THE IDENTITY OF THE HASIDEANS OF 1 AND 2 MACCABEES:

A RE-EXAMINATION OF THE TOPIC WITH A FOCUS ON

THE HISTORY OF SCHOLARSHIP

by

JAMES CONNELL HENRIQUES

(Under the Direction of WAYNE COPPINS)

ABSTRACT

The Hasideans are only mentioned only three times in the books of 1 and 2 Maccabees. As a result, they have been the object of much scholarly speculation. This thesis is an attempt to trace the historical dialogue among scholars regarding the identity of the Hasideans. Two questions are asked, specifically, "Who were the Hasideans?" and "What became of them?" Some have argued that the Hasideans were the predecessors of the Pharisees, basing this specifically on the attitudes and behaviors attributed to the Hasideans and similar behaviors attributed to the Pharisees. Others have proposed that the Hasideans were the predecessors to the Essenes, based both on different interpretations of textual evidence, as well as comparisons with the discoveries made at the Qumran site in 1947.

INDEX WORDS: Hasideans, Hasidim, 1 Maccabees, 2 Maccabees, Maccabaean
                 Revolt, Hasmoneans, Pharisees, Essenes

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CHAPTER 1:

Introduction

Written some time during the first century BCE, the books of 1 and 2 Maccabees introduce to the world of Jewish literature a group who will, by the 19th century, be the cause of great speculation. The author of 1 Maccabees introduces the Hasideans, or "the Pious," a seemingly distinct political or ecclesial group who joins the Maccabaean revolt, and apparently, turns the tide of war in favor of Judas Maccabee and his followers. Later, in 2 Maccabees, they appear again, this time with Judas Maccabee himself being counted among their number. A simple explanation for their inclusion could begin and end with the term "literary device." One could perceive them simply as supporting cast to explain a sudden change of events in favor of the protagonist(s), Judas (or his family members). However, closer inspection shows that at certain points, inclusion of the Hasideans really is not necessary to further the plot – as in their appearance in 2 Maccabees. Further confounding matters is the fact that either "Hasids" or "Hasidim" appear a few other times in Jewish literature – most notably in the Psalms and Talmudic literature. Thus, understandably, many scholars have not been satisfied with the simple explanation of "literary device," and have set about attempting to determine exactly who these mysterious men were, and why exactly they were so important to the Maccabaean revolt.

Unfortunately, despite the large amount of material written about them, very few facts are actually known about the Hasideans of the Maccabaean revolt. It is, as John Kampen notes, a seeming law of Biblical studies that "the fewer the references, the

greater the number of books and articles."[1] But this is in fact only partly true in the case of the Hasideans. Even though there are numerous scholarly discussions on the Hasideans, most are relegated to brief mentions of previous theories on the identity of the Hasideans, and little more. More often than not, scholars seem to pick and choose one theory in particular, presenting it as the only theory, if not solidly as fact, and move on. Others recognize more than one theory, yet refuse to adhere to one, and again, move on. Those who do expound on the Hasideans, however, do so in length. Scholars such as Martin Hengel, Philip Davies, and most of all, John Kampen, have explored the questions of Hasidean identity in great detail. The problem, then, is the constant recycling of information and theories, with little discussion of the merits, origins, and further developments of each theory.

As noted above, the cause of the aforementioned problem is the severe paucity of first hand references to the Hasideans as a distinct group. There are, in fact, only three mentions of the Hasideans in 1 and 2 Maccabees. Following this, they seemingly disappear off the map of Biblical literature. Thus it is logically the self-appointed task of modern scholars to determine both the identity of the Hasideans and the reasons for their sudden departure from said proverbial map. The result of such scant references is that the majority of scholarship on the Hasideans has been heavily based on conjecture. Furthermore, the primary focus is based heavily upon who the Hasideans become in their future – either Pharisees or Essenes, depending on whom you ask.   This is perhaps because it might be easier to infer what became of them due to the ability to compare

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[1] John Kampen, *The Hasideans and the Origin of Pharisaism: A Study in 1 and 2 Maccabees* (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1988), 1.

them to later sects, whereas it is much harder to paint a complete picture of their identity within their own time based on only three references. The result, however, is an unfortunate lack of discussion on the identity of the Hasideans within their own time – conjecture or no.

It can of course be argued that studying a group's end result can shed some light on their origins. But there is a difference between studying an entire timeline of a person's existence – particularly by trying to reconstruct the childhood from stories of the adulthood – and studying that person from strictly what little we know of their childhood, and then determining how that resulted in the adult they became. It is almost as if two questions are being asked: "Who were the Hasideans?" and "What became of them?" The main problem is that answers regarding the second question seem to drown out those regarding the first. That is to say, when such conflicting theories of the Hasideans' future selves exist, it almost makes discerning who they were in their own time even harder. This is of course hinged upon the fact that they are only mentioned three times in 1 and 2 Maccabees. Seemingly, answering the second half of the question has held priority over the first – with any answers to the first half of the question coming specifically to support those conjectures built in answer to the second.

The goal of this thesis is to find answers to both halves of the presented question. It will be an attempt to create a relatively comprehensive collection of scholarly discourse on the identity of the Hasideans, both who they were and who they became. Each chapter will compile and discuss the various proposed theories dealing with the identity of the Hasideans, and will draw some conclusions as to which theories hold more weight over others. The following chapter will attempt to examine theories regarding the

Hasideans in their own context, particularly focusing on other places in Biblical literature where the terms used to describe the Hasideans are also used. Chapter Three will be a chronological look at the history of discourse regarding the fate of the Hasideans, centering primarily on theories regarding the origins of the Pharisees and the Essenes. And Chapter Four will focus on other possible theories regarding the identity of the Hasideans, in particular, theories relating the Hasideans of 1 and 2 Maccabees to the *Hasidim harishonim* of the Talmud.

CHAPTER 2:

The Hasideans in their own Context

Logically, if we are to understand who the Hasideans are in their own context, then we must specifically focus on those passages in which they appear: 1 Macc. 2:41; 1 Macc 7:14; and 2 Macc 14:6. The Hasideans first appear when they join Mattathias and his army in the revolt. It seems to be implied that the tide turns in favor of the Maccabaeans immediately after the Hasideans join, but the Hasideans are never specifically mentioned as having any substantial role in the subsequent battles. When they appear again, in 1 Macc 7, they are approached by a delegation led by Alcimus, the new high priest. The Hasideans, under promise of immunity, attempt to bargain with Alcimus for terms of peace. However, Alcimus breaks his oath and slays 60 of them on the spot. Finally, the Hasideans appear in 2 Macc. 14, this time being mentioned in a "rant" by Alcimus, describing the Hasideans as specifically being led by Judas Maccabee. These three brief mentions are the only descriptions we have to begin a study of the Hasideans within their own context.

Just prior to the first appearance of the Hasideans, there is a description in 1 Macc 2:29-38 of Jews who are slaughtered in the wilderness for their refusal to fight on the Sabbath. These martyrs are often taken to be the Hasideans. This interpretation seems to originate with Josephus, who tells a story of those Jews who survived the Sabbath day massacre joining the revolt.[2] Later scholars seem to make the same connection, and run with it further. Indeed, Plöger interprets the passage as a reference to the Hasideans. His

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[2] Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 12.6.2.

reasoning lies in the fact that refusing to fight on the Sabbath seems to be a decision that the Hasideans – the Pious – would make.[3] The logic is perhaps evident in light of the fact that later in 1 Macc 7, the Hasideans are the first to seek peace. Thus, with this reasoning, the Hasideans are the first to attempt to avoid war, and then are the first to attempt to end it. Hengel follows Plöger's lead, using some of this information to firstly prove the "pacifistic"[4] nature of the Hasideans, and secondly prove the founding of an Essene-like community in the desert, and thus justify his theory of their development into the Essenes.[5] Several scholars, however, feel that this association is unwarranted. Both Efron and Davies fall into this camp, with Davies describing the connection as "quite gratuitous."[6] Collins, as well, emphasizes that there is no reason to associate the Hasideans with these martyrs in the wilderness. Indeed, there is nothing in the text of 1 Maccabees which actually designates those survivors as the Hasideans who join the revolt, other than simple textual proximity.

The Hasideans themselves first appear by name in 1 Macc 2:42, where they unite with the Maccabaeans to aid in the revolt. Their specific description, in English, is as follows: "mighty warriors of Israel, every one who offered himself willingly for the

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[3] Otto Plöger, S. Rudman, trans., *Theocracy and Eschatology* (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1968), 8-9.

[4] "Pacifists" is here used loosely, more to refer to what one might consider "pious pacifists," or those who apparently only fight in defense of the faith.

[5] Martin Hengel, John Bowden, trans., *Judaism and Hellenism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974), 177.

[6] Philip R. Davies, *Sects and Scrolls: Essays on Qumran and Related Topics* (Atlanta: Scholars Press. 1996), 13.

law."[7] "*συναγωγὴ Ἀσιδαίων*" is commonly translated as a "gathering of Hasideans," or

"a company of Hasideans." This is based on a transliteration from Hebrew to Greek of

the term "*Ἀσιδαίων*," signifying (to most authors) that the original author's intent was to

designate a specific group. An alternative translation would be "a gathering of the pious"

– but this only works if the author had no intentions when transliterating "*Ἀσιδαίων*."

Secondly, "*ἰσχυροὶ δυνάμει*" is most often translated as "mighty warriors." Indeed, this

is how Collins seems to take it.[8] As already mentioned, readers should note that in the

verses prior, the revolt appears to be losing, and in the verses following, after the

Hasideans have joined the fight, things once again turn in favor of the Maccabaeans. The

implication in such a translation, then, is that this is a distinct party, apparently known for

their military prowess, whose aid turns the tide of the revolt. However, the fact that an

alternate translation can be rendered is potentially problematic. Identifying the Hasideans

as a specific sect forms the basic groundwork of any theory about whom they become, be

it Pharisees or Essenes (See below in Chapter 3). Therefore, if one translation proves to

be correct over another, it could completely render either hypothesis as false. This, of

course, is where Davies bases one of his primary criticisms of what he calls Hengel's

"Hasidean hypothesis."[9] Thus, any search for the true identity of the Hasideans within

their own context should begin with two questions: First, where else in Biblical literature

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[7] Collins' translation. John J. Collins, *Daniel, 1-2 Maccabees,* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1981), 166-167.

[8] John J. Collins, *Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls,* (London: Routledge, 1997), 26.

[9] Davies, *Sects*, 14.

is the term "συναγωγὴ ᾿Ασιδαίων" used? Secondly, where else is the term "ἰσχυροὶ δυνάμει" also used?

Fortunately, John Kampen has already done much of this work in his important work *The Hasideans and the Origin of Pharisaism*. Kampen,[10] as well as Hengel[11] and Davies,[12] suggest that "συναγωγὴ ᾿Ασιδαίων" is a translation of the Hebrew "קהל חסידים." Both Hengel and Kampen note the occurrence of this term in Psalm 149:1, which not only mentions a gathering of the pious, but also describes them as wielding swords, and exacting vengeance against their enemies. Carroll Stuhlmueller, in his commentary on the Psalms, acknowledges a possible Maccabaean date for Psalm 149, based on postexilic references to Isaiah 56-66 and similar themes to Zecheriah 9-14 and Obadiah,[13] although it should also be noted that he warns that the phrase "קהל חסידים" could very well have existed prior to the Maccabaean period. Kampen points out that the Septuagint translation in this instance uses ἐκκλεσία instead of συναγωγή. He goes on to explain that ἐκκλεσία is most often used to translate both קהל and עדה, while συναγωγή is only ever used to translate קהל. Kampen notes that early on, συναγωγή most often refers to the entire gathering of Israel. He then cites Schrage in noting that "its [συναγωγή] use in the LXX is a midpoint in the progression from the use of the term as a translation of the biblical *qahal* or *'edah* to its later designation as the Greek equivalent of the *beyt*

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[10] Kampen, *Hasideans*, 82.

[11] Hengel, *Judaism*, 177.

[12] Davies, *Sects*, 14.

[13] Carroll Stuhlmueller, *Psalms 2 (Psalms 73-150)* (Willmington: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1983), 220.

hakkeneset (synagogue)."[14]   He goes on to note several instances in the Septuagint that use συναγωγή to translate קהל, where συναγωγή refers specifically to a distinct group or sect, including the following: Deut. 33:4, Deut. 45:18, Num. 16:6, Num. 21:9, as well as Num. 10:7, where συναγωγή is specifically referring to a group gathering for battle, as they do in 1 Macc.[15]   Kampen thus concludes that there is sufficient evidence to show that συναγωγή can be interpreted as a specific group, set apart from the main – as in the instance of 1 Macc, a group of pious citizens separate from those who have already joined the revolt.

᾿Ασιδαίων, as previously noted, is clearly a Greek transliteration from the Hebrew חסידים. The primary argument used by most to determine whether or not the Hasideans are in fact a specific sect lies in the belief that the author would have translated the Hebrew term to the Greek ὅσιος had he not intended for ᾿Ασιδαίων to stand in as a proper name. Also stated above, חסידים appears in Psalm 149, as well as in Psalm 79. In both instances, the Septuagint translation renders the Hebrew as ὅσιος. Interestingly enough, the author of 1 Maccabees is thought to specifically reference Psalm 79. 1 Macc 7:16-17 states:

> So they [the Hasideans] trusted him [Alcimus]; but he seized sixty of them and
> killed them in one day, in accordance with the word which was written:
> The flesh of thy saints (ὁσίων) and their blood
> They poured out round about Jerusalem,

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[14] Kampen, *Hasideans*, 85, citing Wolfgang Schrage in Edwin Hatch and Henry A. Redpath, eds, *A Concordance to the Septuagint and Other Greek Versions of the Old Testament (Including the Apocryphal Books)* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1897), 1309; and Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, eds, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 1985), 7:805.

[15] Ibid.

And there was none to bury them.[16]

Compare that to Psalm 79:2-3 (Septuagint):

> They placed the corpses of your slaves
>> as food for the birds of the air,
>> the flesh of your devout (ὁσίων) for the wild animals of the earth.
> They poured out their blood like water
>> all around Ierusalem,
>> and there was no one to bury them.[17]

If we are to take the quote from 1 Macc 7:16-17 as a reference to Psalm 79, then clearly the translator of 1 Macc was aware of such a possible translation for חסידים, but instead chose to transliterate the Hebrew term rather than use the translation. Even if one were to assume that the author was working from the Hebrew version of the Psalms, it still seems unlikely that he would be completely unaware of the Septuagint, seeing as how he is writing in Greek; or, in the event that such is the case, that he is still completely unaware of the word ὅσιος – a basic vocabulary word given his genre of literature. Collins sees the inclusion of the Psalm as a reference to the destruction of the temple, that being the theme of Psalm 79, and connects this to other similar quotations found earlier in 1 Macc.[18] However, Kampen disagrees, seeing the reference included specifically in relation to the recently slain Hasideans, stating that "the material is structured in such a way that it applies directly and only to the Hasideans."[19]

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[16] Trans. Collins, *Daniel*, 197.

[17] NRSV. Albert Pietersma, trans*., A New English Translation of the Septuagint* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 79.

[18] Collins, *Daniel*, 199.

[19] Kampen, *Hasideans*, 134.

It should be noted that while often translated as "in accordance with the word which was written," which precedes the reference to Psalm 79, 1 Macc 7:16 (κατὰ τὸν λόγον ὃν ἔγραψεν αὐτόν) can also be translated as "in accordance with the word which he had written." Kampen notes this, yet essentially glosses over it. Benjamin Scolnic raises the question of whether or not the "he" here could actually refer to Alcimus.[20] Scolnic bases his argument on a few specific criteria. Firstly, the author of 1 Maccabees clearly despises Alcimus. There is no way, in Scolnic's eyes, that the author would credit Alcimus with the authorship of such a text if it were not based in fact. Secondly, the Psalm is clearly describing defilement of the temple and religious persecution, yet no reference is specifically made to actual destruction of the temple, nor to an exile. Scolnic is thus forced to prove a Maccabaean date for the Psalm, in particular focusing on when the Psalms were canonized and considered holy scripture – meaning if this process happened after the Maccabaean period, someone like Alcimus could still have been editing the Psalter. Scolnic cites other scholars who posit a possible Maccabaean date for Psalm 79, but no definitive evidence ever appears. But, giving Scolnic the benefit of the doubt, one has to wonder why Alcimus would write a Psalm decrying the defilers of the temple, when he himself ultimately becomes an agent of those doing the defiling. Scolnic addresses this, as well, hypothesizing that perhaps the Psalm was written prior to becoming High Priest, and perhaps aided in his credentials with the Hasideans as noted in 1 Maccabees. However, it seems odd that Scolnic never addresses the fact that the more common translations never translate the passage from 1 Macc 7 with Alcimus as the

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[20] Benjamin Scolnic, *Alcimus, Enemy of the Maccabees* (Lanham: University Press of America, Inc., 2005), 113.

author of the Psalm.   Indeed, even citing Kampen elsewhere in his work, Scolnic never notes Kampen's own translation or interpretation.   On the one hand, if true, Alcimus' authorship would prove a degree of irony within 1 Macc, fitting with what we have already seen of the author's purposeful inclusion of the Psalm 79 reference.   Thus, Alcimus, having written a Psalm clearly referring to "the pious," later has a group referring to themselves as "the Pious" put to death.   Clearly, if the Hasideans were an official group, and Alcimus did write Psalm 79, the author of 1 Macc would not pass up such an opportunity to force Alcimus to eat his words.   But, on the other hand, the connection seems to be too perfect, and the more common reading of "the word which was written" is probably the more likely.

The previously mentioned "$\dot{\iota}\sigma\chi\nu\rho o\grave{\iota}$ $\delta\nu\nu\acute{\alpha}\mu\epsilon\iota$" is the phrase that appears immediately following the introduction of the Hasideans in 1 Macc. This phrase is also problematic for having more than one meaning. In English, 'powerful' and 'strength' can have a variety of meanings, based on context.   One could be powerful in the sense of physical strength, or one could be powerful in the sense of political power.   Likewise, $\dot{\iota}\sigma\chi\nu\rho o\grave{\iota}$ $\delta\nu\nu\acute{\alpha}\mu\epsilon\iota$ has been translated as both "mighty warriors" and "stalwarts of Israel." Understanding the meaning behind the phrase holds significance both for understanding the Hasideans within their own context, as well as for understanding any theories as to whom the Hasideans become. Kampen identifies $\dot{\iota}\sigma\chi\nu\rho o\grave{\iota}$ $\delta\nu\nu\acute{\alpha}\mu\epsilon\iota$ as a reference to גבור חיל,[21] an identification with which Davies concurs.[22] Kampen notes several instances throughout Joshua where the term is used to refer to men of military might, but he also

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[21] Kampen, *Hasideans*, 97.

[22] Davies, *Sects*, 13.

finds just as many instances, including Ruth 2:1, 2 Kgs. 15:20, 1 Sam 9:1, and 1 Kgs. 11:28, to describe a "man of wealth."[23] Kampen furthers this by noting "in 1 Sam. 16:18 when one of the servants describes [David] as both *gibbor hayil* and *'ysh milhamah* (a man of war), i.e., the phrase *gibbor hayil* carries a meaning other than that of a warrior."[24] Kampen finally provides several instances where גבור חיל refers to heads of household, such as 1 Chr. 26:6.[25] However, ἰσχυροὶ δυνάμει is used again in 1 Macc in reference to Judas Maccabee, clearly used to present him as a warrior. Kampen concludes that while the term can definitely hold military connotations, it is too ambiguous to rule out use as a referent to a head of household. But, in this instance, based on the context, one might be safe to assume it holds a military connotation.

The second appearance of the Hasideans comes in 1 Macc 7:12, where they, along with a group of scribes, entreat Alcimus for peace. Most notable is the fact that the Hasideans are willing to drop their arms at the prospect of an Aaronid priest. This could indeed be very telling of their reasons for war. It is Efron who notes that many scholars, such as Plöger,[26] have interpreted this as indicative of an internal rift within the Maccabaean party, with the Hasideans wishing to end the war.[27] Efron quickly deflects this theory, even examining the Syriac and Latin translations of the text and, interpreting the Hasideans as Kampen's "men of worth," finds that the Hasideans are taking the active role in hammering out terms of peace. Davies notes that this instance could also have

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[23] Kampen, *Hasideans*, 99.

[24] Ibid., 100.

[25] Ibid., 103.

[26] Plöger, *Theocracy*, 8.

[27] Joshua Efron, *Studies in the Hasmonean Period* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1987), 23-25.

multiple translations, with the Hasideans either being the "first (chronologically) among the Israelites to seek peace," "the foremost amongst the Israelites," "the first of the scribes," or "they (the scribes) were the first Hasidim among the Israelites."[28]   Of course, even Davies acknowledges that the first translation renders support for the idea of the Hasideans as "pacifists" – an idea with which both Davies and Kampen seem to have problems. Kampen bases his rejection on clues within the text itself, noting that in verse 12, the scribes are seeking "just terms," while in verse 13, the Hasideans, are seeking peace. Kampen points out that Alcimus has come to the rebels with a large force. Judas rejects them due to perceived attempts at intimidation. The Hasideans, however

> understand the threat posed by this force and wish to discern the terms whereby disaster might be averted. They are afraid that the Greek military forces will destroy Israel and they wish to head off the attack. This is what is meant both by 'seeking just terms in v. 12 and 'seeking peace' in v. 13.[29]

Thus the Hasideans are taking the active, and perhaps more prudent, role as negotiators. This seems to be in line with Efron's interpretation, who notes that "no information is available on the list of demands, the degree of insistence or the limits of concession."[30] Clearly, though, in Efron's eyes, the demands were indeed steep, resulting in Alcimus reneging on his oath, and slaughtering 60 of the Hasideans on the spot, leading to the reference to Psalm 79 already discussed above.

The Hasideans are mentioned for the third time in 2 Maccabees 14:6. Interestingly enough, it is here they are mentioned as being specifically led by Judas Maccabee. The scene, in which Alcimus approaches Demetrius about the revolt, at least

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[28] Davies, *Sects*, 16.

[29] Kampen, *Hasideans*, 122.

[30] Efron, *Studies*, 25.

mirrors 1 Macc. 7:26 in that Alcimus seems to become the primary enemy of the narrative. Kampen cites several other scholars who have noted the similarities in content between 1 Macc 3-7 and 2 Macc 8-15[31] – particularly in the recounting of events, and over-arching themes: Demetrius seizes power, appoints Nicanor in charge of quelling the revolt, and Nicanor is beheaded and the Jews celebrate. Both versions include a brief mention of Alcimus and his dealings with the Hasideans. The only problem is that the two mentions could not be any more different. As stated above, the author of 2 Macc designates Judas as the leader of the Hasideans. Many scholars seem to have taken this explicitly at face value, interpreting this to mean that Judas himself *is* a Hasidean. That is to say, if putting both 1 Maccabees and 2 Maccabees together for a complete story, many scholars read Judas as (somewhere not mentioned between the two books) having been elected by the Hasideans as their leader. This is in fact the stance that Zeitlin and Tedesche take.[32] Kampen also seems to interpret Hengel as taking it this way;[33] however, Hengel simply states that Judas is "the leader of the Hasidim."[34] This does not necessarily mean that Hengel ascribes to such a view. Hengel is actually discussing the intentions of Jason of Cyrene, whose work supposedly provides the basis for 2 Maccabees, and where Jason's own sympathies lie. Hengel notes that Jason identifies Judas as the leader of the Hasideans simply as support for his view that Jason holds pre-

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[31] Kampen, *Hasideans*, 136.

[32] Solomon Zeitlin, Sidney Tedesche, trans., *The Second Book of Maccabees* (New York: Haper & Brothers, 1954), 229. Kampen notes this as well, Kampen, *Hasideans*, 147.

[33] Kampen, *Hasideans*, 147.

[34] Hengel, *Judaism*, 97.

Pharisaic tendencies.[35] Kampen offers his own explanation and takes an opposing viewpoint from the previous authors, stating: "it is said that the Hasideans are led by Judas Maccabee in order to add to his general portrayal as a pious person, in contrast to the impious Alcimus. In other words, Judas is said to be leader of the 'Pious' to add to his image of piety and purity. This means that we learn relatively little about the Hasideans from this passage; the author rather wished to teach us something concerning Judas."[36] Kampen's explanation is quite insightful, and probably even valid. However, he, like most before him, seems to miss the more obvious explanation: one does not need to be a member of a group to lead them – most specifically in war. 2 Maccabees lists the Hasideans, and their leader Judas, but it never refers to him as "Judas of the Hasideans." One need only look back to 1 Maccabees when the Hasideans first join the Maccabaean revolt. Logically, the Maccabees are already the leaders of the revolt when the Hasideans join; therefore, there would be no reason for the Hasideans to suddenly assume leadership of the revolt and absorb Judas into their ranks. In other words, by joining the *Maccabaean* revolt, the Hasideans are already going to acknowledge the *Maccabee* as their leader. One might compare the situation to Hessian soldiers who fought for the British during the American Revolution – although the Hessians served under the command of General Howe, Howe himself did not automatically become a Hessian. What might be more likely, if we make the assumption that the aid of the Hasideans turned the tide in favor of the Jews, is that the Hasideans were the most note-worthy

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[35] Hengel, *Judaism*, 97.

[36] Kampen, *Hasideans*, 147.

thorn in the side of Alcimus, and Judas, being the leader of the entire revolt, was also their leader.

As we have seen, despite the vast amounts of information – or theories, really – regarding whom the Hasideans become, there is very little regarding who they actually were. Outside of the books of 1 and 2 Maccabees, there is absolutely no information regarding them. That is, unless one counts the two Psalms referring to the "pious," which, even then, contain no real clues as to whether they are referring to the actual Hasideans of the Maccabaean revolt. It is probably safe to say that the Hasideans do constitute a distinct group within the revolt, based solely on the repeated transliteration of the name. What is not as clear is what the regulations and beliefs of the members of the Hasideans were. Were they "pacifists?" Were they mighty warriors? Or were they simply community leaders and men of influence? The context, even when compared to outside sources, is too ambiguous to answer these questions. It appears as if the Hasideans could fulfill all of these roles as the situations warranted. Joseph Sievers summarizes what we know of the Hasideans very succinctly:

(a) that they temporarily cooperated with the Hasmoneans,

(b) that they were "volunteering for the Torah,"

(c) that they were represented as stirring up [or turning the tide of] the war and

(d) that they (or at least some of them) made peace when Demetrius sent Alcimus whom they thought – reputedly because of his Aaronic ancestry – a legitimate high priest with authority to restore the Torah.[37]

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[37] Joseph Sievers, *The Hasmoneans and their Supporters: From Mattathias to the Death of John Hyrcanus I* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), 40.

Any information regarding the personality or beliefs of the Hasideans is more or less absent. All we have to judge them by are their actions, and all we can glean from that is the fact that they were concerned with the Law, and that they were concerned with having an Aaronid priest. Anything else is really just based on conjecture.

CHAPTER 3

Theories Regarding the Fate of the Hasideans

Following the Maccabaean Revolt

As already noted, the question regarding the identity of the Hasideans is two-fold: "Who were the Hasideans?" and "What became of them?" The previous chapter dealt primarily with identifying the Hasideans in their own context. The current chapter will thus attempt to identify what became of the Hasideans following the Maccabaean Revolt. It should be noted, however, that as the only references to the Hasideans are found in 1 and 2 Maccabees, all conjectures as to their ultimate fate can only be based on those mentions found in 1 and 2 Maccabees. To summarize what has already been discussed as to their identity: Based on the three references to the Hasideans in 1 and 2 Maccabees, they were a group of 'pious' Jews holding some amount of either militaristic or political power, and that their joining the Maccabaean revolt apparently turns the tide in favor of Judas and his followers. Finally, they are fighting strictly for the upholding of the Law, as they abruptly leave the revolt once a proper Aaronid High Priest is instated. As to their fate, in short, two basic theories have been proposed, based on varying amounts of evidence: The Hasideans are either the predecessors of the Pharisees, or the predecessors of the Essenes. We will thus be focusing on both theories, beginning with their earliest proponents over a century ago, and moving chronologically to the modern period. In doing so, attention will not only be paid to the developments of the theories themselves, but also to the criticisms and debates which the theories have since spurred and incurred.

The Pharisees:

John Kampen cites several 19th century sources (Abraham Geiger and Zecherias Frankel, to name a few) that propose a common beginning for both the Pharisees and the Essenes from the Hasideans.[38] Much of the early debate which Kampen discusses seems to center specifically around the order of the succession. That is to say, the early debate was not over which group were the successors of the Hasideans – as most were apparently in agreement that both Pharisees and Sadducees found their ancestry in the Hasideans – but over which group came from the Hasideans first. However, the most prominent early advocate of the Pharisaic theory would probably be Julius Wellhausen.[39] It should be noted that Wellhausen refers to this Pharisaic theory as a "generally held assumption."[40] In actuality, he relies heavily on the works of both Ferdinand Hitzig and Abraham Geiger.[41]   Wellhausen bases his opinion firstly on the frequent textual proximity of the Hasideans to the scribes within 1 and 2 Maccabees, and the later similar juxtaposition of the Pharisees and the scribes in the New Testament, and secondly on the similarity in behavior between the two groups.

Wellhausen begins by attempting to prove that the Hasideans were a strictly ecclesial group, and not political. He supports this by pointing to the fact that the

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[38] Ibid., 33-35. Kampen cites several sources, some also cited by Wellhausen.

[39] It should be noted that Wellhausen acknowledges the existence of a theory by Hitzig that the Hasideans were the predecessors of the Pharisees. However, he focuses primarily on Pharisaic origins, 68, n. 3.

[40] Julius Wellhausen, Mark E. Biddle, trans., *The Pharisees and the Sadducees: An Examination of Internal Jewish History* (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 2001), 68

[41] Ibid., 67.

Hasideans left the revolt in 1 Macc 7 once their needs had been met (See above in Chapter 2).[42] From here, Wellhausen attempts to disprove the apparently prevailing theory that the change from Hasidean to Pharisee comes about as a movement of the people. Citing Geiger,[43] Wellhausen describes the contemporary opinion that the scribes (and by proxy the Hasideans) represented a nationalistic, populist uprising against Hellenism and "paganism and the hierocracy that supported it."[44] Thus the Sadducees (or their predecessors), on the other hand, are those "conservative egoists, the people to whom the accident of birth brought authority, which they then selfishly exploited without consideration for the public welfare."[45] The theory, then, is that the predecessors of the Sadducees who aligned themselves with the Hellenizing occupiers, were eventually toppled during the Maccabaean revolt. They then found themselves re-aligning their allegiances in turn to gain influence and the approval of the new Hasmonean rulers. The Hasideans, conversely, are those who helped to overthrow such figures, and eventually became the Pharisees. This, of course, is supported by the later trouble the Hasmoneans (particularly Alexander Jannaeus) have with the Pharisees. The major crux of this argument seems to rest on the idea that the ideals of the Hasideans are in sync with the rest of the revolution (which would imply a political nature), and what is more, the Hasideans are the primary driving force behind this revolution.

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[42] Ibid., 75.

[43] Ibid., 70, n. 4. It should be noted that Geiger, according to Wellhausen, believes that the struggles of all peoples throughout time are "essentially a struggle between Pharisees and Sadducees.

[44] Ibid., 76.

[45] Ibid., 69-70.

However, Wellhausen is convinced that, as stated above, the Hasideans are a completely ecclesial group – focused strictly on the Law. That is to say, their motives for joining the revolt do not lie in defending the *right* to practice the Law, but in actually *defending and enforcing* the Law itself. Thus, the Hasideans lose interest in the revolt once Alcimus, a legitimate high priest, is appointed. Wellhausen suggests that if the Hasideans were truly interested in nationalistic ideals, they would have continued with the revolt long after Alcimus had been appointed, to such a degree as to aid the Hasmoneans in gaining full control of Judea.[46]

Wellhausen further supports his connection by citing Josephus' *Antiquities* 13.10.5 – the first known instance of animosity between the Pharisees and Sadducees. The scene describes a banquet held by the Hasmonean king John Hyrcanus, currently a follower of the Pharisees, who asks the Pharisees whether or not they are satisfied with his rule. Eleazar, one of the Pharisees, takes the moment to ask Hyrcanus to abdicate the priesthood due to rumors that Antiochus IV once held his mother captive – but to remain on as king. Hyrcanus is insulted and, goaded by his Sadducee friend Jonathan, joins the ranks of the Sadducees. Wellhausen attempts to prove at length that the words of Eleazar are in fact representative of the Pharisees as a whole, and Eleazar alone has taken the blame of dissenter due to Josephus' pro-Pharasaic bias. For Wellhausen, the Pharisees' concern that John Hyrcanus is an illegitimate priest is identical to the Hasideans' approval of Alcimus as a legitimate one.[47]

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[46] Ibid., 77.

[47] It should perhaps be noted that the Qumran community was not yet discovered at the time of Wellhausen's work.

Working contemporaneously with Wellhausen, if not slightly later, is Emil Schürer,[48] whom Wellhausen actually criticizes for taking the "prevailing" view that the Hasideans were the primary heroes of a populist revolt.[49] However, Schürer's comments on the Hasideans are somewhat limited in comparison to Wellhausen. Like Wellhausen, Schürer makes note that the Hasideans only joined the revolt on behalf of the Law. Schürer even goes so far as to mention that the Hasideans were definitely distinct from the Maccabaean party.[50] Schürer likewise cites the scene described by Josephus as the source of not only the transition from Hasidim to Pharisees, but the beginning of the Pharisee-Sadducee feud, as well.[51] For Schürer, though, it seems as if the split that solidifies the identity of the Pharisees is not only with the Sadducees, but also with the Hasmoneans. The cause of the split deals more with the Hasmoneans' ambition for secular power than with the Hasideans' emphasis on the Law, so thus the Hasideans "separated" themselves from the Hasmoneans, becoming the Pharisees.[52]

It seems, though, that Schürer more or less agrees with Wellhausen. One wonders why Wellhausen felt the need to specifically single out Schürer as being in the circle of

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[48] The most recent edition of Schürer's work has been revised and edited Vermes, Millar, and Black, with updated references. A new section is included in V.2 detailing theories relating the Hasideans to the Essenes, with specific references to findings at Qumran (most notably the Damascus Document).

[49] Ibid., 69.

[50] Emile Schürer, Geza Vermes, Fergus Millar, and Matthew Black, translators and editors, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C. A.D. 135)*, Volumes I-II (Edinburgh. Scotland: T. & T. Clark LTD, 1979), 400.

[51] Ibid, 401.

[52] Ibid.

the "wrong." Wellhausen never cites where Schürer took the "prevailing opinion" (he rarely cites anything at all). However, as Wellhausen's book was written roughly five years before Schürer's, one can assume that perhaps Wellhausen was able to change Schürer's mind – or at least encourage him to be more cautious on the topic of the Hasideans – in the intervening period.

Writing in the early 20th century, Max Weber departed from the tradition set by Wellhausen, arguing that the Hasideans – specifically the συναγωγὴ ᾿Ασιδαίων of 1 Maccabees – were simply those pious people resisting the Hellenistic occupiers, and not a coherent sect, going so far as to state that "it does not matter whether their military contribution was slight as Wellhausen assumes."[53] For Weber, they were more of a social movement than a specific sect. Weber also includes Talmudic literature, taking the חסידים referenced there as the same found in 1 and 2 Macc, as well as the Psalms – all apparent references to generic "saints." Based on the Talmudic references, Weber describes these 'pious' as "meditating an hour before ritualistic prayer"[54] (See also Chapter 4 below). Following the Maccabaean revolt, it is these types of people – the pious – who go on specifically to form the Pharisee sect. One might argue, though, that the transliteration of the term ᾿Ασιδαίων alone already connotes something stronger and more cohesive than a general religio-political zeitgeist. Like his predecessors, Weber sees the break as arising out of differences with the Hasmonean kingship; the Hasideans develop a need to "separate" themselves from their former political allies once those

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[53] Max Weber, Hans H. Gerth and Don Martindale, translators. *Ancient Judaism,* V. 2 (New York, New York: The Free Press, 1952), 385.

[54] Ibid.

allies are no longer concerned with defending the Law, but their own Hellenistic-styled kingship.[55] This seems to further agree with Wellhausen. Although not specifically stated, Weber makes the implication that the Pharisees, by-way-of the Hasideans, have become a non-political, ecclesial group forced into a political situation as opposition to the Sadducees.

Kampen describes the list of twentieth century scholars who assume a Hasidean origin for either the Essenes, Pharisees, or both as "endless," going so far as to include a two-page long footnote listing various twentieth century scholars writing on the topic. [56] While, like Kampen, we cannot discuss that entire list here, it will still be advantageous to discuss a few of the key players in scholarship of the twentieth century.[57]

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[55] However, based on the Damascus Document, this argument could also be applied to the Qumran community, and presumably, the Essenes in general.

[56] Kampen, *Hasideans*, 38.

[57] This, of course, does not mean we cannot include our own list of those who see evidence in favor of the Pharisees: Kaufman Kohler, "Pharisees," *Jewish Encyclopedia*, V. 9 (New York: Funk and Wagnalls Company, 1905), 661-666; Heinrich Graetz,, *History of the Jews*, Vol. II (New York: George Dobsevage, 1933), 24; Leo Baeck, *The Pharisees and Other Essays* (New York: Schocken Books, 1947), 11; John Bowker, *Jesus and the Pharisees* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973); Michael Grant, *The Jews in the Roman World* (London: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1973), 40; R.T. Beckwith, "The Pre-History and Relationships of the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes: A Tentative Reconstruction" in *Revue de Qumran*, v. 11, no. 41 (1982), 41; Gunter Stemberger, Allan W. Mahnke, trans. *Jewish Contemporaries of Jesus: Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 97; P.F. Ellis, "Hasideans" in Bernard L. Marthaler, ed., *New Catholic Encyclopedia Second Edition,* Vol. II (Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2003), 659-660. This is, of course, a very brief list, which also only acknowledges those who ascribe to the Pharisaic theory; those who acknowledge both are excluded. Scholars ascribing to an Essene hypothesis will be acknowledged below in the section on the Essenes. Finally, it should also be noted that as recently

L. Finkelstein, writing during the first half of the twentieth century, never actually identifies the Hasideans when discussing the origins of the Pharisees in his book, *The Pharisees.* But he does discuss the formation of a stricter "Society" by the scribes during the Maccabaean revolt – perhaps following along Wellhausen's model, without ever actually mentioning the Hasideans.[58] Finkelstein does in fact later on mention his belief that the Pharisees and the Essenes both descended from the Hasideans. Twenty years later, in an article titled "The Ethics of Anonymity Among the Pharisees," Finkelstein actually goes so far as to use the terms "Hasidean" and Pharisee" interchangeably.[59] It seems as if by 1958, Finkelstein had at least begun working under the assumption that the Hasideans were a specific sect or group who were identical to the Pharisees in belief and attitude (whether this is the same as the "Society of Scribes" he described before is unclear). It is interesting to note, however, that throughout Dr. Finkelstein's career, articles dealing specifically with the origin of the Pharisees[60] focus primarily on schisms or feuds with other sects, particularly in liturgical practice – never does he actually mention the Hasideans as the originators of the sect.

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as 2007, Kampen had not changed his view, as seen in his article on "Hasidim" in Katharine Doob Sakenfield, ed. *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible,* Vol. 2 (Nasville: Abingdon Press, 2007), 739-740. Kampen still cites much of the same major bibliography as in his book.

[58] Louis Finkelstein, "The Origin of the Pharisees," in Louis Finkelstein, *Pharisaism in the Making: Selected Essays* (New York, New York: KTAV Publishing House, Inc., 1972), 74.

[59] L. Finkelstein, *Pharisaism*, 187. He explains his reasoning in a footnote.

[60] Finkelstein wrote another article in 1962, titled "The Origin of the Pharisees," with a footnote referring to his earlier book *The Pharisees* as the standard on the subject. The chapter "The Origin of the Pharisees" in the earlier book differs slightly in topic from the later article.

By mid-century, the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls added further evidence for scholars supporting an Essene hypothesis. But despite this, several scholars still saw enough evidence for continued support of Pharisaic origins. More precisely, the majority of scholars seemed to give credence to both theories.[61] Scholars such as Geza Vermes still refer to the Pharisees as "an essentially lay group formed from one of the branches of the Hasidim of the Maccabaean age."[62] Stegemann, interestingly enough, interprets the Hasideans to be in opposition to the Teacher of Righteousness at Qumran, with the Hasideans eventually becoming the Pharisees. He cites various references in the Damascus Document as referring specifically to the Pharisees, criticizing them for their incorrect interpretations of the Law.[63] Other modern scholars whom Kampen finds worthy of note (while still glossing over numerous others) include Noth and Heaton, both of whom ignore any possibility of a Hasidean-Essene relationship and describe the Hasideans strictly as predecessors of the Pharisees.[64] Why Kampen finds these scholars note-worthy is unclear. One would think someone like Vermes, a noted Qumran scholar

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[61] As already noted, giving credence to both theories is not new. Many scholars previously discussed recognized both theories. However, it seems that more often than not, scholars promoted the Wellhausen model of Pharisaic origins, even when acknowledging other theories of Essene origins, as well.

[62] Geza Vermes, *An Introduction to the Complete Dead Sea Scrolls* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press, 1999), 130.

[63] Harmut Stegemann, *The Library of Qumran: On the Essenes, Qumran, John the Baptist, and Jesus* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993), 152-155.

[64] Kampen, *Hasideans*, 39. Martin Noth, *The History of Israel* (London, England: Adam & Charles Black, 1958), 374 and E.W. Heaton, *The Book of Daniel: Introduction and Commentary* (London, England: SCM Press Ltd, 1956), 24.

arguing in favor of a Pharisaic connection, would be much more of an exception and worthy of mention.

Finally, Kampen's own exhaustive study finds evidence in favor of the Pharisees. Most notably, Kampen examines the possible motives behind the authors' inclusion of the Hasideans in both 1 and 2 Maccabees. Kampen notes that the slaughter of the Hasideans after suing for peace with Alcimus makes them appear "naive and unrealistic."[65] He furthers this by citing Josephus' description of the Hasmonean dynasty – and in particular his description of Alexander Jannaeus' famous dispute with the Pharisees – and compounds that with a pro-Hasmonean reading of 1 Maccabees. Kampen thus concludes that the author of 1 Maccabees would most likely have intentionally portrayed the Hasideans as naive simply as a slight against the Pharisees (that is, assuming they *are* the predecessors of the Pharisees). More precisely:

> These Hasmoneans considered them to be unrealistic with regards to the future of the Jewish state in the turbulent world of the declining Seleucid Empire; certainly the Pharisees were opponents of their policies and power. The perspective which 1 Maccabees reflects concerning the Hasideans could very well be, and I suggest most likely is, that which a Hasmonean supporter would have had, or would have wanted to disseminate, of the Pharisees.[66]

Conversely, as already discussed, Kampen believes that the Hasideans are included in 2 Maccabees to bolster the image of Judas Maccabee, as the author's primary intent is to glorify Judas himself, and not the Hasmonean dynasty as a whole. The author, Kampen contends, regards the Hasideans as a well-known, popular group, and portraying Judas as

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[65] Kampen, *Hasideans*, 212.

[66] Ibid., 212-213.

their leader thus reflects well upon him.[67] In this portrayal, Kampen sees an emphasis on the importance of the Hasideans as a group, and, as in 1 Maccabees, a group too important not to be mentioned.

The Hasideans and Apocalypticism

Some mention should be made of theories involving Hasidic origins of Jewish Apocalypticism. Some might qualify this as going hand in hand with theories of Essene origins. However, it would perhaps be advantageous to discuss this as a separate entity for the simple fact that not all scholars who identify the Hasideans as the originators of Apocalypticism also identify them as the predecessors of the Essenes – some indeed either make no mention of the Essenes, or still see the Hasideans as the originators of the apocalyptic genre, but also identify them (and apocalyptic) with the Pharisees. Secondly, a fuller understanding of this topic might aid in the discussion on the Essenes that follows.

Much of the discussion centers around the apocalyptic vision passages found in the latter half of the book of Daniel. In fact, Heaton even identifies the author of Daniel as a Hasidean.[68] Heaton bases much of his argument on various hints as to the author's identity as a scribe living at the time of the Maccabaean revolt – from here he concludes that such a person most likely would have been a member of the Hasideans. Plöger likewise makes a similar connection between the Hasideans and Daniel. The assumption

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[67] Ibid.

[68] Heaton, *Daniel*, 24. Heaton also identifies the Hasideans as predecessors of the Essenes. Kampen notes Heaton's identification, as well. Kampen, *Hasideans*, 23.

is based on inferences into both the behavior and attitudes of the Hasideans as well as those of the author of Daniel.[69] Plöger, like Noth, sees a distinct, progressive lineage moving from prophetic literature to apocalyptic, culminating in the visions found in Daniel, embodied specifically by the group calling themselves the "pious."[70] Furthermore, scholars like Tcherikover offered the groundwork for later scholars to make connections between the Maccabaean Hasideans and the *Maskilim* (the wise) found in Daniel, making apparent light of similarities between the two groups.[71] Collins, however, finds this argument to be relatively weak, noting that there really is no overt support of the Maccabees in Daniel,[72] but this is not much of an argument in itself, as we see in 1 Macc that the Hasideans only supported the Hasmoneans in a limited sense. Collins posits that it is more likely that Daniel simply represents the views of one of the many diverse groups existing during the time of the Maccabaean revolt.[73]

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[69] Otto Plöger, S. Rudman, trans., *Theocracy and Eschatology* (Richmond, Virginia: John Knox Press, 1968), 23-25.

[70] Noth,, *History*, 396.

[71] Victor Tcherikover, S. Applebaum, trans., *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1966), 477, n. 33. Tcherikover explains further: "The Book of Daniel also speaks of the important role of the Hasidim in the insurgent movement, calling them "the enlightened" or 'enlighteners of the people,' that is, he sees in them the intellectual leaders, who "shall stumble by sword and flame, by captivity and by spoil many days" (11.33), meaning that they had suffered greatly during Antiochus' persecution," 198. Much of Tcherikover's comparison seems to come from personal interpretation.

[72] John J Collins, *Daniel* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press, 1993), 69.

[73] Ibid., Horsley agrees that Daniel takes a "quietist position" on the revolt. Richard A Horsley, *Bandits, Prohpets and Messiahs: Popular Movements at the Time of Jesus* (San Francisco: Harpers Row, 1985), 7.

Daniel is not the only text to provide support for such a hypothesis, though. 1 Enoch has also resulted in various comparisons to the Hasideans. These connections, in Collins' opinion, are of a stronger substance than those made with the author of Daniel.[74] Indeed, Nicklelsburg sees in 1 Enoch 90:9-10, the Animal Apocalypse, an interpolated reference to Judas Maccabee as the "great horn."[75] Nickelsburg takes this as "[positing] – in its narrative world – an association between [Judas] and an already extant group of apocalyptic militants and attests – in its author – a real sympathy for the Maccabee."[76] Nickelsburg thus sees a parallel between the Hasideans and their support for Judas in 1 Macc, and the rallying of the sheep to the single horned sheep found in the Animal Apocalypse.[77] Collins supports this interpretation, as well.[78] Of course, this does not necessarily mean that the Hasideans were the originators of apocalyptic – only that they held apocalyptic beliefs (also assuming that Nickelsburg's interpretation is the correct one).

What seems to be most significant is, as Nickelsburg notes, the abundance of fragments of Enochic texts, Jubilees, the Damascus Document, and the Community Rule found at Qumran.[79] This signifies, for Nickelsburg, the fact that the Qumran community

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[74] Ibid.

[75] George W.E. Nickelsburg,, *1 Enoch 1* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press, 2001), 400.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Ibid., 363.

[78] John J Collins, *Apocalyptic Vision in the Book of Daniel* (Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1977), 202-205.

[79] Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 363.

was "heir and transmitter to the reformist traditions contained in these documents."[80]

Clearly there is a strong connection between apocalyptic and the Qumran community –

whether or not their predecessors were in fact the originators of the genre has yet to be

proven. Some scholars, such as Gabriele Boccaccini have used this connection to support

their own theories separate from any connections to the Hasideans.[81] Other scholars,

particularly Martin Hengel, have used this evidence, in tandem with more evidence

discussed below, to support the hypothesis that the Hasideans preceded the Essenes.

Hengel, in fact, finds several further parallels between 1 Enoch and Daniel, particularly

emphasizing certain themes, such as the culmination of all history into a single

apocalyptic moment, resurrection and judgment, and even the importance of wisdom

through revelation.[82]

Finally, it should be noted that not all scholars accept a connection between

Hasideans and apocalyptic. Joseph Sievers holds that there is no proof that the Hasideans

were interested in apocalyptic speculation.[83] Sievers points to the fact that the Hasideans

were so accepting of Alcimus as the high priest as proof that they clearly were not

interested in engaging in some sort of apocalyptic battle. Furthermore, according to

Sievers, Daniel and 1 Enoch could not even have stemmed from the same circles, as

"Dan. 11:31 affirms the holiness of the Second Temple, while 1 Enoch 89:73 denies the

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[80] Ibid.

[81] For such discussions, see G. Boccaccini, *Enoch and Qumran Origins: New Light on a Forgotten Connection* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005).

[82] See also Michael Edward Stone, "The Book of Enoch and Judaism in the Third Century B.C.E." in the *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, Vol. 40, no. 4 (October, 1978), 479.

[83] Sievers, *Hasmoneans,* 38.

validity of the sacrifices offered in it."[84] Thus, for Sievers, not only is there no connection between the Hasideans and apocalyptic literature, but there is not even a connection between single works of apocalyptic literature within their own genre.

The Essenes:

Contemporary to the earliest theories of Hasidean-Pharisee connections were theories regarding Hasidean-Essene connections, as well.[85] Wellhausen, in his argument against the prevailing consensus of Pharisaic origins, credits Hitzig's "assumption that the Hasidim were also the common root of the Essenes" as "very plausible."[86] Wellhausen recognized that this early interpretation is linguistically based.[87] Who made the claim first seems unclear, but it is often assumed by the mid-nineteenth century that the Greek term Ἐσσηνοί was derived from Aramaic *hasyan* (*Hasidim* thus being the Hebrew term

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[84] Ibid., 38, n. 50.

[85] Others in this list include: H.H. Rowley, *The Zadokite Fragments and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1955), 68, 71; Martin A. Larson, *The Essene-Christian Faith: A Study in the Sources of Western Religion* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1980), 36; Phillip R. Callaway, *The History of the Qumran Community: An Investigation* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988), 83-85; Hakan Ulfgard, "The Teacher of Righteousness, the History of the Qumran Community, and our Understanding of the Jesus Movement: Texts, Theories, Trajectories" in Frederick H. Cryer, and Thomas L. Thompson, eds., *Qumran between the Old and New Testaments* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 340; Raymond E. Brown, "Essenes," in Bernard L. Marthaler, *New Catholic Encyclopedia Second Edition*, Vol. 5 (Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2003).

[86] Wellhausen, *Pharisees*, 68, referring to Ferdinand Hitzig, *Geschichte des Volkes Israel von Anbeginn bis zur Eroberung Masada's im Jahre 72 nach Christus* (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1869).

[87] Ibid., see also Kampen, *Hasideans*, 36.

used). The term appears initially in Josephus. However, Josephus himself alternates the term with Ἐσσαῖοί. Furthermore, Epiphanius refers to the group both as the Ὀσσαῖοι and Ἰεσσαῖοι, the latter of which Black notes as a derivation of "Jesse," the father of David.[88] The term Ὀσσαῖοι lends some credibility to the theory of a relation between the Hasideans and the Essenes, as it could possibly be an attempt at a literal translation from Hebrew to Greek of חס'ד'ם. This is the theory for which Wellhausen credits Hitzig. Likewise, Kampen, emphasizes the importance of Schürer.[89] As already noted, Schürer acknowledges the Hasideans as the predecessors to both the Pharisees and the Essenes. It should be noted that the most recent update of Schürer's work has additional appendices describing the archaeological finds at Qumran, bolstering support for links between the Hasideans and Qumran.

As briefly discussed in the previous chapter, further support for an Essene connection has come from scholars attempting to link the Hasideans with those Jews in 1 Macc 2:29-38 who fled into the wilderness, but were slain when they refused to fight on the Sabbath. While there is no textual evidence to support this, most scholars in favor of a connection draw from Josephus's *Antiquities,* which describe a similar situation in which the survivors of a Sabbath day massacre join the Maccabaean revolt.[90] These survivors, although never named as such, have been taken to be the Hasideans. It seems by the mid-twentieth century, scholars such as Plöger[91] and Zeitlin[92] use this connection

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[88] Matthew Black, *The Scrolls and Christian Origins: Studies in the Jewish Background of the New Testament* (New York, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1961), 13.

[89] Kampen, *Hasideans*, 37.

[90] Josephus, *Ant*. 12.6.2.

[91] Plöger, *Theocracy*, 7-9.

as further evidence in favor of a Hasidic origin for the Essenes. This reading, although not the major crux of the argument, will continue to be a major piece of supporting evidence for later scholars – most notably Martin Hengel, who will be discussed below – arguing in favor of an Essene connection.

As with the hypothesis regarding a Pharisaic connection, the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls added further evidence in favor of a Hasidean-Essene connection. Since the discovery, the major consensus has been that the members of the Qumran community were either Essenes, or an Essene-like group.[93] This has been based primarily on Josephus' descriptions of the Essenes being compared to the Qumran community's own descriptions of themselves found within the Dead Sea Scrolls; theological views such as those on the afterlife, and practical matters such as the nonuse of oil and the confiscation of property from initiates overlap between the two groups.[94] In addition to the linguistic connection, scholars such as Black have built an argument heavily off the discoveries at Qumran. In particular, Black cites the *Damascus Document* (4Q265-73, 5Q12, and 6Q15) as referring specifically to the Hasideans. The document describes the Qumran community's founding as 390 years after the Exile, followed by a "root of planting" to possess God's land, who spend twenty years blindly "groping for a way." By Black's math, this places the community as just prior to the ascension of

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[92] Solomon Zeitlin, Sidney Tedesche, trans., *The First Book of Maccabees* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1950), 85.

[93] See James C. VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994), 71-98 for a concise argument in favor of an Essene connection, as well as various counter-arguments.

[94] Again, see VanderKam, in footnote above.

Antiochus IV (586 BCE – 390 years = 196 BCE. 196 BCE – another 20 years = 176 BCE).[95] Thus, for Black, this timing coincides perfectly with the first appearance of the Hasideans. Cross, going strictly by palaeographical evidence, dates the community to roughly 150 BCE[96] – not too far off from Black's estimate.

Vermes takes a similar reading as Black. His math corresponds to Black's, and Vermes likewise identifies the "root of planting" as the Hasideans.[97] Vermes' general history of the Essene community runs almost parallel to the history that Black provides. It should come as no surprise, then, that both Vermes and Black (along with Millar), acting as editors of Schürer's great work *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ* update the text with pertinent information regarding Qumran and the origins of the Essenes. The history of the Essenes, as outlined in the edited version of Schürer's work, thus heavily reflects the interpretation of the *Damascus Document* given by both Vermes and Black in their own works, providing links between the Hasideans and the Essenes.[98]

In actuality, however, Vermes initially held a position opposed to the "majority" opinion on the origins of the Essenes. He believed the term "Essene" was actually

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[95] Black, *Scrolls*, 19. VanderKam uses the same method, but begins his dating from 587 B.C.E, instead of 586 B.C.E., coming up with a result of 177 B.C.E. Also, again, see VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today*, 100.

[96] Frank Moore Cross, "The Early History of the Qumran Community," in David Noel Freedman, and Jonas C. Greenfield, editors, *New Directions in Biblical Archaeology* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1969), 67.

[97] Vermes, *An Introduction*, 137.

[98] Schürer, *History*, 586-587

derived from אסיא,[99] or "healer." Vermes cites references in both Philo and Josephus that describe the Essenes as being able to maintain a healthy lifestyle, far beyond the average life expectancy. Vermes further bolsters this by attempting specifically to link the Essenes to the *therapeutae* found in Philo. He interprets the term *therapaeutae* as referring to those who "heal" through worship. Furthermore, Vermes cites Epiphanius' own statement that he himself had heard that "the original name of the *Therapeutae* was *Iessaioi*, Essenes." [100] Vermes cites his own critics of his theory (Schönfeld) who take Vermes as translating *therapeutae* literally as "physician," or "doctor" ("Arzt").[101] Kampen also confirms that Vermes has been somewhat misinterpreted.[102]   However, Kampen cites Cross, another critic of Vermes' theory, who is positive that the Greek "*ess-*" is derived from Semitic "*ḥas-*."[103] Whatever the case, it seems Vermes eventually fell in line with the majority position, as his *Introduction to the Dead Sea Scrolls* (and its earlier version, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*) contain this "majority" view of Hasidic origins.

Martin Hengel likewise adopts this majority position – seemingly becoming perhaps the most well known modern proponent. Hengel cites both the linguistic evidence, as well as the "root of planting" reference found in the *Damascus Document.* Hengel, of course, makes further connections with the Hasideans and apocalyptic literature, citing various references in both 1 Enoch's Animal Apocalypse and the Ten

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[99] Geza Vermes, *Post-Biblical Jewish Studies* (Leiden, Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 1975), 23. See also Kampen, *Hasideans*, 154.

[100] Ibid*.,* 22.

[101] Ibid., 30-31.

[102] Kampen, *Hasideans*, 155.

[103] Ibid., see also Cross, *Ancient Library*, 38-39.

Week's Apocalypse as referring to the formation of the Essenes.[104] Hengel borrows much from Plöger, emphasizing that the author of the apocalypses found in Daniel can be counted among the Hasideans.[105] Hengel indeed goes to great lengths in attempting to interpret the earlier apocalypses in Hasidean contexts. However, it should be noted that Hengel believes the Hasideans to be the predecessors of both the Essenes and the Pharisees, as well as countless other unknown sects. This seems to be especially likely, if we are to assume Weber is correct in portraying the Hasideans as a pious social movement. But Hengel places special emphasis on the idea of the Essenes carrying on the distinct lineage of the Hasideans, becoming more of an exclusive group.

As noted, Hengel's theory seems to have become the authoritative view,[106] with several subsequent scholars building upon his ideas. However, as always, prominent ideas draw prominent refutations. Most notable among these is Philip Davies' article "*Hasidim* in the Maccabaean Period." Davies makes such a thorough attempt at debunking these theories that Collins himself refers to the pre-Davies portrayals of the Hasideans as "all-embarrassing."[107] Davies does assert that although not a single link of Hengel's "Hasidic hypothesis"[108] can be proven, they are all still very plausible. Despite

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[104] Hengel, *Judaism*, 176.

[105] Ibid.

[106] Davies, *Sects*, 6.

[107] John J. Collins, "Enoch, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the Essenes: Groups and Movements in Judaism in the Early Second Century B.C.E.," in G. Boccaccini, *Enoch and Qumran Origins*, 345

[108] Davies, *Sects*, 7: 1. The Hasideans were a distinct group; 2. The Essenes descended (based on linguistic evidence) from the Hasideans; 3. The Qumran community were Essenes; 4. The twenty years described in

such plausibility, as Davies states, "only one assumption needs to be invalid for the entire argument to break down."[109]

Davies sees particular problems with Hengel's proposed association between Daniel, 1 Enoch, and the Hasideans. He cites several other scholars, including Collins, who propose a possible Babylonian origin for the author(s) of Daniel. Davies does admit that not only did the Qumran community produce apocalyptic literature, but there is certainly a good chance that they were heavily influenced by Daniel. But he also insists that there is no proof what so ever that the Essenes or the Book of Daniel can be associated with the Hasideans. Perhaps the biggest bone Davies has to pick with Plöger's theory (and by proxy Hengel's) is that there is absolutely no reason to base the beginning of the history of the Hasideans on the Book of Daniel.[110] Davies asserts that nowhere in Plöger's work can he find any specific connection to interpret Daniel specifically as a work of the Hasideans. Finally, Davies emphasizes the point that nowhere in the literature attributed to the Hasideans does the term *hasid* even appear. Davies does qualify this as a 'naive' assumption presumably because the term could be a later appellation given after the literature attributed to them had been written. The primary emphasis, then, is on the fact that the majority of characteristics given to the Hasideans are based on literature attributed to them with little evidence of any reason for such an attribution. That is to say, as Davies puts it "the picture is made up almost completely

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the Damascus Document are literal; and 5. The Teacher of Righteousness and his followers withdrew in the time of Jonathan.

[109] Ibid.

[110] Ibid., 9

from the *assumed products of Hasidic authorship* whose connection with the *Hasidim* must be dubious at best"[111] (Davies' emphasis).

Conclusion:

If one were forced to pick a side, based on the amount of evidence given, it might seem logical to side with those arguing for a Hasidean-Essene connection.[112] There is a seemingly strong amount of linguistic evidence, as well as a good amount of circumstantial evidence as seen in the Dead Sea Scrolls. This has, of course, for the past twenty-five years, been the case. It was not until Davies' harsh critique of such a theory that modern scholars were taking a more cautious approach in their assumptions. There were, of course, those scholars who still argued for a Hasidean-Pharisee connection, despite Hengel's convincing argument. This was based, more than anything else, on a sociological understanding of human behavior: "this is how the Hasideans acted, and this is how the Pharisees acted."

However, more often than not, both theories have been recognized as valid. As already stated, scholars since the beginning have seemingly recognized both theories

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[111] Ibid., 10.

[112] There are also those who attempt to reconcile both, with mixed results. See Kurt Schubert, John W. Doberstein, trans., *The Dead Sea Community: Its Origins and Teachings* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959), 31-35; Millar Burrows, *Burrows on the Dead Sea Scrolls: An Omnibus of Two Famous Volumes: The Dead Sea Scrolls and More Light on the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Grand Rapids: Baker House Books, 1978), 257; Robert Eisenman, *Maccabees, Zadokites, Christians and Qumran* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1983), 15; Horsley, *Bandits*, 27; Lena Cansdale, *Qumran and the Essenes: A Re-Evaluation of the Evidence* (Tubingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1997), 77.

simultaneously. Some have simply stated that it is possible that the Hasideans could very likely be the progenitors of both groups, while others will recognize both theories separately, without any attempts at reconciliation between the two. There have, of course, been those particular giants, Wellhausen, Plöger, and Hengel, who have attempted to further one theory over the other. This is not to say that the theories are mutually exclusive. Indeed, they definitely are not. Hengel, as already noted, proposes the Hasideans as the forerunners of not only the Essenes and the Pharisees, but several other unknown sects, as well. If this would be the case, could it not also be probable that the Hasideans themselves had other unknown contemporary sects, as well, who would be just as likely to spawn subsequent sects, as the Hasideans have been theorized to do? It seems just as likely that the Pharisees or Essenes could have spawned from an unknown sect as they could have from the Hasideans (again, assuming the Hasideans truly were a clearly defined group). But, if one were forced to choose between the two famous groups, there certainly is a strong amount of linguistic and circumstantial evidence in favor of a Hasidean-Essene connection – perhaps even more so than a Hasidean-Pharisee connection.

CHAPTER 4:

The Hasideans and the *Hasidim Harishonim*

Mentions of Hasidim are also found throughout Talmudic literature. More specifically, the Tannaim and their successors often referred to the חסידים הראשונים (*Hasidim harishonim*), or the first Hasidim. References to these Hasidim were used anecdotally, to provide examples of Jews going above and beyond the call of *halakhic* law. It should be noted, of course, that both the singular *Hasid*, and the plural *Hasidim*, are used, depending on the anecdote. As the Maccabaean Hasideans obviously pre-date the authors of the Talmud, it would be easy to just assume the Talmudic authors were referring to the Hasidim of 1 and 2 Maccabees. Kampen and Safrai both note that this seems to have been the case for much of the 19th century.[113] However, the context of the accounts given in the Talmud are typically devoid of any reference to the Maccabaean revolt, and, indeed, any real context of time at all – most stories simply appear to have happened some time previous to their recording. Exceptions to this include references to Hanina ben Dosa and Honi the Circle-drawer, both of whom are referenced on separate occasions as Hasid in the singular, and both of whom we can generally date.[114] The existence of such references, then, raises two questions: Firstly, are the authors of the

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[113] Kampen, *Hasideans,* 188, n. 4, and Shmuel Safrai, "Teaching of Pietists in Mishnaic Literature," *The Journal of Jewish Studies,* Vol. XVI, No. 1 (1965): 16.

[114] Büchler places Hanina in the late first century CE, and Honi during the mid-to-late first century BCE. Adolph Büchler, *Types of Jewish-Palestinian Piety from 70 B.C.E. to 70 C.E.: The Ancient Pious Men* (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1968), 88 and 196, respectively.

Talmud referencing a specific group, like the Hasideans of 1 and 2 Maccabees? If so, can we actually gather a coherent thread of beliefs and teachings to which the members of this group adhere? And secondly, are these Hasidim of the Talmud linked in any way to the Hasideans of 1 and 2 Maccabees – if not explicitly, then at least by a common tradition? As in the previous chapters, our goal for this one will simply be a brief investigation into the history of scholarship regarding these two questions. Furthermore, we will only be interested in places where the term is used in the plural, as all mentions of *Hasidim* and *Hasid* would require too unwieldy for a short chapter as this.[115]

Most significant for answering the first question is Shmuel Safrai's article "Teaching of Pietists in Mishnaic Literature" which appeared in 1965 in *The Journal of Jewish Studies.* Safrai attempts to comprehensively compile all mentions of the Hasidim in the Talmud into a single, coherent school of thought. Safrai includes mentions of both *Hasidim harishonim* and various famous rabbis who are also referred to by the adjective "*hasid.*" The results are mixed, as we shall see. While he certainly succeeds in highlighting the behaviors of the *Hasidim harishonim* as exemplifying exceptional behavior in regards to the law, Kampen often also highlights the flaws in Safrai's further conclusions regarding a coherent tradition of Hasidic *halakha*.

There is in fact only one mention of the Hasidim in the Mishnah itself, which states that "the early Hasidim used to wait one hour before praying in order to direct their minds toward God."[116] The reference seems rather obscure; especially in light of the fact

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[115] Also cited by both Safrai and Kampen, Adolph Büchler's *Types of Jewish-Palestinian Piety from 70 B.C.E. to 70 C.E.: The Ancient Pious Men* provides a comprehensive study of various figures referred to as Hasid in the singular, including Hillel and Honi.

[116] Mishnah Berakhot 5:11.

that it is preceded by a *halakha* stating that one may only recite the 18 Benedictions, or *tepillah*, with a bowed head. The general consensus, however, seems to be that the authors were intending to show how certain pious Jews simply took extra steps prior to reciting the *tepillah* in the mornings. Safrai makes the assumption that the following sentences also refer to the Hasidim,[117] while Kampen maintains that one cannot be certain that this is the case.[118] The statement goes as follows: "Even if the king salutes a man he may not return the greeting, and even if a snake was twisted about his heel he may not interrupt his prayer." Assuming that this is indeed a reference to the early Hasidim, then it is most likely again an attempt at showing how such figures went above and beyond their call of duty in fulfilling *halakhic* law. Safrai argues that this is in contradiction with accepted *halakhah* regarding reasons one might interrupt prayer, including both greeting a king and being bitten by a snake.[119] Safrai uses this, in conjunction with other similar instances, as an attempt to a draw a common, Hasidic tradition of *halakha*, which, in some instances, runs counter to the accepted *halakha* found in the Talmud. This is, of course, Safrai's primary goal. Kampen, however, sees Safrai's examples as jumping to conclusions with faulty evidence.[120]

Further instances in the Talmud which Safrai uses to support his theory include a mention of the early Hasidim in *Niddah* 38. Here, the early Hasidim are described as only having intercourse with their wives on the fourth day of the week, as it is believed that any other day would potentially result in a birth on the Sabbath, thus defiling it.

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[117] Safrai, *Teachings*, 28.

[118] Kampen, *Hasideans*, 195.

[119] Safrai, *Teachings*, 28.

[120] Kampen, *Hasideans*, 193.

Safrai points to various other laws regarding the Sabbath, which approve of intercourse, even on the Sabbath.[121]   While Safrai makes the generally agreed upon point that the Hasidim take piety to a further extreme than the average Jew, he also furthers this statement, stating that "hasidic *halakhoth*, then, are not simply the practice of austerity but a *halakhic* tradition which sometimes differs from the prevailing rulings."[122] Safrai combines this with another instance of the early Hasidim refusing to kill snakes and scorpions on the Sabbath, despite *halakhic* law allowing it.[123]   In actuality, however, Kampen notes that the quote refers to the spirit of the Hasidim being displeased with those who kill snakes and scorpions on the Sabbath, perhaps implying that the author felt that such actions are "what would have been expected of the Hasidim, even though he makes no claim for an explicit record or memory of their having actually done so."[124]

Other instances include a description of the early Hasidim burying thorns and other debris found on their property deep into the ground so as not to cause injuries to others walking through their fields,[125] and several other related stories dealing with property and injuries, as well as an account of the early Hasidim freely making Nazirite vows, as they wished to make a sin offering, but had no sins for which to make offerings.[126]   Clearly, from such references one can see a recurring pattern of a group taking further, extra provisions to fulfill a stricter version of *halakhic* law. While Safrai

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[121] Safrai, *Teachings*, 23-24.

[122] Ibid., 25.

[123] Ibid.

[124] Kampen, *Hasideans*, 200.

[125] T. B., Baba Kamma, 2:6.

[126] T.B., Nedarim, 10a.

tends to argue for a very specific Hasidic *halakha* which runs counter to prevailing *halakha*, it seems that Kampen often has a convincing and logical counter explanation. Kampen notes that while the *Hasidim harishonim* are used as examples of exemplary behavior, they are never used to settle Talmudic disputes,[127] which, according to Kampen, puts doubt upon these Hasidim as having a divergent *halakhic* tradition. It seems more reasonable to simply accept that these early Hasidim were used specifically as examples as those going beyond their general call of duty in regards to *halakhic* law. Furthermore, one might even be able to argue that, like the use of *Ασιδαίοι* in 1 and 2 Maccabees, the frequent recurrence of *Hasidim harishonim* is used to denote a specific group held in mind by the authors. Thus, a valid argument could be made favoring the *Hasidim harishonim* found in the Talmud as a distinct group with a defined interpretation of *halakha*.

Even if this argument is granted, however, this still leaves the second question: whether or not these Hasidim are the same as the Hasideans found in 1 and 2 Maccabees. As already noted above, this seems to be the accepted theory through the 19th century. Indeed, Kohler's entry on the Essenes in the Jewish Encyclopedia openly accepts such a connection, with little to defend it.[128] It is not until the mid-twentieth century that the accepted theory begins to receive some doubt. By 1957, L. Jacobs' article on the progression of the use of the term "*hasid*" posits that the Hasideans of 1 and 2 Maccabees *may or may not* be the same as the *Hasidim harishonim*.[129] This is perhaps a negligible

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[127] Kampen. *Hasideans*, 206.

[128] Kaufmann Kohler, "Essenes" in *Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. 5, 1903., 224-31.

[129] L. Jacobs, "The Concept of Hasid," *Journal for Jewish Studies* vol.VIII, no. 4 (1957): 147.

step; but while Jacobs examines the term as it is found in both the books of the Maccabees and the Talmud, he is reluctant to positively relate the two. Jacobs concludes his essay by furthering his "maybe" statement by noting that even if the two groups are the same, they are certainly no longer in existence by the Tannaitic period.[130] By 1964, Safrai concludes his essay by giving some credence to our previously discussed Hasidean-Pharisee theory, and noting that *perhaps* the Talmudic Hasidim evolved out of a specific group within the Pharisees, who themselves were descended from the political Hasideans of the Maccabaean revolt.[131] More specifically, these Hasidim had their own *halakhic* practices and literature as a subgroup among the Pharisees. However, it should be noted that Safrai's attempt at determining a coherent Hasidic ideology is qualified with Safrai's belief that such ideology did not develop until after the Maccabaean revolt, and prior to the Tannaitic period; thus, even for him the *Hasidim harishonim* are not necessarily the exact inheritors of the Maccabaean Hasidean tradition. Eventually, Safrai explains, "the term 'Hasid' became blurred and was used simply as a *soubriquet* for scholars of an austere attitude towards *halakha*."[132] Kampen's book is the most recent to examine the topic. In one of the few places where Kampen does agree with Safrai, as well as Jacobs, he states that there is *at least* a possibility that the Hasidim referred to in the Talmud originated with the Hasideans found in the books of the Maccabees.[133]

As stated above, it can at least be theorized that the *Hasidim harishonim* represent a distinct group within Talmudic literature. Moreover, it can be agreed upon that they

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[130] Jacobs, "Concept," 153.

[131] Safrai, "Teachings," 33.

[132] Ibid.

[133] Kampen, "Hasideans," 206-207.

were commonly referenced throughout the Talmud as Jews who took a stricter interpretation of *halakha*. But, other than the similarity in name, there is no obvious connection between the *Hasidim harishonim* of the Talmud and the Hasideans of 1 and 2 Maccabees. While on the one hand we know much about the *halakhic* practices of the *Hasidim harishonim*, on the other, we know very little about the Hasideans. One could easily argue that the term "pious" could be used to describe any given Jewish sect. Name alone does not connote a connection. However, this does not completely rule out the possibility. Even though there is only a name in common, there is no specific evidence pointing to the impossibility of a connection. Thus, Jacobs, Safrai, and Kampen are right to leave open the possibility of a gradual transition of the name to define a specific political and religious party, to that of a generic term referring to the practices of a former group.

CHAPTER 5:

Conclusion

From the outset, our goal was to find answers for those two stated questions: "Who were the Hasideans?" and "What became of them?" Primarily, our interest focused on the history of debate in regards to answering those questions. In regards to the first question, it can at least be agreed upon that the Hasideans were almost certainly a distinct group, based solely on the fact that their title is transliterated from Hebrew to Greek, instead a Greek *translation* of the Hebrew. Whether this is a solid sect versus a larger social movement is left unanswered, but the textual evidence lends some credence to the former. Clearly, they were a group concerned with defending their right to practice their religion. While this can also be said of the Maccabaean party in general, there is certainly some mark of distinction between the two groups. Some particular characteristic warranted the title the "Pious" over the rest of the Maccabaeans. Some have posited that they were a group of "pacifists" (again, used not in the strictest of senses[134]), who attempted to isolate themselves from oppression by removing to the desert – although this might be a case of conflating two separate references based on textual proximity. This is bolstered, though, by the Hasideans apparent appeasement upon the appointment of an Aaronid priest. Regardless of their hypothesized pacifistic tendencies, all scholars can agree on the Hasidean's effectiveness in the war effort upon joining the Maccabaean revolt. The text clearly shows a turn in favor of the Maccabees immediately following the joining of the Hasideans. This is furthered by the

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[134] See above on page 6, n. 3.

interpretation of the description of the Hasideans as "mighty warriors." If this is the case, then one might easily interpret the fighting prowess as that which distinguishes them from the Maccabaean party itself. However, this again does not explain their name, nor would such a definition give credence to either theory regarding what became of the Hasideans.

Unfortunately, the name "the Pious" creates more questions than it answers. It tells nothing of their personal theology, beliefs, or practice – things that would most likely lend them their name. The scant actual references can be summed up in the above statements. Scholars are thus left to imagine such habits and beliefs by comparing the evidence from 1 and 2 Maccabees to such features of better-known, later sectarian groups. Thus, in the mid-to-late 19th and early 20th centuries, scholars such as Wellhausen, Schürer, and Weber began to read into the descriptions of the Hasideans the features of the Pharisees. For one, Wellhausen saw connections between the Hasideans anti-Hellenistic tendencies and those of the Pharisees – particularly in the opposition of the Pharisees to the pro-Hellenistic Sadducees. On the other hand, Weber proposed a more general social movement, which potentially spawned more groups.

Other scholars attempted to link the Hasideans with those *Hasidim harishonim* found in the Talmud. As the Talmud, and Rabbinic Judaism in general, is considered the successor to Pharisaic Judaism, the implication in such a connection would be that the Tannaitic authors of the Talmud regarded the "early Hasidim" as inspirations. These Hasidim obviously being prior to the Tannaim, it would then be assumed that the early Hasidim would have to be Pharisees, or perhaps the Hasideans. The attempt at a connection was two-fold: to link the *Hasidim harishonim* to the Hasideans of 1

Maccabees, and to determine a coherent belief system which could be used to distinguish the Hasideans as a distinct group. This, as we saw, turned up inconclusive results.

Likewise, at the same time Pharisee models were being proposed, so too were those of the Essenes. The earliest scholars noted potential linguistic similarities between the Hasideans and the Essenes, both in Aramaic and Greek. Secondly, scholars found similarities between the Hasideans presumed retreat to the desert and the Essenes own removal to the desert. For the next half century, scholars could be found who either divided themselves on the subject, or accepted both theories. It was not until the discovery of the scrolls at Qumran that an argument for an Essene model gained more traction. Once a connection between the Qumran community and the Essenes had been established, scholars were able to use evidence from Qumran in bolstering their claims for Hasidean origins. Modern scholars such as Black, Vermes, Cross, and VanderKam all noted the dates given in the Damascus Document corresponded to the supposed dates of the rise of the Hasideans. Apocalyptic literature also provided evidence. Texts found both in and outside of Qumran provided scholars with even more food for speculation. Both Plöger and Heaton read the apocalypses in Daniel as veiled references to the Hasideans, an idea which Hengel took and furthered.

It was Philip Davies' scathing criticism of the Essene hypothesis, however, that resulted in a greater reluctance to associate the Hasideans completely with any group. Davies emphasized the fact that there is no concrete connection between the two, only small numbers of apparently too-good-to-be-coincidental links. Davies also noted the habits of scholars to overlay the personalities of the later sects onto the Hasideans in their zeal to prove a connection.

While many modern scholars will agree with Davies that past attempts at making connections between the groups were perhaps overzealous (see the quote from Collins above in Chapter 3, page 36), this has not necessarily deterred scholars since Davies to continue speculating. As already noted, Kampen's own study – the modern source par excellence on the topic of the Hasideans – sided with a Pharisaic model. Kampen certainly bases this on both the motives of the author of 1 Maccabees, and his potential sympathies with the Pharisees, and furthermore, that the Hasideans were acting in a similar manner in regards to the Seleucid state as the Pharisees were to the Hasmonean state. Kampen also takes into consideration the *Hasidim harishonim*, as we saw above, people clearly respected by the authors of the Talmud, who were themselves inheritors of the Pharisaic tradition. However, it seems again that this is still a result simply overlaying too much personality of the later group onto the Hasideans. Kampen, despite making a very convincing and even plausible argument, is still falling into the trap that Davies warned against. Secondly, one could argue that the dislike for and separation from the Hasmoneans that the Pharisees espoused could also be said of the Essenes. Yes, the similarities that Kampen makes are striking, but there is no concrete evidence. There is no Talmudic text specifically stating "the *Hasidim harishonim* are the same men referred to in 1 Maccabees." Likewise, there is no proto-Pharisaic text stating "We intend to separate ourselves from the Hasmoneans, just as our predecessors did from the Hellenistic supporters of the Seleucids."

One might argue that agnosticism is the most prudent choice. It probably is. But if one were simply examining face value evidence, an Essene hypothesis might be the more valid. Again, while not explicit, we have seen that the dates given for the

establishment of the Qumran community coincide very well with the appearance of the Hasideans. Secondly, the appearance of other referents for the Essenes, such as Ὁσσαῖοι lend credible evidence that the term Hasidim and Essene are linked. The fact that Ἀσιδαῖοι is a transliteration of Hebrew חסידים lends credible evidence that Ἐσσενοι is a transliteration of Aramaic חסין, with other terms like Ὁσσαῖοι being an actual attempt at translating the name. Obviously, these arguments do not seal the deal, but, if looking at face value evidence that requires as little interpretation or speculation as possible, it seems an educated guess would lean in favor of the Essenes. While it's hard to argue against such a thorough case as Kampen presents, very much of it is hinged on sociological assumptions – educated and well informed assumption, but assumption nonetheless. An Essene explanation seems to lean well enough on the side of caution, without venturing too far into the realm of speculation.

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