

# The Dead Sea Scrolls

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By Misheal Al-Kadhi, from the Arabic Paper



The scrolls and scroll fragments recovered in the Qumran environs represent a voluminous body of Jewish documents, a veritable "library", dating from the third century B.C.E. to 68 C.E. Unquestionably, the "library," which is the greatest manuscript find of the twentieth century, demonstrates the rich literary activity of Second Temple Period Jewry and sheds insight into centuries pivotal to both Judaism and Christianity. The library contains some books or works in a large number of copies, yet others are represented only fragmentarily by mere scraps of parchment. There are tens of thousands of scroll fragments. The number of different compositions represented is almost one thousand, and they are written in three different languages: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek.

### The main categories represented among the Dead Sea Scrolls:

- **Biblical** Those works contained in the Hebrew Bible. All of the books of the Bible are represented in the Dead Sea Scroll collection except Esther.
- **Apocryphal or pseudepigraphical** Those works which are omitted from various canons of the Bible and included in others.
- **Sectarian** Those scrolls related to a pietistic commune and include ordinances, biblical commentaries, apocalyptic visions, and liturgical works.

### The Discovery

In 1947, young Bedouin shepherds, searching for a stray goat in the Judean Desert, entered a long-untouched cave, on the shores of the dead sea, and found jars filled with ancient scrolls. That initial discovery by the Bedouins yielded seven scrolls and began a search that lasted nearly a decade and eventually produced thousands of scroll fragments from eleven caves. These scrolls were immediately identified as the work of a very devout sect of the Jewish community that lived centuries before the birth of Jesus (pbuh).

Hershel Shanks says in his book **Understanding the Dead Sea Scrolls**: *"Such was the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, manuscripts a thousand years older than the oldest known Hebrew texts of the Bible, manuscripts*

*many of which were written a hundred years before the birth of Jesus and at least one of which may have been written almost three hundred years before the journey of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem" (Understanding the Dead Sea Scrolls, Hershel Shanks, pp. 7-8).*

An immediate frantic search ensued through the remaining caves in the region in order to find what other ancient scrolls could be discovered therein. A small group of "international" scholars in Israel were given exclusive access to them and the rest of the world was all but totally barred from gaining even the slightest glimpse of the texts.

Prof. Eisenman observes that one of the major stumbling blocks for the publication of the scrolls was that "in the first place, the team was hardly "international". Prof. Robert Eisenman was one of the key players in the drama that finally lead to the release of the scrolls.

In his book **The Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered** we read: *"In the spring of 1986, at the end of his stay in Jerusalem, Professor Eisenman went with the British scholar, Philip Davies of the University of Sheffield, to see one of the Israeli officials responsible for this - an intermediary on behalf of the Antiquities Department (now 'Authority') and the International Team and the Scrolls Curator at Israel Museum. They were told in no uncertain terms 'You will not see the Scrolls in your lifetimes'".* This stung them into action, and as a result of this statement, a massive effort was launched and five years later, through a whirlwind of media publicity, absolute access to the scrolls was attained.

Prof. Eisenman eventually received 1800 pictures of the previously unpublished scrolls. The book goes on to describe how "Eisenman was preparing the Facsimile Edition of all unpublished plates. This was scheduled to appear the following spring through E. J. Brill in Leiden, Holland. Ten days, however, before it's scheduled publication in April 1991, after pressure was applied by the International Team, the publisher inexplicably withdrew and Hershel Shanks (author of Biblical Archeology Review) and the Biblical Archeology Society to their credit stepped in to fill the breach". However, finally in September 1991, the archives were officially opened and two months later the 2-volume Facsimile Edition was published.

**We have already read the words of Mr. Tom Harpur in the preface to his book:** "The most significant development since 1986 in this regard has been the discovery of the title "Son of God" in one of the Qumran papyri (Dead Sea Scrolls) used in relation to a person other than Jesus....this simply reinforces the argument made there that to be called the Son of God in a Jewish setting in the first century is not by any means the same as being identical with God Himself." **For Christ's Sake**, pp. xii.

So why don't we study these scrolls in a little more detail and see what else we can learn?

The Dead Sea Scrolls consist of fragments from many manuscripts. However, some of the most interesting among them are the **Peshet texts**. The Peshet texts are strings of interpretations of Biblical verses compiled by the most knowledgeable among the Jews. The word itself is derived from the Hebrew root word p-sh-r, which means, "to explain". The texts consist of Biblical passages followed by the words peshet ha-davar

"the interpretation of the matter is", and then the interpretation itself.

The basis of all of these texts is the notion that all of **history is preordained by God**. In other words, God is not restricted to looking at matters as "past", "present", or "future", rather, all of time is an open book to God. Indeed, this is the essence of how prophets receive "prophesies", because God "sees" the future. So, remembering that we are henceforth quoting from **texts that have been carbon dated at about 100 years or more before the coming of Jesus (pbuh)**, and that this dating is confirmed by literary analysis, and that the authors were a sect of very religious and devout Jews, considering all of this let us see what they have to say:

Those who have studied the scrolls have noticed a **common theme prevalent throughout** these manuscripts, that is, most of the pesher texts prophesies the coming of a **"Teacher of Righteousness"** who will be sent by God to the Jews. This "Teacher of Righteousness" will be opposed by the "Teacher of Lies" and the "Wicked Priest".

These scrolls also predict the coming of two messiahs. These two messiahs are referred to as a

### **1) priestly and a**

### **2) temporal messiah**

What we had here was a society of very devout Jews who were convinced that the time of the coming of the **two messiahs** was at hand, therefore, they set about preparing for their advent by detaching themselves from the mainstream society, and dedicating their lives to their worship and the preparation for their imminent arrival.

In *The Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered*, by Robert Eisenman and Michael Wise, we read that the early scrolls spoke of **two messiahs**, but that later on, the communities of the Jews began to combine them into one messiah: *"As we have suggested, contrary to the well-known 'two-Messiah' theory of early Qumran scholarship, these references to the 'Messiah of Aaron and Israel' in the Damascus Document are singular not plural... and one possible explanation for it is that it is evoking a Messiah with both priestly and kingly implications, like the somewhat similar recitations of Hebrews"* (***The Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered***, Robert Eisenman and Michael Wise, p. 162).

*"According to the dominant view in the sectarian texts from Qumran, two messiahs were to lead the congregation in the End of Days, one priestly, and the other lay"* (*Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls*, Lawrence H. Schiffman, pp. 321-322).

The Jews had prophesies of two messiahs. The **first** was best known to them for his **"religious" or "priestly"** works which he would perform. The **second** was best known to them for his **"kingly" works; his bringing of an epoch of peace.**

These two prophesies refer to Jesus (pbuh) and Muhammad (pbuh).

Jesus (pbuh) was best know for his **"priestly"** works. However, he never lead an army, and he never established a kingdom or a government. Quite

the opposite, he called to peace and submissiveness and to leave the rule of the land to others (Matthew 22: 21). He told his followers that he yet had **many things to teach them** but they could not bear them yet and that another would be coming after him who would teach them the complete truth (John 16: 7-14).

Muhammad (pbuh) too began his ministry preaching submissiveness and passiveness. However, his ministry was nurtured by God almighty to a point where it was able to defend itself and establish justice in the earth and abolish evil. His followers fought **several wars in self defense and against injustice**. The **Islamic empire** finally stretched from China to Spain and even those who did not follow Muhammad (pbuh) knew him well. However, what did they know him for? They knew him for his **"kingly" actions** and not for the "priestly" side of him that his followers knew.

*"And fight against them until persecution is no more and religion is for God alone. But if they desist then let there be no hostility except against wrongdoers" --The Qur'an, al-Baqarah(2): 193*

*"Those unto whom We gave the Scripture recognize him Muhammad as they recognize their sons. But verily, a party of them conceal the truth while they know it" --The Qur'an, al-Baqarah(2): 146*

Over time, the prophecies of the Jews began to become a **little blurred**, and this in addition to the continuous persecution of many nations towards the Jews eventually lead to their **blending** of these prophecies into **one single prophecy** and their aggrandizing of this one all- conquering wondrous event that would finally relieve them of their persecution and pave the way for them to march forth conquering all nations, and establishing themselves as the protectors of the kingdom of God.

**For this reason, when we read the Gospel of Barnabas, we find that when the Jews ask Jesus (pbuh) whether he is "the messiah" he replies that he is not "the messiah" that they are expecting.**

*"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law." --Matthew 10: 34-35*

This is because he understood their question. They were not asking him for his title, rather, they wanted to know whether he was the one who would finally fulfill all of their prophecies of leadership, power, and grandeur that they had been waiting for so many centuries. For this reason, he told them that **he was not "the messiah"**, but that "the Messiah" they were waiting for would not come until later. He was referring to the **SECOND messiah** in their prophecies. (the Jews had expectations of **three** prophecies to be fulfilled)

# Three distinct prophecies

In the Bible we read of the test that the Jews applied to Jesus (pbuh) in order to ascertain his truthfulness. The Jews had a prophecy that required Elias to come before Jesus (pbuh): "Elias verily cometh first" (Mark 9:12). They had not seen Elias yet so there was still doubt as to Jesus (PBUH) being the Messiah. Jesus, however, responded to them that Elias had already come but that they did not recognize him.

In **Matthew 17:12-13** we read: "But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not...Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist".

John, however DENIES the claims of Jesus (pbuh). This is one of the Christian's "dark sayings of Jesus" that their scholars have yet to reconcile and we will leave this matter for them to work out among themselves.

In **John 1:19-21** we read "And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who art thou?. And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, **I am not the christ**. And they asked him, What then? *ART THOU ELIAS?* And he saith, I am not. ***ART THOU THAT PROPHET? And he answered, No***".

**We notice that there are three distinct prophecies here:**

- **Elias,**
- **Messiah**
- **That prophet.**

**The Jews were not waiting for two prophecies, but three.**

This can be further clarified by reading John 1:25:

"And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be:

- a) not the Christ,**
- b) nor Elias,**
- c) neither that Prophet?"**

"that prophet" could not be Jesus (pbuh), because that would make the third question in both verses redundant; nor can we believe that "that prophet" is the holy ghost, did John look like a ghost? Further, we must remember that "That prophet" can not apply to any prophet before the time of Jesus (pbuh) because at the time of Jesus (pbuh) the Jews were still waiting for all three.

Notice how when we let the Bible speak for itself, without forcing the holy spirit or other supernatural meanings on it in the commentary, or forcing three questions to be only two, how clear these verses become.

It is quite obvious from the above verses that the followers of Jesus (pbuh) recognized that the Jews were waiting for **three** prophecies to be fulfilled.

The Bible, to one degree or another, confirms that both the first and second prophecies were fulfilled. However, it provides no logical explanation for the third prophecy.

## Cont. the Dead Sea Scrolls

Lawrence Schiffman says regarding Peshar Habakkuk: *"It (Peshar Habakkuk) describes the struggle between the Teacher of Righteousness and his opponents - the Man of Lies (also termed the Spouter or Preacher of Lies) and the Wicked Priest. The Spouter is pictured as heading a community. The dispute between the Teacher and the Spouter is seems to have been based on matters of religious interpretation and law. The Wicked Priest is said to have begun his rule in truth but then to have abandoned the way of truth. He then persecutes the Teacher, confronting him on the holiest day of the year, the Day of Atonement".* (**Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls**, Lawrence H. Schiffman, p. 228).

This prophecy also continues in Peshar Psalms: *"This text also mentions the familiar dramatis personae: the Teacher of Righteousness, termed 'the priest'; the wicked priest; and the Man of Lies. The Wicked Priest persecuted the Teacher and sought to kill him. The man of lies lead people astray".* (**Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls**, Lawrence H. Schiffman, p. 229).

What we begin to see in all of this is the **story** of the coming of Jesus (pbuh), his selection of Judas as one of the apostles, the deviance of Judas from the truth, how a sect of the Jews persecuted Jesus (pbuh), how this sect tried to deceive the masses and differed with Jesus (pbuh) regarding the truth of God's message, and finally, how they schemed with Judas to kill Jesus (pbuh). **The Teacher of Righteousness is thus a reference to Jesus (pbuh); the "priestly" Messiah.** The Wicked Priest is a reference to Judas, and the Spouter of Lies is most likely the leader of the "chief priests and Pharisees" who persecuted Jesus (pbuh) and are mentioned so often in the Bible.

Many Christian scholars have snatched up these prophecies in order to prove the validity of their claim that Jesus (pbuh) was indeed sent by God and that the Jews are required to follow him. However, they have been thwarted in their attempts by one other quite amazing piece of evidence that the Jews continually manage to refute their claims with, specifically, that the Dead Sea Scrolls claim that the coming messiah will be persecuted and that the Wicked Priest will try to kill him, but that the Wicked Priest will not be successful and that it is he who will receive the fate he wished for the messiah.

In interpreting Psalms 37:32, "The Wicked watches for the righteous, seeking to put him to death," the text states: "Its interpretation concerns the Wicked Priest who watched out for the Teacher of Righteousness and sought to put him to death!" (**Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls**, Lawrence H. Schiffman, p. 233).

## So Judas will try to kill Jesus (pbuh).

"The Wicked Priest began his career with the support of the sectarians, but he quickly lost his way and began to transgress in order to increase his wealth". (**Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls**, Lawrence H. Schiffman, p. 233).

"And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver". --Matthew 26:15

"Various theories have sought to identify the Teacher with Jesus, claiming that he was executed by the Wicked Priest. However, had that been the case, the text would not have gone on to explain how God took vengeance against the priest by turning him over to the 'ruthless ones of the nations'. And according to this text, the teacher certainly survived the ambush. Indeed the entire passage is an interpretation of Psalms (37:33) where the text continues, "The Lord will not abandon him (the Righteous), into his hand (the Wicked); He (The Lord) will not let him (the Righteous) be condemned in judgment (by the wicked)." (**Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls**, Lawrence H. Schiffman, pp. 233-234).

The author goes on to quote Peshet Habakkuk with regard to the Wicked Priest's intentions and his punishment. He says: "Ultimately, however, the Wicked Priest was punished: '... because of his transgression against the Teacher of Righteousness and the men of his council, God gave him over to the hands of his enemies to afflict him with disease so as to destroy him with mortal suffering because he had acted wickedly against His chosen one'.

The Wicked Priest's enemies tortured him which represents divine punishment for his attacks on the Teacher of Righteousness. The sufferings of the Wicked Priest are even more graphically described in another passage: 'and all his enemies arose and abused him in order for his suffering to be fit punishment for his evil. And they inflicted upon him horrible diseases, and acts of vengeance in the flesh of his body'. But the one who suffered was the Wicked Priest, not the Teacher of Righteousness.

"The enemies of the Wicked Priest, the nation against whom he had made war, are said to have tortured him, so that his life ended in mortal disease and affliction." (**Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls**, Lawrence H. Schiffman, p. 234).

If we read the [Gospel of Barnabas](#), we will find that when Judas came with the Roman troops in order to betray Jesus (pbuh), God raised Jesus (pbuh) unto Him and saved him. He then made Judas look and even speak like Jesus (pbuh) so that the Romans dragged him (Judas) away with them kicking and screaming that he was not Jesus (pbuh) but Judas. Even the Apostles were totally bewildered.

After the Romans had their fill afflicting Judas with all manner of abuse and torture, he was finally taken to trial. By now he had totally given up hope of ever being believed. So now when he was asked, "art thou Jesus?" He replied "Thou sayest". In other words, "you will not believe me if I say

otherwise, so why fight it any more". His enemies (the Romans) then took him, mocked him, kicked him, cut him, spat on him, humiliated him, and tortured him. Finally, they put him up on the cross. It appears, however, that shortly after they took him down, he disappeared from his tomb (maybe to live in disease and torment and die later on if he was not already dead).

The [Gospel of Baranabas](#) then goes on to describe how Jesus (pbuh) returned to the apostles to tell them of how God had saved him from the hands of the Jews and the Romans and how the traitor (Judas) was taken instead.

**This (above) is exactly what the Qur'an has been saying for 1400 years now; that Jesus (pbuh) was not forsaken by God to be killed by the conspiracy of the Jews and Judas, but that "it was made to appear so to them":** "But when Jesus became conscious of their disbelief, he cried: Who will be my helpers in the cause of Allah? The disciples said: We will be Allah's helpers. We believe in Allah, and bear you witness that we have surrendered (unto Him). Our Lord! We believe in that which You have revealed and we follow him whom You have sent. Enroll us among those who witness (to the truth). And they (the disbelievers) schemed, and Allah schemed (against them): and Allah is the best of schemers" --**The Qur'an, A'I-Umran(3):52-54.**

"And because of their saying: We slew the Messiah Jesus son of Mary, Allah's messenger, and they slew him not nor crucified, but it appeared so unto them; and lo! those who disagree concerning it are in doubt thereof; they have no knowledge thereof save pursuit of a conjecture; for of a surety they slew him not" --**The Qur'an, Al-Nissa(4):157**

The scrolls then go on to describe how "Kittim" (the Roman empire) and the kings of Greece would both try to take Jerusalem (the symbol of the faithful), but that it would be Kittim (the Romans) who would finally be successful.

"Some texts also speak about an eschatological prophet who will announce the coming of the Messiah, a figure similar to Elijah in the rabinnic tradition" (**Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls**, Lawrence H. Schiffman, p. 323).

Referring to the manuscript titled [The Rule of the Community](#), verse 9:11-12, Mr. Schiffman says: "[this text unquestionably refers to two messiahs](#) who will be announced by an eschatological prophet and based on a the cave 4 manuscripts of Rule of the Community, the original publication team argued that this passage was added to the text later in the history of the sect. However, the evidence in these manuscripts does not sufficiently support such an assertion. As far as we can tell, the [two-messiah concept](#) was part of Rule of the Community from the time it was composed". (**Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls**, Lawrence H. Schiffman, p. 324).

"And when there came unto them (the Jews) a Scripture from Allah, confirming that in their possession though before that they were invoking Allah (for the coming of Muhammad ) in order to gain victory over those who disbelieved, then when there came unto them that which they had recognized, they disbelieved in it. So let the curse of Allah be on disbelievers" --**The Qur'an, Al-Baqarah(2):89**

The Dead Sea Scrolls make mention of many more quite amazing and illuminating prophesies and parallels with the teachings of the Qur'an and Islam. There is so much more that could be said about the Dead Sea Scrolls and their confirmation of the Qur'an and the mission of Muhammad , however, that will have to be left to a future article where, God willing, many more detailed examples of this sort shall be analyzed in detail.

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## Chapter 7: The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Gospel of Barn p2

*"It (Peshar Habakkuk) describes the struggle between the Teacher of Righteousness and his opponents - the Man of Lies (also termed the Spouter or Preacher of Lies) and the Wicked Priest. The Spouter is pictured as heading a community. The dispute between the teacher and the Spouter is seems to have been based on matters of religious interpretation and law. The wicked priest is said to have begun his rule in truth but then to have abandoned the way of truth. He then persecutes the Teacher, confronting him on the holiest day of the year, the Day of Atonement."*

Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls, Lawrence H. Schiffman, p. 228

This prophesy continues in Peshar Psalms:

*"This text also mentions the familiar dramatis personae: the Teacher of Righteousness, termed 'the priest'; the wicked priest; and the Man of Lies. The Wicked Priest persecuted the Teacher and sought to kill him. The man of lies lead people astray"*.

Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls, Lawrence H. Schiffman, p. 229

In Peshar Psalms A 1 III 15-16 we read

*"Its interpretation (Psalms 37:23) refers to the priest, the Teacher of Righteousness whom God promised would arise, for He (God) prepared (i.e., predestined) him (the teacher) to build for Him a congregation"*.

Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls, Lawrence H. Schiffman, p. 120

What we begin to see in all of this is the story of the coming of Jesus (pbuh), his selection of Judas as one of the apostles, the deviance of Judas from the truth, how a sect of the Jews persecuted Jesus (pbuh), how this sect tried to deceive the masses and differed with Jesus (pbuh) regarding

the truth of God's message, and finally, how they schemed with Judas to kill Jesus (pbuh). The Teacher of Righteousness is thus a reference to Jesus (pbuh); the "priestly" messiah. The Wicked Priest is a reference to Judas, and the Spouter of Lies is most likely the leader of the "chief priests and Pharisees" who persecuted Jesus (pbuh) and are mentioned so often in the Bible, or it may be a reference to Paul himself.

Many Christian scholars have snatched up these prophecies in order to prove the validity of their claim that Jesus (pbuh) was indeed sent by God and that the Jews are required to follow him. However, they have been thwarted in their attempts by one other quite amazing piece of evidence that the Jews continually manage to refute their claims with, specifically, that the Dead Sea Scrolls claim that the first messiah will be persecuted and that the Wicked Priest will try to kill him, but that the Wicked Priest will not be successful and that it is he who will receive the fate he wished for the messiah.

*"The Wicked Priest went so far as to lie in ambush for the Teacher of Righteousness. In interpreting Psalms 37:32, "The Wicked watches for the righteous, seeking to put him to death," the text states: 'Its interpretation concerns the Wicked Priest who watched out for the Teacher of Righteousness and sought to put him to death' Peshar Psalms A 1-10 IV 8-9"*

Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls, Lawrence H. Schiffman, p. 233

So Judas will try to kill Jesus (pbuh).

In Peshar Habakkuk 11:4-8 we read

*"Its interpretation (Habakkuk 2:15) concerns the Wicked Priest, who pursued the Teacher of Righteousness to swallow him up with his wrathful anger to the place of his exile. And at the time of the day of rest of the Day of Atonement, he (the Wicked Priest) appeared before them to swallow them up and to make them stumble on the day of the fast of their abstention from work."*

Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls, Lawrence H. Schiffman, p. 120

*"The Wicked Priest began his career with the support of the sectarians, but he quickly lost his way and began to transgress in order to increase his wealth".*

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Remember Matthew 26:15

*"And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto*

you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver".

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The author goes on to quote *Pesher Habakkuk* with regard to the Wicked Priest's intentions and his punishment. He says:

*"Ultimately, however, the Wicked Priest was punished: '.. because of his transgression against the Teacher of Righteousness and the men of his council, God gave him over to the hands of his enemies to afflict him with disease so as to destroy him with mortal suffering because he had acted wickedly against His chosen one'. The Wicked Priest's enemies tortured him which represents divine punishment for his attacks on the Teacher of Righteousness. The sufferings of the Wicked Priest are even more graphically described in another passage: 'and all his enemies arose and abused him in order for his suffering to be fit punishment for his evil. And they inflicted upon him horrible diseases, and acts of vengeance in the flesh of his body'. The one who suffered was the Wicked Priest, not the Teacher of Righteousness. The enemies of the Wicked Priest, the nation against whom he had made war, are said to have tortured him, so that his life ended in mortal disease and affliction."*

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*Pesher Habakkuk* 9:9-10 reads:

*"Its interpretation (Habakkuk 2:8) concerns the Wicked Priest, who, because of (his) transgression against the Teacher of Righteousness and the men of his council, God handed over into the hands of his enemies to afflict him..."*

Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls, Lawrence H. Schiffman, p. 119

If we were to read the Gospel of Barnabas, we would find that when Judas came with the Roman troops in order to betray Jesus (pbuh), God raised Jesus (pbuh) unto Him and saved him. He then made Judas look and even speak like Jesus (pbuh) so that the Romans dragged Judas away with them kicking and screaming that he was not Jesus (pbuh) but Judas. Even the

apostles were totally bewildered.

After the Romans had their fill afflicting Judas with all manner of abuse and torture, he was finally taken to trial. He was asked many times whether he was Jesus (pbuh) and each time he replied that he was not Jesus but Judas and that Jesus had utilized his black magic in order to alter his form and make him resemble Jesus. Of course, no one believed him. The most his pleas succeeded in doing was to convince some that Jesus was a lunatic. This turn of events appears to be supported by the New Testament where we find that whenever Jesus was asked, "art thou Jesus?" He would reply "Thou sayest"(Matthew 27:11, Mark 15:2). This would be a completely logical response if he was not Jesus but Judas and he had been abused, ridiculed and mocked to the point that he had given up all hope of being believed. In other words, what Judas meant by "thou sayest" was, "you will not believe me if I say otherwise, so why fight it any more."

Judas' enemies (the Romans) then took him and resumed their abuse. They mocked him, kicked him, cut him, spat on him, humiliated him, and tortured him. Finally, they put him up on the cross. It appears, however, that shortly after they took him down, he disappeared from his tomb (perhaps to live in disease and torment and die later on if he was not already dead). The Gospel of Barnabas then goes on to describe how Jesus (pbuh) returned to the apostles to tell them of how God had saved him from the hands of the Jews and the Romans, raised him up into heaven, and how the traitor (Judas) was taken instead.

Once again this chain of events appears to be supported by the New Testament where we find that uncertainty regarding the fate of Judas has resulted in contradicting narrations in it's different books. For example, in Matthew 27:5 Judas is depicted as having felt severe remorse, handed over his blood money to the custodians of the great Temple, and then gone out and hung himself out of shame and remorse. However, in Acts 1:19 far from displaying remorse, Judas is depicted as having purchased a field with his ill gotten gains and then one day while he was out walking he tripped, fell down, and his internal organs burst out. In this manner, divine justice took vengeance against the traitor.

Conservative scholars have tried to harmonize these two conflicting narrations for centuries now, trying to make sense of how in one place it is Judas who purchased the field himself, and in the other it is the chief priests who purchased it. Similarly, in one place Judas died by hanging himself, and in the other he tripped and his bowels gush out. In one he was remorseful and in the other he displayed no signs of remorse. As a partial solution to this dilemma, some conservative scholars have suggested that Judas hung himself, the rope broke, he fell down and then his bowels gushed out. In other words, they have taken two contradictory accounts, added in additional details found in neither one, and then come up with a completely new account supported by neither.

As mentioned previously, it is quite possible that the elusive Q document which Christian scholars believe to be the source document for the first three Gospels, (Matthew, Mark and Luke) is indeed the Gospel of Barnabas. This Gospel, once again, appears to have had a strong influence on our current day New Testament, however, the denial of Judas has now taken on various new forms, for example:

In one (Matthew 26:64), Jesus is taken before the high priest who commands him to answer *"whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God."* Jesus replies: *"Thou has said."*

In the next Gospel (Mark 14:61), Jesus is asked the question by the High Priest but this time he is depicted as having answered it directly and courageously. In this version, Jesus affirms *"I am..."*

However, In Luke 22:67, Jesus now returns to the original "thou sayest" position, albeit with different words. In this version he says: *"If I tell you, ye will not believe"* Once again, confirming the narration of the Gospel of Barnabas.

Further evidence in support of my assertion that Q may in fact be the Gospel of Barnabas is the fact that the final (Non-Synoptic) Gospel, that of John, contains no mention of the High Priest's question or Jesus' claimed reply. In the Johnine version (John 18:19-23), the questions and answers are quite different than the first three Gospels. The author of the Gospel of Mark appears to have modified the original response in order to depict Jesus as fearlessly answering their questions directly, and heroically standing his ground welcoming their persecution with open arms. On the other hand the other two (Matthew and Luke) still retain the original text reflecting Judas' frustration in the face of the persecution he had intended for his master.

For 1400 years now the Qur'an has been telling us that Jesus (pbuh) was not forsaken by God to be killed by the conspiracy of the Jews and Judas but that *"it was made to appear so unto them."* Although we as Muslims may never know for certain the details of how this transpired since the Qur'an does not give us these details, still, we read:

*"But when Jesus became conscious of their disbelief, he cried: Who will be my helpers in the cause of Allah? The disciples said: We will be Allah's helpers. We believe in Allah, and bear you witness that we have surrendered (unto Him). Our Lord! We believe in that which You have revealed and we follow him whom You have sent. Enroll us among those who witness (to the truth). And they (the disbelievers) schemed, and Allah schemed (against them): and Allah is the best of schemers"*

The noble Qur'an, A'l-Umran(3):52-54.

*"And because of their saying: We slew the Messiah Jesus son of Mary,*

*Allah's messenger, and they slew him not nor crucified, but a similitude of that was shown unto them; and lo! those who disagree concerning it are in doubt thereof; they have no knowledge thereof save the pursuit of conjecture; for of a surety they slew him not"*

The noble Qur'an, Al-Nissa(4):157

*Those among the Children of Israel who disbelieved were cursed by the tongue of David and Jesus, son of Mary. That was because they disobeyed and were ever transgressing. They used not to forbid one another from the evil which they committed. Vile indeed was what they used to do. You see many of them taking the disbelievers as their protectors and helpers. Evil indeed is that which their own selves have sent forward before them, for that (reason) Allah's Wrath fell upon them and in torment they will abide. And had they believed in Allah, and in the Prophet (Muhammad, pbuh) and in what has been revealed to him, never would they have taken them (the disbelievers) as protectors and helpers, but many of them are the rebellious, the disobedient to Allah. Verily, you will find the strongest among men in enmity to the believers (Muslims) the Jews and the polytheists, and you will find the nearest in love to the believers (Muslims) those who say: "We are Christians." That is because amongst them are priests and monks, and they are not proud. And when they listen to what has been sent down to the Messenger (Muhammad, pbuh), you see their eyes overflowing with tears because of the truth they have recognised. They say: "Our Lord! We believe; so write us down among the witnesses. "And why should we not believe in Allah and in that which has come to us of the truth? And we wish that our Lord will admit us (in Paradise) along with the righteous people. So because of what they said, Allah rewarded them Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise), they will abide therein forever. Such is the reward of gooddoers. But those who disbelieved and belied Our signs they shall be the dwellers of the (Hell) Fire.*

The noble Qur'an, Al-Maidah(5): 78-86

The scrolls then go on to describe how "Kittim" (the Roman empire) and the kings of Greece would both try to take Jerusalem (the symbol of the faithful), but that it would be Kittim (the Romans) who would finally be successful. Remember how in chapter one we described the stages of how the Roman empire eventually took control of the whole Christian religion and "protected" it and "spread" it after it was "clarified" and its doctrines established and preserved through Greek philosophy and writing?

*"Some texts also speak about an eschatological prophet who will announce the coming of the messiah, a figure similar to Elijah in the rabbinic tradition"*

Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls, Lawrence H. Schiffman, p. 323

Once again, please read section 6.1 where it is made abundantly clear that not only were the Jews expecting a prophet to "clear the way" for Jesus (pbuh) and "announce" him (this was John the Baptist), but they also expected a second messiah to come after Jesus (pbuh).

Referring to the manuscript titled The Rule of the Community, verse 9:11-12, Mr. Schiffman says:

*"this text unquestionably refers to two messiahs, Dual Messiah prophecy who will be announced by an eschatological prophet. Based on a the cave 4 manuscripts of Rule of the Community, the original publication team argued that this passage was added to the text later in the history of the sect. However, the evidence in these manuscripts does not sufficiently support such an assertion. As far as we can tell, the two-messiah concept was part of Rule of the Community from the time it was composed".*

Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls, Lawrence H. Schiffman, p. 324

*"Until the coming of the Prophet and both the priestly and the lay Messiahs, these men are not to depart from the clear intent of the law to walk in any way in the stubbornness of their own hearts. They shall judge by the original laws in which the community was schooled from the beginning"*

Manual of Discipline 9:8-11 (The Dead Sea Scrolls and Gospel of Barnabas)

*"And these, in specific form, are the regulations which they are to follow throughout the Era of Wickedness, until the priestly and lay Messiahs enter upon their office expiate and expiates their inequities"*

Zadokite Document 14:18 (The Dead Sea Scrolls and Gospel of Barnabas)

Mr M. A. Yusseff relates in his book:

*"In the late second century, as the Memoirs of Hegesippus says, a man was found collecting traditions about the life and ministry of Jesus from the Nazarenes and Christians in order to write a general ecclesiastical history. Whatever was the nature of such an ecclesiastical history, one thing can be said for sure that the traditions carried prophecies about the Messiah who was to come after Jesus. So pervasive was their presence in the ecclesiastical literature that even the Nicolaitans Church of Rome retained them, though in a distorted form"*

The Dead Sea Scrolls, the Gospel of Barnabas, and the New Testament, M. A. Yusseff, p. 109

To see how the Jews recognized these prophecies and indeed acted upon them in anticipation of the arrival of their final Messiah in Arabia, please

read chapter 10.

*"And when there came unto them (the Jews) a Scripture from Allah, confirming that in their possession though before that they were invoking Allah (for the coming of Muhammad, the last Messiah) in order to gain victory over those who disbelieved, then when there came unto them that which they had recognized, they disbelieved in it. So let the curse of Allah be on the disbelievers"*

The noble Qur'an, Al-Baqarah(2):89

The Dead Sea Scrolls make mention of many more quite amazing and illuminating prophesies and parallels with the teachings of the Qur'an and Islam. There are also many parallels with the historical series of events presented in this book, such as the reference to the "seekers of smooth things" (simplifying the law of the religion) which sound amazingly similar to the description of Paul and his followers who "simplified" the religion of Jesus after his departure and removed all obligation from it all the while claiming that his authority came directly from "visions" of Jesus (pbuh). He is even quoted, while preaching this removal of obligation and the law, as saying

*"But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ"*

2 Corinthians 11:3 (also see 2 Corinthians 1:12, Romans 3:28, etc.)

*"When the prayer was ended, the priest said with a loud voice: 'Stay Jesus, for we need to know who you are, for the quieting of our nation.' Jesus answered 'I am Jesus son of Mary, of the seed of David, a man who is mortal and fears God, and I seek that God be given honor and glory.' The priest answered, 'In the book of moses it is written that our God must send us the Messiah, who shall come to announce to us that which God willed, and shall bring to the world His mercy. Therefore, I pray, tell us the truth, are you the Messiah of God whom we expect?' Jesus answered 'It is true that God has so promised, but indeed I am not he, for he was made before me, and shall come after me.' The priest answered, 'By your words and signs at any rate we believe you to be a prophet and a holy one of God. I pray in the name of all Judea and Israel that you, for love of God, should tell us how the Messiah will come.' Jesus answered, 'As God lives, in whose presence my soul stands, I am not the Messiah whom all of the tribes of the earth expect, even as God promised to our father Abraham saying: "In your seed will I bless all of the tribes of the earth" But when God shall take me away from the world, Satan will raise again this accursed sedition, by making the impious believe that I am God the Son of God. At such time, my words and my doctrine shall be contaminated so much that scarcely shall there remain thirty faithful ones. At that time, God will have mercy upon the world and will send his messenger for whom He*

*has made all things. He shall come from the South with power and shall destroy the idols and the idolaters. He shall take away the dominion which Satan has over men. He shall bring with him the mercy of God for salvation of those who shall believe in his words"*

The Gospel of Barnabas, 96

*"Then the disciples wept after this discourse, and Jesus was also weeping, and when they saw many who came to find him, for the chief of priests took council among themselves to catch him in his talk. They sent the Levites and some of the scribes to question him, saying, 'Who are you?' Jesus confessed and said the truth, 'I am not the Messiah.' They said, 'Are you Elijah or Jeremiah, or any of the other ancient prophets?' Jesus answered 'No' Then they said, 'Who are you? Say, in order that we may give testimony to those who sent us.' Then said Jesus, 'I am a voice that cries through all Judea, and cries, "Prepare you the way for the messenger of the Lord," even as it is written in Esaias.' They said, 'If you are not the Messiah or Elijah, or any prophet, why do you preach new doctrine, and make yourself more important than the Messiah?' Jesus answered, 'The miracles which God works by my hands show that I speak that which God wills; nor do I make myself to be accounted as him of whom you speak. For I am not worthy to loosen the shoe straps of the messenger of God whom you call "Messiah," who was made before me, and shall come after me. And shall bring the words of truth, so that his faith shall have no end.' The Levites and the scribes departed in confusion, and recounted to the chiefs of the priests, who said, 'He has the devil on his back who recounted all to him'"*

The Gospel of Barnabas, 42

Mr. Yusseff says:

*"In sir Godfrey Higgins' notable work Anacalypsis, we are told that in the book of Haggi, the name of the Messiah who was to come after Jesus appears in chapter two, verse seven: 'And the desire of all nations shall come' Here the Hebrew word HMD\* [translated as 'desire'], from the Hebrew text appears in Sir Higgins' work with the following explanation of the root word HMD. 'From this root,' (says Parkhurst,) 'The pretended prophet Mohammed, or Mahomet, had his name.' Sir Higgins says, 'Here Mohammed' is expressly foretold by Haggi, and by name; there is no interpolation here. There is no evading this clear text and it's meaning, as it appeared to the mind of the most unwilling of witnesses, Parkhurst, and a competent judge too when he happened to not be warped by prejudice. He does not suppress his opinion here, as he did in the Wisdom of the Jerusalem Targum, because he had no object to serve; he did not see to what this truth would lead."*

The Dead Sea Scrolls, the Gospel of Barnabas, and the New Testament, M. A. Yusseff, pp. 110-111

## Other Ancient Religions and Scriptures:

There is much more that could be said about the Dead Sea Scrolls and their confirmation of the Qur'an and the mission of Muhammad (pbuh), however, that will have to be left to a future book where, God willing, many more examples of this sort shall be analyzed in detail. However, before closing this topic, I would like to pose the following question: Are the Gospel of Barnabas and the Dead Sea Scrolls the only two ancient scriptures that prophesy the coming of a final messenger of God from Arabia? This was a question that I wrestled with for some time. Muslims are told that Allah Almighty had been sending messengers since the beginning of time to all of the nations of earth. They are also told that each one of these messengers had prophesied to their followers a number of matters, among them the coming of the "last messenger" and also the coming of the "false Christ" (whom Muhammad too warned his people of). A brief study of other ancient scriptures available today has lead me to the conclusion that it is indeed the case that many of these religions, no matter their current state, appear to have at one point in time began their life with a true messenger of God and that this messenger of God prophesied the coming of Muhammad (pbuh). Although I have not yet had sufficient opportunity to research this matter appropriately, still, the initial indications appear to support this assertion. Two very brief examples follow:

Example one: The Farsi (Parsi) religion is one of the oldest known religions of mankind. It was practiced in Persia for many centuries and consisted mainly of two scriptures: the Dasatir and the Zand Avasta. In Dasatir 14 (Sasan11) we can find a very clear prophesy of Muhammad (pbuh):

*"When the Persians should sink so low in morality, a man will be born in Arabia whose followers will upset their throne, religion and everything. The mighty stiff-necked ones of Persia will be overpowered. The house which was built (The Kaaba in Makkah built by prophet Abraham) and in which many idols have been placed will be purged of idols, and people will say their prayers facing towards it. His followers will capture the towns of Parsis and Taus and Balkh and other big places round about. People will embroil with one another. The wise men of Persia and others will join his followers."*

This prophesy requires no interpretation. It is an exact description of matters that we now recognize as historical fact (see end of chapter 10).

Example two: In the Hindu scriptures too there is what appears to be a clear prophesy of Muhammad (pbuh). In Bhavishya Purana he is actually mentioned by name:

*"Just an illiterate man with the epithet Teacher, Muhammad by name, came along with his companions. Raja (Bhoja in a vision) to that Great Diva, that denizen of Arabia, purifying with the Ganges water and with the five things of cow offered sandal wood and pay worship to him. O denizen of Arabia and Lord of the holies, to thee is my adoration. O thou who hast found many ways and means to destroy the devils of the world. O pure one from among the illiterates, O sinless one, the spirit of the truth and absolute master, to thee is my adoration. Accept me at thy feet"*

Bhavishya Purna Parv 3, Khand 3, Adhya 3, Shalok 5-8

For those who wish to see more, you are encouraged to obtain a copy of the book "The Bible's Last Prophet," by Faisal Siddiqui, Al-Saadawi Publications.

Lawrence Schiffman says regarding *Pesher Habakkuk*:

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### **Final Note**

The Dead Sea Scrolls have been the subject of avid interest and curiosity for nearly fifty years. Today, scholars agree on their significance but disagree on who produced them. They debate specific passages of individual scrolls and are still assessing their impact on the foundations of Judaism and Christianity. For the public in this country and throughout the world, the scrolls have an aura of reverence and intrigue which is reinvigorated periodically by the media--journalists who report serious disagreements among well-known scholars, as well as tabloids which claim that the scrolls can predict the future or answer life's mysteries.