C. 47 or 27, instead of that scholar's

¹ The criticism of Professor Strack's provisional interpretation of one vital point in the document will be discussed farther on in the present article in connexion with the paper on the "Two Zadokite Messiahs" in *The Journal of Theological Studies* for last April.

290 B.C. or a hundred years later. Professor W. Bacher, in a long contribution to the *Zeitschrift für Hebräische Bibliographie* for January–February (an article which should on many essential points, in the opinion of the present writer, also be regarded as provisional) passes over lightly the Dosithean part of Dr. Schechter's theory, though agreeing with him on the general Zadokite interpretation; but it is significant that he definitely refers the composition of the document to the earlier part of the second half-century of the Christian Era, thus coming in this respect very near the standpoint adopted in the *Athenæum* article (more on this point, however, presently). The similar position taken up by M. Israel Lévi, of Paris, is sufficiently indicated by the title: "Un Écrit Sadducéen Antérieur à la Destruction du Temple," under which he began a series of articles in the "Revue des Études Juives" for April. Three important attempts to solve the problem were made in leading American theological quarterlies for July. Dr. Kaufmann Kohler, in *The American Journal of Theology*, tries to show that the document is not Sadducean, but represents a manifesto of a Samaritan sect founded by Dositheus in the first century before the Christian Era. Professor George F. Moore, writing in *The Harvard Theological Review*, places the migration of the sect to Damascus and the writing of their manifesto in the middle of the second century B.C. or near the time of the disasters under Antiochus Epiphanes. He rejects, however, both the Sadducean and the Dosithean hypothesis, and regards the body of sectaries as so far not otherwise known. In an article, lastly, contributed by Dr. William Hayes Ward to *Bibliotheca Sacra* the opinion is put forward that the sect had greater affinities with the Pharisees than with the Sadducees, and it is there considered likely "that the date would be soon after the persecution of the Pharisees by the Sadducean Alexander Jannaus, or not long before the middle of

the first century B.C."¹ The latest account given of the document appeared in *The Jewish Review* for September, the writer being Dr. S. Poznański, of Warsaw. The general position there adopted is a strictly impartial one, the problem being regarded as so far insoluble. On the question of the date of composition, however, the time immediately preceding or immediately following the destruction of the Second Temple is definitely adopted. The impression which the document has made on this serious critic is shown in his expression of opinion that the problem "is calculated to evoke the ingenuity of scholars to such a degree that the research of the next few years will be even more concentrated upon our publication than it was on the book which followed the discovery of the Hebrew Sirach."

The opinion of the present writer has since the beginning of the controversy become considerably strengthened, partly through fresh points that have revealed themselves in the document, and partly through a general consideration of the historico-religious problem that is involved. It must also be owned that he finds additional confirmation of his view in what he regards as the ineffectual arguments that have been put forward in favour of opposing theories, the process of elimination of rival hypotheses being naturally here, as in problems of a similar kind, of high value.

The main strength of the early Judæo-Christian interpretation of the document must, of course, continue to lie in the apparent impossibility of satisfactorily identifying the chief characters referred to in it with any other historical persons

¹ It is from a critical point of view worth noting that in the *New York Independent* for September, Dr. Ward treats the rejection (may be, temporarily) of the present writer's theory by the three American scholars named (Dr. Ward himself, as has been seen, included) as a kind of consensus against that theory; but the consensus of all the scholars named by him in the same Journal would with equal cogency show the untenableness of his own theory that the document emanated from a section of the Pharisees.

except John the Baptist, Christ, and St. Paul ; and in order to set out this view of the case in full and proper form amidst the attendant circumstances of time and place, it seems best to give a translation of the exordium of the manifesto, with a running commentary on it in the form of "Notes and Discussions," and to preface the rendering of the text by a series of remarks on the vital questions which demand a solution one way or the other.

I. *Vital Questions Involved.*

1. *The question of date.*—There are two time indications in the document, of which the first, though having so far proved sufficiently perplexing, may reasonably be referred to near the time styled *Anno Domini*, and the second in its full natural sense pointing to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in A.D. 70.

a. On p. 1, ll. 5-8 we have the following sentence, which will in its full context be found farther on in the article :—
"And at the end of the wrath, [namely] three hundred and ninety years after delivering them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babel, has he visited them, and caused to sprout from Israel and Aaron a root of planting," etc.

As the destruction of the Holy City by the armies of the Babylonian king just named took place in the year 586 B.C., 390 years after that event would, on the ordinary reckoning, bring us to B.C. 196. Strangely enough, Dr. Schechter made 290 of it, and—almost more remarkable still—the twenty years or so that elapsed between that period and the appearance of the Teacher of Righteousness would according to him take us into the second quarter of the next century, namely, "the Hellenistic persecutions preceding the Maccabean revolt" (Introduction, p. xii.). As, however, the result thus obtained did not seem to recommend itself on other grounds, Dr. Schechter was strongly inclined to the opinion

that the 390 years stand for 490 years, and that this longer period itself is not to be taken literally, as it was in all probability only intended to signify a round number originating in the prophetic idea of seventy weeks of years¹ (Introduction, pp. xxii.-xxiii.). The argument hereupon put forward by the present writer was that, if the date is in any case inexact, we are left free to gather our impressions of the period to which the document points from the characterisation of the persons and events referred to in it.

It now seems more probable, however, that the 390 years are to be taken seriously² from the original author's point of view, and that he merely worked on a faulty chronology that was in one form or another prevalent in his time. According to the accepted reckoning, the Persian domination of Palestine lasted from 538 (1st year of Cyrus) to 332 (Alexander's invasion of Palestine), and the entire period that elapsed between the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and the year designated *Anno Domini* is taken to have occupied 586 years. But in the *Séder 'Olām Rabbah* (generally ascribed to R. Yōsē b. Ḥalafta, who lived in the second half of the second century A.D.), as well as in the Talmudic tractate, '*Abodah Zarah*, fol. 9a, we have the following quasi-chronological statement:—"Persian rule, while the Temple was standing, lasted 34 years; Greek rule, while the Temple was standing, extended over 180 years; Hasmonæan supremacy, while the Temple was standing, continued for 103 years; Herodian rule also lasted 103 years."—It will

¹ For a similar explanation of the erroneous early Jewish chronology, to which reference will be made presently, see *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. iv., pp. 70-71.

² This view appears to be confirmed by the analogy of the 390 days in Ezek. iv. 5, which similarly brings to an end the burden of iniquity (answering to the "end of the wrath" in the document). Ezekiel, as the grand prophet-priest, was only too likely to serve the priestly Sadduceans as a model in many things. If so, the number 390 need only be taken as approximately (though pretty closely) giving the date.

thus be seen that the 206 years, which on the usual reckoning given above was the period of Greek domination, were compressed by Jewish chronologists into 34 years ; while to Greek overlordship 180 years were given, instead of about 166 on the ordinary computation (taking it to have extended from the invasion of Alexander in 332, to the rising under Mattathias in 167 B.C.) The whole period extending from the rebuilding of the Temple to its destruction under Titus is on Rabbinic chronology made to last only 420 years instead of 585 years (from 515 B.C. to 70 A.D.), thus deducting 165 years from what is regarded as the real length of the period. Reckoning from the destruction of the Temple by Nebuchadnezzar, the period usually assigned is 656 years (from 586 B.C. to 70 A.D.), whilst Rabbinic chronology makes it 488 (420 + 68). It would follow, therefore, that in order to arrive at the actual date that is meant by the 390 years after the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, 165 years have to be added, thus obtaining the date 555 (i.e., B.C. 30) after the catastrophe under Nebuchadnezzar for the appearance of the Messiah from Aaron and Israel.

But there is something further to be said about it. The quasi-chronological data mentioned are introduced in *'Abōdāh Zārāh* by way of contrasting it with what appeared a rival chronology that shortened the period by another 26 years. On fol. 8*b* of the tractate, Rabbi Yishmā'el (son of Rabbi Yōsē, the reputed author of the *Séder 'Olām*) is reported to have stated that Roman overlordship during the time of the Second Temple lasted 180 years ; and as Roman dominion was considered by the Rabbis to have begun on the cessation of Greek overlordship, and therefore comprised the entire period of Hasmonaeon and Herodian supremacy, the 180 years of Rabbi Yishmā'el fell short by 26 years of the period of 206 years (103 Hasmonaeon, and 103 Herodian) usually accepted in Talmudical circles. This discrepancy is

then harmonized by explaining that the first 26 years are not counted as Roman overlordship in the ordinary sense because the Romans had during that time kept faith with the Jews, treating them as allies rather than a subject race.

Now the question must be raised whether this harmonising statement is not a mere effort on the part of later Rabbinic teachers at bridging over a real difference of chronological opinion that existed in Mishnaic times (i.e. before A.D. 200). The actual beginning of Roman influence of course began with the embassy sent by Judas Maccabaeus to Rome about 161 B.C. (see Josephus, *Ant.*, Book xii., xi., 6; 1 Macc. ch. viii.), and it would be rather too nice a way of political dating on the part of Rabbi Yishmā'el, or on the part of his father, Rabbi Yōsē b. Ḥalafta,¹ on whose authority he is reported to have made the statement in question, to deduct just 26 years from the period of Roman influence as having been a time of absolute freedom for the Jews from both Greek and Roman domination. There is at any rate fairly good reason for thinking that the 180 years of Rabbi Yishmā'el's chronological statement were as seriously meant to cover the entire period of Roman overlordship as the 206 years given in '*Abōdāh Zārāh*, fol. 9a, and in the *Sēder 'Olām Rabbah*, both chronologies in all probability going back to traditions of much earlier times than the second century. But if so, the assumption does not seem an unreasonable one that the Zadokite sectaries of our document followed the shorter chronological table instead of the longer one, and that therefore 191 years (165 + 26) have to be added to their 390. The date referred to would in that case be 581 after the destruction of the Temple by Nebuchadnezzar, that is just about the time

¹ As critics only assign the original basis of the *Sēder 'Olām Rabbah*, but not the entire work in the form in which it has come down to us, to Rabbi Yōsē, the report of his son might well go back to a different chronological scheme of Rabbi Yōsē himself.

in which critics, with pretty close unanimity (see Hastings' *Dictionary*, vol. i., v. 404; *Encyclopædia Biblica*, vol. i. pp. 88-89) agree to place the Birth of our Lord.¹

Such a result might seem rather startling, but it can clearly not be said to rest on a violent treatment of Talmudical data. As a possible explanation, at any rate, of the date in question it must surely be accorded full consideration. For the moment the topic must, however, be left where it stands. Further reference to the question of date will be found under "Notes and Discussions" following the translation of the exordium.

b. At the close of page 5 of the document the occasion for the migration of the sect to Damascus is described as follows:—"And at the end of the destruction of the land there arose they who removed the boundary, and they led Israel astray; and the land became desolate, because they had spoken rebellion against the commandments of God [given] by the hand of Moses, and also against his holy Messiah, and they prophesied falsely in order to turn away Israel from God."

The question as to who the persons were against whom this denunciation is directed will be considered in "Notes and Discussions" on page 1, ll. 13-17. For the moment our attention must be fixed on the indication of date only. No one will, of course, doubt that the completion of the Roman conquest of Palestine under Titus in A.D. 70 would suit the requirements of the text with unchallenged completeness. No period since the time of Nebuchadnezzar could properly be described as "the end of the destruction of the land," with the additional emphasis expressed by the word: "and the land became *desolate*." The only two previous occasions on which there was something like an approach to such deso-

¹ The suggestion that the number 390 need only be closely approximate (in connexion with Ezek. iv. 5) has already been made.

lation were the disasters under Antiochus Epiphanes prior to the Maccabean revolt, and the invasion of Palestine by Pompey in 63 B.C. But each of these was an approach only. One could not properly speak of "the end of the destruction of the land" in referring to these calamities. If, therefore, one had to choose between the time of Titus and those of Pompey or Antiochus Epiphanes on the merits of this portion of the text alone, one would be obliged to prefer the former to either of the latter periods. This consideration has proved strong enough to induce Professor Bacher, M. Israel Lévi, and Dr. Poznański to move very near the position advocated from the first by the present writer. The first two of the scholars just named are definite in their opinion that the term קץ need not mean the actual end, but only the "end period,"¹ and they would accordingly place the document within ten years or so of the catastrophe of A.D. 70. But even if it could be shown clearly that the Hebrew word in question need not in some combinations mean "the end" in the absolute sense, it must surely be conceded that it can mean nothing else in this particular passage. The emphatic addition: "and the land became *desolate*" would in this case not be really necessary to make the sense clear; but still the special emphasis is there, as if to make it quite impossible to interpret "the end of the destruction of the land" in any but its true natural sense.

But besides the view of the three scholars named, some widely divergent opinions of other scholars have to be examined in the light of what has so far been said in this article. Dr. Kohler, though not expressly quoting the portion of the text now under consideration, indicates clearly

¹ Professor Moore's view is that *the end of the destruction of the land* means "not when the destruction was complete, but when the period of desolation was over" (i.e. the desolation effected by Antiochus Epiphanes. But it should be admitted that *the end means the end*, and not *after the end*; see also further on.

that in his view the invasion of Pompey is referred to in it (see pp. 407 and 410 of his article "Dositheus, the Samaritan Heresiarch," in *The American Journal of Theology*). But this scholar has, apart from the imperfect applicability of the text to Pompey's invasion, involved himself in a rather serious attitude of contradiction to the plain meaning of the text on this point. He thinks that as the Samaritans were by the Roman general delivered for a time from the rule of the Jews at Jerusalem, "we can understand that, since Damascus formed the headquarters of Pompey during the invasion of Judaea, the Samaritans who fled from their capital should have found a safe refuge in the vicinity of the northern city." The invasion of Pompey was, therefore, according to Dr. Kohler, regarded as a sort of blessing by the sectaries of the document. But if so, how could they speak of the [results of that invasion as a tremendous calamity which was sent as a punishment for Israel's rebellion? No one reading the lines now under consideration would naturally suppose that the destruction of the land was a cause of satisfaction to the sectaries, instead of a cause of dejection and sorrow.

Dr. Ward, who places the date soon after the persecution of the Pharisees by the Sadducean Alexander Jannaeus, "perhaps 80 B.C.," involves himself in the impossibility of giving a satisfactory explanation of the sentence: "at the end of the destruction of the land," as the persecution of one party by another could hardly be so described.

Professor Strack would, as has been seen, place the migration of the sect to Damascus in B.C. 47 or 27. But to what event, one has a right to ask, could in that case "the end of the destruction of the land" refer? The invasion of Pompey, even if the terms used were applicable enough, could hardly be spoken of in this way 16 or 36 years after the event.

There is lastly the opinion of Professor Moore to consider, who places the document about the middle of the second century B.C., or near the time of the calamities that were brought upon Judea and Jerusalem by the policy of Antiochus Epiphanes. All that can in this part of the present article be urged against this view is the preference that must be given to the complete conquest under Titus, if the phrase: "the end of the destruction of the land" is to be taken at its full value; but the final acceptance or rejection of it must depend on the general interpretation of the document, which is to be discussed in part ii.

So far, then, it may be granted (even if only for argument's sake) that a sufficiently good *prima facie* case has been established for the view that the indication of date on the first page of the manifesto may take us very near the period that is designated as *Anno Domini*, and that the second mark of time refers more naturally to the conquest of Palestine and the destruction of Jerusalem¹ by Titus than to any other event since the catastrophe under Nebuchadnezzar. This is all that the reader is at this stage of the argument asked to admit. A complete demonstration can only be based on the fuller study of the text that will follow.

2. *The two Messiahs*.—It is on this question only necessary to summarise what has been said under the heading: "The two Zadokite Messiahs" in *The Journal of Theological Studies* for last April, and to add some remarks on suggestions that have since been made with regard to the point under consideration.

Dr. Schechter assumed that the "root of planting" spoken of in l. 7 of p. 1 of the document was identical with

¹ The omission of any mention of the Temple in the reference to the catastrophe is no difficulty, as the sectaries, who were ready to build a Temple in Damascus, would not be desirous of referring to the Temple of Jerusalem.

the Teacher of Righteousness introduced in l. 11 of the same page. That such an interpretation was contrary to the elementary rules of Hebrew construing was clear at first sight. The passage in question presents us with a regular series of imperfects with *waw* consecutive, each separate clause of which was intended to mark a distinct progress in the narrative ; and the English translation, both as given by Dr. Schechter and as printed in part II. of the present article is alone sufficient to show that the regular construction of the text requires us to assume the acknowledgment of two religious leaders by the sectaries in the early days of their existence.

Professor Strack, in his article in *Reformation* already referred to, also saw that the proper sense of the Hebrew would oblige us to think of two different personalities. But he thought that this impression could not be maintained in view of other indications contained in the document. In order, therefore, to show that no indications which would force us to abandon the natural meaning of the Hebrew sentences exist anywhere in the text, the present writer collected in the paper mentioned all the references to the Messiah and the Teacher of Righteousness that are found in the manifesto. The result—it is here confidently submitted, once more—was as decisive as anything can be. There is absolutely nothing in the document which demands the unnatural construction that was put by Dr. Schechter and Professor Strack on its opening lines. “On the contrary, it seems perfectly legitimate to argue that “an intentional distinction” is made in it “between the Messiah descending from Aaron and Israel and the Messiah whose descent is not specified.”

A suggestion that has been made to the writer by a well-known scholar is to the effect that though the Teacher of Righteousness is not to be identified with the “root of

planting," no two Messiahs need have been intended, for the last-named expression might refer, not to an individual leader, but a certain hopeful or Messianic condition of things that arose at a certain time. The reply must, of course, be that such a phrase as : " and he caused to sprout from Israel and Aaron a root of planting " can hardly denote anything but a distinct personality, and that, moreover, the several other references to the Messiah from Aaron and Israel that are found in the document would (on the assumption that the Teacher of Righteousness is distinct from the " root of planting ") preclude the impersonal interpretation of its first occurrence, even if the terms used could bear such a meaning.¹

An explanation of a different kind was offered by M. Israel Lévi in the *Revue des Études Juives* for last April. He sees clearly that two different personalities are meant, and he thinks that the " root of planting " was intended to denote the founder of a new high-priestly dynasty, whilst the Teacher of Righteousness, who came twenty years later, was the most prominent high-priest of the same dynasty. Now if M. Lévi could produce any historical verification of his view, all possible consideration would have to be given to it. But the truth is that he is himself puzzled to know what dynasty and what " Teacher " might be meant by it. It is clearly not sufficient to ascribe the tangible characterisation

¹ Dr. Moore, whose article in *The Harvard Theological Review* came to hand after the above had been written, thinks that the idea of *possessing the land and taking pleasure in the good of his territory* proves beyond question that the " root " is not an individual, but a " collective designation of the first generation of the sect." But is not the idea of national prosperity almost always bound up with the Jewish expectation of a personal Messiah ? Or, the answer to Professor Moore might be put as follows : Does Isaiah xi. 6 (" And the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, etc. ") stand in conflict with the prediction of a personal Messiah (" A branch of his root " : strangely similar to " root of planting ") in *vv.* 1-5 of the same chapter ?—Moreover, does Professor Moore think that " the first generation of the sect " was without an originator and leader ?

of the two religious leaders in question to purely hypothetical personages. What is wanted is an historical basis for what is said in the document, and not merely a supposition that persons corresponding to the descriptions given might at one time or another have existed.

3. *The observance of the Law and primitive Christianity.*—Exception to the Judæo-Christian interpretation of the document has been taken on the ground that one of its distinguishing features is a strong and even vehement insistence on the observance of the Mosaic Law. This argument is worded by Dr. Kohler as follows :—

“The whole sacrificial system with all the Levitical laws of purity connected therewith, the most rigid observance of the Sabbath and the dietary laws are insisted upon throughout the messianic manifesto so as to offer no ground whatsoever to ascribe it either to followers of the Nazarene teacher who with such scathing language condemned all this ritualism, or of John the Baptist who wanted the cleansing of man from sin by the water of repentance, not by blood.”

The best way of describing opposition of this kind is to say that it is extremely surprising. One should have thought that at this hour of the day scholars would readily bring to bear on a topic of this kind their knowledge of the fact that in the earliest period of the Church Jewish Christians actually did observe the Law in common with the rest of their nation, and that even for some time after the appearance of St. Paul legalistic principles—as the Apostle had to realise by all too bitter experience—were stoutly and even violently defended by various sections of Jewish believers. All this is so much of a commonplace in our knowledge of early Christian history that no special quotations in support of it are required ; but Dr. Kohler may fitly be reminded that he has in vol. v., p. 13 of *The Jewish Encyclopedia* himself clearly shown this condition of things to have obtained

among the main body of early Ebionites who "observed all the Jewish rites, such as circumcision and the Seventh-day Sabbath . . . , while rejecting the writings of Paul as those of an apostate." It is true that the Ebionites made no attempt at instituting a sacrificial system after the destruction of the Temple, whilst the sectaries of the document established, or sought to establish, such a system in their new Damascus settlements. But can it be supposed that the Apostles themselves dissociated themselves absolutely from the national sacrificial worship while the Temple was yet standing, considering that Peter and John were in the habit of going up into the Temple courts for the purpose of prayer (Acts iii. 1; see also Acts ii. 46, v. 12, 20)? If it had been easy for early Jewish believers to abandon the idea of the Temple sacrifices, the Epistle to the Hebrews might indeed not have been written. The particular section of the Sadducean party, who are here supposed to have adopted a certain form of belief (not in any Pauline sense, or anywhere near it) in Jesus, would naturally—if only on account of the priestly origin of many of them—have clung to the idea of Mosaic sacrifice much more tenaciously than any other body of Jewish believers; and as for erecting a Temple for sacrifice outside the Holy City, was there not already another Temple in Heliopolis in Egypt,¹ and had there not also been a Temple in far away Elephantinê in Upper Egypt, which had accustomed people's minds to the idea of offering sacrifices outside Jerusalem? As submission to the spiritual leadership of Jesus was not felt by early Jewish believers to be incompatible with the observance of the Law, and as, furthermore, the duty of offering sacrifices stood in the same Law

¹ This Temple was closed by the Romans in A.D. 73; but Damascus appears to have been at that time under Arabian rule (see e.g., Hastings' *Bible Dictionary*, vol. i., p. 546), or at any rate less directly subject to Roman authority. That that city was a refuge for Christian believers in the early history of the Church is clear from the Acts of the Apostles.

with the keeping of the Sabbath and other ordinances, it must have seemed to our sectaries quite as reasonable to cling to the former as to maintain all the latter.

Professor Moore shares Dr. Kohler's view on this matter, and the difficulty of reconciling the extreme attachment of the sectaries to the Mosaic ordinances with the following of Jesus may appear to gain strength from a comparison of our Lord's appeal to humaner feeling regarding an animal that had fallen into a pit on the Sabbath day (see St. Matt. xii. 11; St. Luke xiv. 5) with the injunction found in p. 11 of the manifesto, not to lift out the distressed beast from the pit or ditch on that day.¹ But why should it be supposed that every act or word of Jesus recorded in the Gospels would, in its correct detail and true bearing, become the property of all who had in some manner or other become favourably impressed with His personality and His teaching? Do—to take an ordinary example from common experience—the acts and words of a modern leader of men necessarily become exactly known and properly appreciated by the wider circle of his admirers? And were there not in the case of our Lord's mission, as in every great movement, outer circles of followers who knew much less and understood much less than they of the inner circle?

One point more. Much has been said by Dr. Schechter, Dr. Kohler, and others on the exact affinities which the form of Law upheld by the sectaries had with one or other of the Jewish parties in the first century B.C. or the first century A.D. Was their legalism, it is asked, Zadokite (in an un-Sadducean sense of the term), Sadducean, Dosithean-Samaritan, or even Pharisaic? Such an investigation is, no doubt, exceedingly interesting and important; but it should be clearly understood that the question is quite irrelevant to the solu-

¹ They were more merciful in the case of a human being, who was not to be rescued by means "of a ladder, a cord, or an instrument" (also p. 11), but whom one could apparently save by human effort pure and simple.

tion of the main problem as here presented. If it be once conceded that close and determined attachment to the Law was in early times considered compatible with the acceptance, in a certain form, of the spiritual leadership of John the Baptist and Jesus, the inquiry as to the special kind of legalism that was adopted in any given case becomes a side-issue, a highly interesting one, it is true, but still a side-issue and nothing more. It will be seen later that our sectaries in all likelihood sprang from the Boëthusian section of the Sadducean party, but that is a detail in the evidence which may be appreciated independently of the special form of Mosaic observance to which they had remained attached.

4. *Degrees of Anti-Paulinism among Early Believers.*—What the following of Jesus meant to the members of the sect will be set out with sufficient fulness under "Notes and Discussions" on p. 1, ll. 10–11. But as, on the Judæo-Christian hypothesis of the document, surprise may be felt at the absence from it of any form of developed christological doctrine, it is necessary to devote a few remarks on the topic in this place. It is perfectly legitimate to suppose that our sectaries were quite as antagonistic to St. Paul's christological teaching as they were to his manner of treating the Law. That there were widely differing degrees of anti-Paulinism in the early Church is certain. There clearly was a vast difference between the mild and more or less opportunist opposition of St. Peter to St. Paul's attitude towards the Law and the attacks and calumnies which were directed against the Apostle of the Gentiles by the more determined and fanatical upholders of a distinctly Mosaic form of Christianity (see, e.g., Hastings' *Bible Dictionary*, vol. iii. p. 109 seqq.). Nor has one a right to suppose that the developed doctrinal teaching of the Apostle met with less strenuous opposition. That he was on points of Christian feeling and belief essentially at one with John, Stephen, Peter, and other leading members of the early Church should not be doubted; but it is at the

same time certain that the Mosaic form of Christianity which was strenuously upheld in wide circles would naturally militate against certain forms of Pauline christological teaching, more particularly so as they were presented in a somewhat philosophical form and appeared to possess a distinctly Hellenistic colouring.

But why, it will be asked, does the manifesto not even contain a mention of the belief in the resurrection? The Messiah-Teacher was indeed confidently expected to reappear in the latter days (possibly, however, in a representative rather than an individual sense), but of appearances of Jesus after death there is no trace in the document.—One answer that might be given is that in this respect the manifesto is merely on a par with the Epistle of James and other detached portions of the New Testament (apparently also with Q). But the complete reply must in the opinion of the present writer take us much farther afield. It is not suggested that the sectaries were followers of the twelve Apostles. Nor were any of them of the number of the five hundred brethren who witnessed the appearance of the risen Jesus (see 1 Cor. xv. 6). They were not of the type of believers to whom such a manifestation would have appealed, and it was naturally only to those capable of seeing that the Jesus who outlived death would show Himself. They were strongly impressed with the personality of the "Teacher" and with the moral grandeur of His teaching; but for the rest they remained Jewish to the backbone. They, in short, belonged to the outermost fringe of the society of early believers, both as regards the observance of the Law and any definite form of christological teaching.¹

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¹ The early Ebionites may, perhaps, again serve as an analogy. It appears to be nowhere stated that they had a belief in the resurrection. The *argumentum e silentio* might, indeed, in their case seem to favour the presence of that belief among them. But one should, on the other hand, suppose that their denial of the virgin-birth carried with it a disbelief in the resurrection.