HISTORICAL GROUPINGS IN SECOND TEMPLE JUDAISM: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS ON RELIGIOUS, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL IMPACT OF SADDUCEES, PHARISEES, AND ESSENES

by

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DECLARATION

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I declare that this Doctor of Literature and Philosophy Thesis is my own work, conducted under the supervision of Prof. H. Ramantswana from the University of South Africa (UNISA). It has never been submitted before to the University of South Africa (UNISA) or any other Institution for degree purposes.

Signature:_____ Date:_____

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ABSTRACT

The Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes are three groups within the history of Second Temple Judaism that carry importance which cannot be ignored. They carry religious, social and political characteristics that are intertwined with the life of the intertestamental times as powerful determinators even prior to the emergence of Christianity. It is within this important context that the three groups are comparatively assessed, analysed and evaluated from religious, social and political perspectives. In the same vein, the comparative analysis will form a firm foundation for the three religious, social and political groups It is the comparative dimensions and their impact, wherein the causes of success or failure, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of the three groups, will emerge. This emergence will reveal the fundamental reasons for the survival or death of the groups during the changing times.

The traditional perspective is that the Sadducees and Essenes and all other groups/sects disappeared after 70 CE, leaving the Pharisees as the only surviving group. Scholars such as Shaye J.D. Cohen, Mathew J. Grey and Pieter J.J. Botha differ from that perspective. This thesis aims to navigate a narrow space which shows the strength of the Pharisees compared to that of the Sadducees and Essenes but does not necessarily agree that the Pharisees are the only ones in any form who survived the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE. It shows the comparative dynamics before 70 CE which through religious, social and political strategies and tactics laid a solid foundation that gave the Pharisees an ideological advantage with the masses of the people, but it does not make the blanket statement that other groups automatically died due to the Temple destruction; rather, it simply shows that the Pharisees strategies and tactics gave them advantages over their contenders such as the Sadducees and Essenes.

This thesis differs from the traditional view that only the Pharisees survived the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE, and it differs from Shaye J.D. Cohen's assertion that the Pharisees' characteristics cannot be identified post 70 CE. However, that the difference between the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes was downplayed with the post–70 CE demise of Jewish sectarianism and variant views within the body of a larger rabbinic group were acknowledged and respected. Moreover, the thesis is also on the cutting edging edge, beyond the vigorous debate as to whether the Essenes and Sadducees (and all other groups or sects) perished around 70 CE or the Pharisees

survived the destruction of the Second Temple intact. It is navigating within Second Temple Judaism, bringing to the surface the strengths that advantaged the Pharisees—whatever form Pharisaism may have taken—after 70 CE. It is a comparison which is advancing the importance of aligning with the ordinary masses of the people through the doctrine of oral and written law within the religious, social and political discourse of Second Temple Judaism and not beyond.

KEYWORDS

Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, Second Temple Judaism

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Ant: *Antiquities*.

AIC: Afrocentric Independent Churches.

AJS: *American Journal of Sociology*.

AP: Ancient Period.

ARS: *Annual Review of Sociology*.

AS: *Acta Sociological*.

BA: Born Again.

BAC: *Biblical Archaeology Review*.

BCE: Before Common Era.

Bell: Bellun.

BP: Batho Pele.

CBQ: *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*.

CD : *The Damascus Document*.

CE : Common Era.

CHJ: *Cambridge History of Judaism*.

DSS: Dead Sea Scrolls.

HTR: *Harvard Theological Review*.

IOS: *Israel Oriental Studies*.

IQS: Community Rule.

IRSH: *International Review of Social History*.

JAAR: *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*.

JBL: *Journal of Biblical Literature*.

JQR: *Journal Quarterly Review*.

JR: *Journal of Religion*.

JSOT: *Journal of the Study of the Old Testament*.

LCL: Loeb Classical Library

LM: Law of Moses.

NT: New Testament.

OC: Orthodox Churches.

OT: Old Testament.

PC: Protestant Churches.

QC: Qumran Covenanters.

QS: Qumran Scroll.

RCC: Roman Catholic Church.

1 Macc: 1 Maccabees.

SBL: Society of Biblical Literature.

War: Jewish War.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The term *Second Temple Judaism* refers to a period in which the "second" temple stood in Jerusalem and the rebuilding of the temple began, that is, the period from 516 BCE (cf. Ezra 5:1–17) to 70 CE, when the temple was destroyed.[1] Stuckenbruck (2018:1) describes this period as follows:

> Pivotal in transitional events of magnitude on either end, the Second Temple period can, within itself, be described in relation to a series of far-reaching socioreligious and political shifts that not only affected holders of power but also determined the location and changing the fate of Judeans, whether they lived nearer to Jerusalem or abroad.

According to Broshi (2007:25), the Second Temple period was a time of divisions, resulting in different groups within Judaism. Josephus calls these divisions "philosophies" (*War* 2:119). Burns (2006:247) regards the various groups as "factions", and Klawans (2009:46) calls them "major sects of ancient Judaism", whereas Regev (2006:5) and Newman (2006:126) classify them as "groups". The reference to the various groups as "sects" or "sectarians" goes back to Josephus, who used the terms *hairesis* and *hairetistai* to describe the three main groups, namely the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes (Josephus, *War* 2:1191–66; *Ant*. 13.1711–73; 18.112–5). However, the three groups mentioned by Josephus were not the only ones which originated during the Second Temple period. Other groups include the Qumran community (for those who see this group as separate from Essenes), the Boethusians, the Fourth Philosophy group, the Sicarii, the Zealots, the Herodians, the Baptismal Sects and the Mandeans, as well as the Revolutionaries, Christians, Gnostics, Charismatics and others (Grabbe 2008:4635–54). To be included also are the Samaritans, who had much in common with the Jews; among the primary distinction markers between the two was the issue of their chosen place of worship, but the

[1] This period has also been referred to variously as the intertestamental period, intertestamental Judaism, late Judaism, the postexilic period, early Judaism and post-biblical Judaism. However, in this study, the term that will be used is the Second Temple period.

distinction between Jews and Samaritans would have been very fuzzy to an outsider (Grabbe 2020:214).

Sanders (1977:31) argues that, from the time of the Reformation, Second Temple Judaism was commonly viewed as a legalistic religion. This view was influenced by the debates during the Reformation period between the Reformers and the Roman Catholics. Since Sanders's view is more sympathetic to Second Temple Judaism, he argues that Second Temple Judaism was characterised by "covenantal nomism", that is, based on the law. However, for the Jews, obedience to the law was not a means to becoming saved; instead, it was obedience by those already saved. Therefore, theirs was an obedience that enabled them to maintain their status in the covenant and not to be saved. Sanders's work was ground-breaking, and it encouraged scholars to not merely have a fresh look at the Christian views, but also at Second Temple Judaism.[2]

Apart from the negative perspective of Second Temple Judaism, there was also the view that Judaism during this period was monolithic (Moore 1996). In Moore's view, Judaism survived because it was able to achieve unity of belief and observance. Further, Moore viewed "normative Judaism" as being characterised by uniformity and described it in terms of its reference to Talmudic literature; other writings, such as apocryphal books and pseudepigraphic literature represented sectarian writings and, therefore, not normative Judaism (Moore 1996:24). However, other contending views appreciate the diversity within Second Temple Judaism, and these have now gained acceptance in the scholarly guild. Goodenough (1935:36) argues that there was plurality within Second Temple Judaism, given the diverse literature from the Second Temple period; the diverse literature represented different theological or religious perspectives. Neusner (1987:14; 1994:21) highlights the importance of identifying the particular communities which were behind and which lived by those various writings. Neusner (1994:21) argues further that it is not enough to simply focus on common beliefs such as observance of the Sabbath, one God, and the Torah, as these do not necessarily account for the diversity within Judaism. Rather,

> There never was, in real social terms, that single Judaism, there was only infinite diverse Judaic system, as various social entities gave expression

[2] Among Christian scholars, Sanders' work ignited the commencement of new perspectives—the New Perspective on Paul and also the New Perspective on Jesus.

> to their way of life, worldview, and theory of social entity that they formed. Only if we take for granted that 'all Israel' formed 'a people, one people,' are we compelled to take seriously a social entity so vast as would sustain the category, Judaism—a single Judaism, one Judaism, for a single people, one people.

Politically, the Second Temple period was a period in which Jewish people experienced waves of military and political domination from the Persian, Greek, and Roman Empires. Under the Greek Empire, the Jews initially had freedom in terms of their religious practices. However, the situation changed when Antiochus IV advanced Hellenism. This gave rise to the Hasmonaean revolt, which laid the foundation for the Hasmonaean dynasty (see Grabbe 1992:14). Justiss (2016:5) argues that this was a productive time for Jewish sectarian groups to emerge given the resistance to the external influence of the various aristocrat factions in Jerusalem and also to the priesthood. The Hasmonaean dynasty was eventually succeeded by the Herodian dynasty, which took power through the anointment, by the Roman Empire, of Herod the Great as king of the Jews.

The various groups in Second Temple Judaism are the centre of this study and will be compared religiously, socially and politically. However, drawing a comprehensive picture of the various groups within Second Temple Judaism remains a challenge. One has to rely on the Second Temple sources to gain an apprehension of the multiple groups. While a vast body of literature originated during this period, which group is behind which writings cannot always be determined. Furthermore, both internal and external factors need to be considered when dealing with the groups which emerged during the Second Temple period.

This study will focus on the Pharisees, the Sadducees and the Essenes (Qumran[3]), who are believed to have emerged to during the Hasmonean period (Flusser 2007:223; 2009:11; Hayes & Mandell 1998:84). Josephus, as an early witness to the period, claims that the three groups emerged during the Hasmonaean period (*Ant*. 13:171–73). According to Josephus, there were about six thousand Pharisees and four thousand Essenes, whereas the Sadducees were a small group, made up especially of the aristocrats. Tomasino (2011:124) notes that the three groups identified by Josephus

[3] It is important to note that within the context of the debate around the Qumran issue, this thesis has to see the Qumran community as part of the larger scope of the Essenes.

should not be viewed as the only groups that existed at the time, as they represented a small fraction of the Jewish population. Although scholars debate the origins of these groups, this study will focus on the religious, social, and political dynamics that were at play not just at the time of their origin but over time within the Second Temple period.

1.2 Problem Statement

Although many groups proliferated in the Jewish society during the Second Temple period, this study focuses on the three main groups, namely, the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes. Some scholars regard these three groups as the dominant groups during the Second Temple Period (Taylor, 2007; cf. Flusser 1970; Eshel 1993). However, as Baumgarten (1997:1–2, 43–44, 50) points out, the majority of Jewish people did not belong to any of these groups, which were mostly male dominated. Such gives a taste of direction towards the research problem necessary in this thesis.

The groups are commonly defined as "sects"—a characterisation which goes back to Josephus.[43] Buchanan (1970:238) explains that Josephus's designation of these groups as "sects" or "heresies" (*hairesis*) was not to be understood in the sense that they were minority groups with unorthodox views; rather, they were the main orthodox groups during the Second Temple period: "These were groups which claimed to be living according to the covenant the Lord made with his chosen people." However, Baumgarten (1997; 2016), in his description of the Jewish sectarian groups, stresses that in their formation, there was a redefining of insiders and outsiders, which resulted in the creation of a new class of aliens. This created tensions as those considered aliens did not consider themselves to be inferior and, therefore, resented those in the sects who treated them as though they were aliens (Baumgarten 2007:263). However, the sects or groups, in one way or another, related with the mainline institutions within Second Temple Jewish society as either reformists or introversionists (Baumgarten 2007:265).

This study is particularly interested in how these three groups related with mainline institutions within Second Temple Judaism, paying attention to the religious, social and

[4] Many studies continue to define Second Temple groups within Judaism as sects. See, for example, Stern (2011), Newman (2006), Baumgarten (2016), Grabbe (2020), LaPean (2003), Neusner (1990), Schiffman (1981), Simon (1967) and Talmon (1986).

political institutions and other factors within Judaism at the time. How these groups related with these institutions possibly differed, and this necessitates an analysis of the dynamics and the possible fluidity with which these groups related with mainstream institutions within Second Temple Judaism.

1.3 Aims and Objectives

This study aims to analytically compare the religious, social and political institutional factors of the Sadducees, Essenes and Pharisees during the Second Temple Judaism period. It is from this comparative perspective that this study seeks to highlight how some of the groups survived uniquely through their strategies and tactics within the changing religious, social and political dynamics.

The following objectives are pursued in this study:

Objective 1: To review some of the trends in the study of Second Temple Judaism and outline the context within which the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes originated and operated.

Objective 2: To comparatively analyse the three groups in respect to the religious institutions of the temple, the high priest and the synagogue.

Objective 3: To comparatively analyse the three groups in relation to certain social factors such as social hierarchies, rural and urban factors, the role of the literati (educated) and marriage.

Objective 4: To comparatively analyse the three groups in relation to local political institutions such as the Hasmonean and the Herodian dynasties and on a broader level with the Persian, Greek, and Roman Empires.

1.4 Research Questions

In what ways and to what extent did the Second Temple Judaism groups (Sadducees, Essenes and Pharisees) strategically and tactically differ or agree with each other in terms of religious, social and political dynamics during the period?

The following sub-questions will be addressed:

Question 1: What are some trends in the study of Second Temple Judaism, and in what ways do they enhance our understanding of the context in which the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes originated, operated and differed up to the destruction of the temple in 70 CE?

Question 2: In what ways, and to what extent did the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes differ or agree with each other in terms of the religious institutions such as the temple, the high priest and the synagogue?

Question 3: In what ways, and to what extent, did the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes differ or agree with each other in terms of the social factors such as social hierarchies, rural and urban factors and marriage in the Second Temple Judaism period?

Question 4: In what ways, and to what extent, did the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes differ or agree regarding glocal political institutions such as the Hasmonean and the Herodian dynasty and, on a broader level, with the Persian, Greek, and Roman Empires?

1.5 Hypothesis

Second Temple Judaism, within the groups such as the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes that emerged and operated, was plurivoiced. Charles (1913:11) asserts that Second Temple Judaism was "a church with many parties." The three distinctive groups of Judaism, whether they were in opposition to or competition with others, had to deal with the changing dynamics of the Second Temple period, which had to do with religious, social, and political issues. Thus, the various groups needed to have strategies and tactics to entrench themselves in society. It does not matter whether the groups employed correct principles religiously, socially or politically. Instead, people supported a group if they could align with its practices, beliefs and principles, and if these resonated with their political, religious and social needs. However, support was not guaranteed, and a group could grow or decline over time. Therefore, it is highly likely that support of the various groups varied over time within the Second Temple period.

1.6 Delimitation and Limitations

The delimitation of this study is as follows:

First, this study focuses on the Second Temple period, which is the period from 516 BCE to 70 CE without going beyond the destruction of the temple in 70 CE. While the destruction of the temple was a traumatic experience in Jewish society, it is not necessarily true that the various groups vanished post 70 CE (Goodman 2007).

Second, while there were many groups within Second Temple Judaism, this study focuses primarily on three groups, namely, the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes.

Third, the Second Temple was a period in which the Persian, Greek, and Roman Empires ruled in succession over Palestine. Therefore, this study considers the imperial influence on local affairs in Palestine and how the groups responded to the empires. The internal politics will also be taken into consideration, while attention will be paid to the Hasmonaean dynasty and the Herodian dynasty.

The following are the limitations of this study:

Although there is ample literature which originated during the Second Temple period, our knowledge of the groups is not in all instances derived from first-hand sources from the groups themselves. It is not always possible to know the groups which lie behind the texts.

The many documents produced during the Second Temple period attest to the plurivocity of Second Temple Judaism in term of beliefs and political ideology. Therefore, our knowledge of the groups depends on secondary sources. This baffles scholars because there are no primary writings from any of the groups under study. It is unclear whether this was because they preferred not to document their views or their documents somehow did not survive.

1.7 Methodology

The methodology that is utilized in this study is a comparative method. This method is utilised in disciplines such as sociology, political science, communication science, historical studies and biblical studies. In biblical studies, there has been widespread interest in finding connections between the Bible and other ancient Near Eastern (ANE) cultures. At the turn of the twentieth century, the renowned Assyriologist Friedrich Delitzsch sparked the interest of scholars by relating the Bible to different ANE cultures through his lectures titled “Babel und Bible,” thereby setting in motion what came to

be known as "Pan-Babylonianism" (see Huffon 1983; Chavalas 2002; Ouro 2011). Furthermore, the developments in the field of archaeology and the discoveries of extra-biblical literature also fuelled interest in the comparative analysis of the Bible. As Malul (1990:14) notes, the basic assumption in the comparison of the biblical texts and/or the world of the biblical texts with other ANE cultures and/or extra-biblical texts is that there is "historical connection or common tradition between the compared societies." The application of the comparative method in biblical studies, as Klingbeil (1999:273) argues, "has removed the foundation for the isolationist's point of view who regards biblical history as having taken place in a vacuum." Although the use of the comparative approach in biblical studies is essential and does require consideration, I will also highlight how the comparative approach has been used particularly in Second Temple studies. I will then proceed to outline how the method will be applied in this study.

1.7.1 Application of the Comparative Method in Biblical Studies

The "Pan-Babylonian" movement perspective of Friedrich Delitzsch, which argues that all world myths and Christian Scriptures (Old Testament and New Testament) were simply versions of Babylonian mythology,[5] also furthers the dimension of the lack of importance of context as the fundamental Babylonian source and the biblical text (Chavalas 2002:10).

Delitzsch highlights the problems associated with the application of the comparative method. He argues that when scholars ignore the contextual aspect of the methodology, they run the risk of reaching a conclusion which is not contextually aligned. According to Robert Ouro, the pan-Babylonian lectures uncover certain problems within the approach (Ouro 2011):

> Firstly, the lectures by Delitzsch were not based entirely on a pure motive. This compromises his work as it questions his integrity and professionalism. Secondly, his interest was to minimise the value of the Old Testament so that it could be contrasted with that of the New Testament.[6] Thirdly, the widespread interest in finding connections

[5] Regarding the advances in Babylonian mythology, see Chavalas (2002:212–6). See also Rodriguez (2001:515–7), whose writing also advances a perspective which aims to dispute the traditional terminologies such as revelation and inspiration.

[6] See Huffon (1983:1251–36).

> between the Bible and other ancient Near Eastern cultures has bred its own reaction in the warning raised by several scholars against exaggerating the importance of such similarities, which is a practice called "parallelonomia" (Sandmel 1962:1). Fourthly, and of particular concern, is the often-tacit assumption that such parallels can be construed as evidence of a genetic (generic) connection between the cultures that share them. Fifthly, often Israelite practices were read into the cuneiform texts rather than legitimately being found there (Greenspahn 1991:6–7). Sixthly, the tendency of changing views about the biblical patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, also provides a vivid example of the questionability of the Pan-Babylonian approach. Lastly, many of the supposed parallels turned out not to be parallels at all.

It is these realities within the Pan-Babylonian approach which show that Delitzsch's series of lectures on comparative studies are full of holes and cannot be upheld as the best way forward in advancing comparative biblical and ANE studies.

Unlike Delitzsch, Huffon is of the view that the comparative methodology, whether within biblical texts or extra-biblical sources, should not be driven by hidden agendas which are not clear or pure. When motives are not clear or pure, the application of methodology can be compromised and the principles[7] which recognise the thorough contextual dynamics not upheld. Scholars' motives should not override the application of comparative methodology (Kitchen 1966:878–8). If that were to happen, the outcome of the comparative application would be flawed, even if the outcome sounds intellectually entertainable.

Thus, the application of the comparative method in biblical studies, just as in any other field of study, is not without strengths and weakness. The issue of utilising extra-biblical sources has emerged as one of the important issues within the application of the comparative method in biblical studies (Weeks 2019:7).

While similarities are important, simply focusing on the mere similarities between the biblical text and the extra-biblical sources without considering context tends to be shallow (Weeks 2019:287). Hence, context has also become a critical issue in the application of the comparative method in biblical studies.

[7] According to Walton, ten important principles must be kept in mind when doing comparative studies. See Walton (1994:262–7, 256); see also Tigay (1993:2502–55). For the discussion of these points of theory and others, see Longman III (1991:303–6), Van der Toorn (1985:19); and Hallo (1990:13).

Contextual factors regarding the biblical text and extra-biblical sources are of paramount importance in driving the application of the comparative method. It is through the contextual dynamics of the fundamental alignment of the biblical text with the extra-biblical source that one can determine whether the two have common ground. Unlike in Delitzsch's Pan-Babylonian approach, in this kind of approach, the application goes deeper by recognising that the comparative method values the context of the extra-biblical source first before venturing into comparison with the biblical text.

The applications of comparative methodology by scholars such as Talmon (1978:3203–56), Hallo (1980:12–16), Kitchen and Lawrence (2012:20) and Walton and Walton (2017; cf. Walton 1989), have all demonstrated a dimension which proves that the absence of contextual knowledge of extra-biblical sources makes the process more complex and difficult for scholars to have consensus on the issues. Scholars have always demonstrated that the issue of context is the missing link in the comparison of the biblical texts with extra-biblical sources.

Through the contextual approach, as the remedy for problems inherent in the application of the comparative method in biblical studies and beyond, Hallo (1980) deepens the perspective of methodological maturity. Applying methodological maturity, he identifies and discusses both the similarities and the differences that may be observed between biblical texts and extra-biblical sources by looking at the diachronic and synchronic variations.[8] This is a balanced approach which recognises the fundamental dynamics within the context.

In this perspective, Hallo's view does not aim to find the key to every biblical phenomenon in some ancient Near Eastern precedent, but rather it aims to silhouette the biblical text against its wider literary and cultural environment. By contextualising issues within a balanced approach, Hallo recognises similarities and differences between the biblical texts and the extra-biblical sources. In principle, both the biblical text and the extra-biblical source are said to be of similar historical, cultural, social and religious backgrounds. In other words, the dynamics of similarities are possible within the context of the above factors. However, such similarities are not automatic but

[8] For the inadequacy of the synchronic approach and the comparative-diachronic approach, see A. Gibson (1981:140, 24). For also the inadequacy of "parallel hunting", see Ringgren (1972), cited in Talmon (1986:402).

indicate contextual relevance where it is possible. Context has to bring the similarity to the surface without unnecessary exaggeration.

It is also important to note that Hallo, using the contextual approach, shows that the biblical texts and extra-biblical sources do have areas of difference. The conceptual, functional and theological backgrounds are identified as key factors upholding the differences between the biblical texts and the extra-biblical sources. Therefore, the three factors recognise that the biblical texts and extra-biblical sources cannot be compared holistically and there are also conceptual, functional and theological differences (Sasson 1980:10).

Klingbeil (1999:273) asserts that there has been a more fruitful discussion about a balanced approach to the comparative method, with the loud warning of parallelonomia sounded by Sandmel also reiterated by many other scholars. This shows a robust engagement in the application of the comparative method. In the same pursuit of identifying the purpose of the comparative method and how it is reached, Malul (1990) identifies six important trends in the application of the comparative method:[9]

1) proof of historical connection between the Old Testament and Ancient Near Eastern texts based on a similar phenomenon or literary work that is being compared;

[9] Other comparative method authors include Sandmel (1962), Smith (1969), Hallo (1980; 1990), Mettinger (1990), Finkelstein (1991), Greenspahn (1991), Machinist (1991), and Saggs (1991). Klingbeil (1999) asserts the following about Malul (1990:87f): he

> … has devoted a whole chapter to the nature and type of the connection between Old Testament and the Ancient Near East: as to the nature of the connection, he distinguishes between the literary/written level [e.g., borrowing from some literary source] and the reality level [i.e., occurrence of a historical connection, because the biblical writer was part of the general culture of the ANE], although the two are not exclusive, and rather complement each other. The type of connection can be on a variety of levels: (1) a direct connection; (2) a mediated connection, i.e., source A borrows indirectly from source C via source B; (3) a common source; and (4) common tradition (1990:879–1). It seems, however, inconsistent with his otherwise balanced approach, as Malul comes to the conclusion with respect to the direction of borrowing in case of a direct connection that "the chronological precedence of the ancient Near Eastern sources automatically determines them as the contributor, and the Old Testament as the borrower.

2) use of external comparative material to enhance the understanding of enigmatic sources, like the elucidating of Old Testament passages through the help of cognate languages;[10]
3) especially in connection with the Patriarchal traditions, proof that the biblical material is based on the comparative external evidence (Klingbeil 1999:273);
4) use of comparative material to aid the dating of biblical evidence, specifically the Patriarchal traditions (Millard 1980:435–8);
5) use of the comparative method to indicate and contrast the differences between the Old Testament and the ancient Near Eastern texts (Sasson 1982:223) and the highlighting of the uniqueness of one source, usually the Old Testament;[11]
6) the listing of numerous comparisons without further qualification as to how the scholar has arrived at the similarities and why he or she advises this comparison at all (Klingbeil 1999:273). [12]

Of these six, the second trend is the one which most closely fits within Hallo's approach.

It is within this historical unfolding of the Pan-Babylonian approach and Malul's (1990) view that the importance of the comparative approach to biblical studies and ancient Near Eastern studies are unpacked. It is in this context that the contextual approach emerges as a balanced approach within the application.

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[10] This seems to be by far the most common purpose for the application of the comparative method, and scholars such as M. Dahood come readily to mind, who have used (and sometimes abused) this method with regard to the Ugaritic evidence in comparison to the Old Testament (Klingbeil 1999). For more detailed examples of comparative literature of this category, see Malul (1990:23–32) and Talmon (1997:32). Klingbeil (1999) shows that this trend has also been promoted in the form of a negative proof, as an *argumentio e silentu,* i.e., if no external evidence contradicts the patriarchal narratives, then they can be accepted as historically valid.

[11] Klingbeil (1999) cites the article by Machinist (1991:42), discusses the history of the distinctiveness-of-Israel discussion and examines the biblical distinctiveness passages, saying that Malul recognises two groups of scholars who follow this trend: (1) the fundamentalists/pseudo-orthox, mainly for apologetic purposes, and (2) scholars who point out contrast and differences between Israel and its neighbours, working from the assumption of a common cultural context of the ANE of which Israel was part.

[12] Klingbeil (1999) shows that this approach seems rather futile, since it limits itself to the tedious task of cataloguing similarities; Malul (1990:32) also refers to it as "inventorial" or "parallel hunting."

1.7.2 Application of the Comparative Method to Second Temple Studies

The application of the comparative method to studies of the Second Temple period is one of the most complex processes in the study of the history of the Jewish people. This is a period which cannot be defined or categorised by one identity within the historical space of Judaism. It extends from the construction of the temple at the end of the sixth century BCE to its destruction by the Romans in 70 CE (Collins 2004:13). It also covers a wide space of historical realities and religious, social, political and other experiences of the Jewish people. It is in this coverage of the different spheres within Second Temple studies that different paths along the application are shown.

The works from the time that have emerged as the most relevant to Second Temple studies are grouped into three categories: the Apocrypha and the Pseudepigrapha, the Dead Sea Scrolls and the texts of the Greek-speaking Diaspora. Scholars approach these categories from two perspectives.

Firstly, the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha and the texts of the Greek-speaking Diaspora were preserved by Christian scholars while the Dead Sea Scrolls were preserved by Jewish scholars. Thus, these three kinds of literature created a space wherein the perspectives of the two scholarly worlds could interact.

It is also important to note that in the scholarly world, studies of this period of Jewish literature experienced evolution before the consensus was reached by scholars to maintain the current terminology, that is, Second Temple Judaism. At first, between the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, it was known as "*Spätjudentum*". The publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which attracted the interest of Jewish scholars, also led to the emergence of the term "early Judaism" as a replacement for *Spätjudentum*. Due to the lack of clarity on the specific beginnings of Judaism, "Second Temple period" became the terminology which won the broader consensus, as it is a chronological term without ideological overtones (Stone 1984:19).

This change of names did not occur in a vacuum; rather, it reflected the changing perspectives of scholars. Schürer (1973:12), through his classical history, advanced a view which showed the growing importance of Pharisaism, which arose through the legalistic orientation introduced by Ezra; the Pseudepigrapha provided an alternative to Pharisaism, and out of this type of Judaism emerged Christianity (Charles 1913:11).

The debate between Christian scholars and Jewish scholars also continued within Dead Sea Scrolls scholarship. The Dead Sea Scrolls became the minefield within which Christian scholars strongly advanced their Christian claims. Meanwhile, Jewish scholars used the very same Dead Sea Scrolls to focus on the affinities with rabbinic Judaism (Schiffman 1994:9). Lastly, the pervasive interest in interpreting the Bible in the light of all genres of literature was outlined by Kugel (1998), who demonstrates a wide engagement with both Christian and Jewish sources. Moreover, the late decades of the twentieth century witnessed the unfolding of the similarities between Second Temple Judaism and Rabbinic Judaism. However, Second Temple literature differs from rabbinic literature, as it has wide-ranging implications for understanding the literary heritage of Judaism (Avery-Peck, Neusner & Clinton 2001:15).

Within the scope of Second Temple literature, there are the apocryphal writings, books which were transmitted into the Greek and Latin Bibles but were not found in the Hebrew. Most of these books, such as 1 and 2 Maccabees, Ben Sira (Ecclesiasticus), Wisdom of Solomon, Baruch (including the letter to Jeremiah), Tobit, Judith, and additional passages in the books of Esther and Daniel (including the stories of Susanna and Bel and Dragon) are accepted as canonical Scripture by Roman Catholics (Collins 2004). The Alexandrian canon, though refuted by Sundberg (1964:4), also falls within the Apocrypha. Whereas the Torah and the Prophets were common Scripture for all Jews, there was also an unidentified category of writings which varied from one group to another, as is seen also in the Dead Sea Scrolls (Barton 1986; Collins 1997a).

The Pseudepigrapha are writings associated with biblical figures such as Enoch, Abraham and Moses. However, some pseudepigraphic writings from the Hellenistic Diaspora are attributed to non-biblical figures such as Phocylides or the Sibyl. Few of these pseudepigrapha, such as the Psalms of Solomon and the Sibylline Oracles, were noted continuously throughout Western history; many were preserved by the Eastern Christians in Ethiopic and Syriac churches or Old Church Slavonic, while those which were written in Greek have long been forgotten and only rediscovered by researchers in the nineteenth century (Collins 2004:13).

Collins (2004:13) says that the modern study of this rediscovered literature began with the edition of 1 Enoch by Richard Laurence in 1821, and it was followed by several editions in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The twentieth century saw a

landmark number of editions of the collected Pseudepigrapha in German (Kautzsche 2000) and English (Charles 1913:11). However, interest in them lapsed until the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which became the most comprehensive collection, edited by Charlesworth (1983/1985).

The pseudepigraphic writings led to the emergence of two main issues in Jewish studies (Kautzsche 2000; Charlesworth 1983/1985). The first concern was the authenticity of the Pseudepigrapha as witnesses to ancient Judaism because they are texts which had been preserved by Christians and not by Jews (Satran 1995:8). These calls into question the place of apocalypticism in Judaism, which featured more in Christian history than in Jewish history, although Christians have often regarded it with suspicion (Rowley 1944 etc).[13]

Secondly, the importance of the Dead Sea Scrolls literature is demonstrated in phases. The first phase lasted from the early 1950s until the Arab-Israel war of 1967. The second phase lasted until all these scrolls became available to all qualified scholars in 1991. The third phase then began when the texts were made generally available in the early 1990s (Flint & VanderKam 1998–9; Schiffman & VanderKam 2000:5).

From a closer look at the scrolls, two perspectives emerge in the context of their identity. First, the scrolls are a range of literature composed by different communities. They also include non-sectarian biblical texts as well as books such as Enoch and Jubilees, which evidently enjoyed wider circulation. Second, the scrolls cannot be taken as a random sample of Second Temple literature; they include a large number of sectarian books, while some well-known Second Temple–period texts are missing (Collins 2004:14). All this, coupled with the perspectives of both Christian and the Jewish scholars, show the comparative dynamics of the applications within the sphere

[13] Scholars have tried to deal with the strangeness of apocalyptic literature in various ways. One way is to try to assimilate it with more familiar types of literature. Some (e.g., Rowley 1944) argue that "apocalyptic" was a child of prophecy, others (e.g., Von Rad 1965:ii.315–30) that it is a late form of wisdom literature. Collins (1979) writes that only in the last quarter of the twentieth century has apocalyptic literature been recognised as a phenomenon in its own right, a new literature developed that came into being in Judaism in the Hellenistic and Roman periods; from 1970 onwards, apocalyptic literature was studied in the context of the Pseudepigrapha and the Dead Sea Scrolls, with both Judaism and Christianity developing a more balanced appreciation of the defining features of apocalyptic literature.

of the Dead Sea Scrolls through the study of the scrolls themselves,[14] the Torah and Prophets,[15] the Apocrypha and the Pseudepigrapha at Qumran[16] and the distinctively sectarian literature.[17]

Thirdly, Diaspora Judaism,[18] which produced unique Second Temple literature, reflects several key issues in its foundational identity. This literature is known from excerpts and summaries made by the Roman freedman Alexander Polyhistor, who wrote before the middle of the first century BCE. His work was also cited at length by the church father Eusebius in *Praeparatio Evangelica*, while some fragments were preserved by Clement of Alexandria and by Josephus (Holladay 1983–1996:5). Other Hellenistic Jewish writings were preserved more fully, including the voluminous works of Philo of Alexandria, and they owe their preservation to Christian scholars. Those which are associated with Jewish origin occur only in rare cases such as in the romance of Joseph and Asenath, and even that is suspected to be of Christian composition (Kraemer 1998:16).

The Hellenistic Diaspora work of the translation of foundational literary work contributed to the advancement of Judaism in the Diaspora. Collins (2004:11) explains this translation process as follows:

> The bible was translated into Greek. The Torah was also translated by the middle of third century BCE. The Prophets and writings also translated gradually in the early first century BCE. Letter of Aristeas is said to have been translated with the intention to meet the needs of the Jewish community in Egypt and not as a request of Ptolemy. Septuagint provided the common ground which united Jews in the Diaspora with their compatriots in Judea.

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[14] See Cross (1995), Sanders (1965), Talmon (1989), Flint (1997), Yadin (1927; 1983), Strugnel (1985) and Schiffman (1994) for further information about the issues connected with the study of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

[15] See Tov (1992), Wachholder (1983), Wise (1990), Cross (1984; 1995), Brooke (1994) and Milik (1992).

[16] See Dimant (1994), Flint and VanderKam (1999) and Strugnell, Harrington and Elgvin (1999).

[17] See Weinfeld (1986), Duhaime (1988), Cross (1995) and Collins (1997c).

[18] See Kugel (1998), Goodenough (1935), Winston (1985), Wofson (1947), Runia (1986), Tobin (1983), Borgen (1997), Van der Horst (1990) and Collins (2000) for explorations of Diaspora Judaism.

The perspective of scholars on Second Temple literature shows the importance of biblical interpretation within all Judaism (Kugel 1998:14). The Qumran texts were para-biblical, intended to extend the biblical texts (Falk 2007); the Greek writings of the Diaspora, many of which were excerpted by Alexander Polyhistor, were rewritings of the Torah in various forms, from faithful chronicles that attempt to resolve problems in the biblical text (Demetrius) to a fanciful romance by Artapanus, who credited Moses with founding the Egyptian animal cults (Collins 2004:11). These writings, including that of Alexandrian Judaism, were among those which expounded the exercises in biblical interpretation.

In sum, Second Temple literature is viewed in modern times as the story of the retrieval of historic Judaism from both the land of the Jews and the Diaspora. The application of the comparative method is rooted in principle within the realities of the perspectives of Christian scholars and of Jewish scholars in particular. It is within the context of the scholastic perspectives that the identities of the different approaches such as allegorical interpretation, biblical interpretation and exegetical traditions unfold, resulting in the comparative analysis of the three categories of the Second Temple literature, which are the Apocrypha and the Pseudepigrapha, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the literature of the Greek-speaking Diaspora.

Regardless of which of the three categories of Second Temple literature one uses, the reality of the resulting biblical interpretation is strongly tied to the historical reality of the biblical elements within them. Therefore, Second Temple studies cannot avoid the inter-relational realities which were present in the three categories of literature. It is within these inter-relational realities that the application of the comparative method has helped interpreters navigate the value of Second Temple studies.

1.7.3 Comparative Analysis in This Study

This study is intended as a religious, social and political comparison of the three historical groups of Second Temple Judaism: the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes. The mode of comparative study focuses on two aspects—the similarities (comparison) and the differences (contrast)—which will serve as the basis for comparing the three groups in Second Temple Judaism.

As Ragin (1987:10) asserts, comparison in qualitative traditions involves comparing configurations; this holism contradicts the radically analytic approach of most quantitative work. Where there is a comparison, the understanding of the contrast becomes clear within the compatibility. Swanson (1971:145) believes that thinking without comparison is unthinkable. Lieberson (1985:44) concludes that social research, "in one form or other, is comparative research" as it could include religious and political research.

The comparative approach, like any other approach, has its advantages and disadvantages. Other scholars acknowledge that modes of comparison such as ethnographic, encyclopaedic, morphological and evolutionary, together with their post variants, were not adequate to prove that comparative methodology was reliable enough to be utilised without question (Smith 1978:20). However, Collier shows that comparison is a fundamental tool of analysis (Collier 1993:15), as he identifies Lijphart's analysis as one of the most relevant when it shows the strengths and the weaknesses of the comparative methodology at its broadness compared to other methodologies.[19] This was done within the scope of evaluating the comparative method in relation to other methodologies such as the case study method, the experimental method and the statistical method. Even in this study, comparison is seen as a fundamental tool of analysis between the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes within the religious, social and political context; principles of the comparative method are not limited to a specific field of study, such as the political studies of Lijphart, but they apply even in biblical studies and in ancient Near Eastern studies.

Lijphart asserts that in the negative perspective, the comparative methodology provides a weaker basis than the experimental or statistical method for evaluating hypotheses, though he also asserts that the comparative method offers a stronger basis for evaluating hypotheses than do case studies. This shows that among other methodologies, the comparative methodology emerges as more beneficial than others for evaluating

[19] On comparative politics and comparative method writing, Lijphart (1971:6826–93) demonstrates the importance of comparative methodology beyond one field of study. This demonstration narrates a perspective which shows the importance of the comparative method within the broader scope of research as an important method which plays an important role in the interlink with other methodologies. In other words, what has been revealed by comparative study can be to the advantage of other methodologies to advance.

hypotheses. It is this stronger basis on which to evaluate hypotheses which also makes comparison relevant in the religious, social and political context of this study between the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes.

Lijphart asserts that while the comparative methodology has negative constraints when it addresses more variables than case studies, its constraints outshine those of the case study methodology because comparative methodology allows systematic comparison. Well-applied systematic comparisons contribute to improved adjudication among rival explanations. This study allows systematic comparisons which contribute in the adjudication between rival explanations of the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes within the religious, social and political context of the Second Temple Judaism period.

Lijphart also shows that the comparative method does not produce its final output in isolation; rather, it plays its part by contributing to the preparation of a methodological advantage for other methodologies to advance their interpretations. This inter-relatedness of the comparative methodology makes it difficult to ignore, despite its negatives, since its results benefit other methodologies. Also, the religious, social and political comparison between the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes has a final output which contributes to other methodologies, advancing their interpretations where necessary. This makes this study not isolative in its approach; rather, it builds with foresight and an understanding of the benefit of inter-relatedness even at the outcome of the study.

Though the comparative methodology is viewed as requiring more data than case studies, it demands less than does experimental and statistical research. The comparative methodology's data requirement is no worse than that of other methodologies.

Lijphart views the comparative methodology as the most appropriate in research based on modest resources; he argues that studies using the comparative method often serve as the first step towards statistical analysis. In his synopsis, Lijphart advances the view that the negatives of the comparative method, real as they are, do not outclass the positives, and it brings benefits to qualitative research such as this.[20] The findings of

[20] Lijphart's perspective emerged within a period in which many scholars such as Merrit and Rokkan (1966), Kalleberg (1966), Verba (1967), Smelser (1968), Lasswell (1968), Etzion and Dubow (1970),

this study can also serve as the first step towards statistical analysis of the religious, social and political context of the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes.

In the context of this study, as education is an important mechanism in the transfer of knowledge from generation to generation, the qualitative methodology in the comparative approach will remain of key importance. The two modes of comparison are combined because similarities and differences serve to complete the comparative purpose of revealing both the strengths and weaknesses of the objects or issues at hand. Similarly, even in this context, the comparative approach will reveal the similarities and differences between the Essenes, Sadducees and Pharisees where necessary.

The aim within the mode of comparison in the qualitative methodology is to recognise that the uniqueness of the three groups concerning particular issues advances the understanding of the comparative perspective through contrast. The two are like a belt and a pair of trousers in advancing one purpose.

The comparative approach will be applied to the Sadducees, Pharisees and Essenes as it allows one to further explore issues, identify patterns and begin to notice associations in the data (Hennink 2011:243). It promotes understanding (Hayashi 1992:17). The comparison of the three groups will focus on their political, religious and social characteristics. The comparative approach will be employed to uncover the strengths and weaknesses of the three groups. Their political, religious and social strategies will help to determine factors which led to their influence or disintegration within the greater society in the period of Second Temple Judaism. As the purpose of a comparison is also to show similarities and differences, in this context, it aims to show basic patterns within the three groups (Allardt 1990:185). It truly permits a critical perspective so that the dynamics of the strengths and weaknesses of the three groups can be uncovered (Kocka 1993:375).

1.8 Chapter Divisions

In line with the methodology adopted, this study is structured as follows.

Merritt (1970), Przeworski and Teune (1970), Sartori (1970), Vallier (1971), Zelditch (1971) and Armer and Grimshaw (1973) experienced a boom of writing in comparative methodology. It is within this worldview of comparative ideas that the synopsis of Lijphart emerged as one of the best among the contenders to advance the importance of comparative methodology in politics, religion or any other field of study.

Chapter 2: The Second Temple Judaism: From Monolithic to Plurality in Judaism

The contextual overview of this chapter will focus on establishing the various trends in the study of Second Temple Judaism. It makes use of the historical basis of the classification and terminological issues covering Judaism as a legislative religion, *Spätjudentum* (late Judaism), the intertestamental period, Palestinian Judaism, ancient Judaism and middle Judaism, early Judaism and Second Temple Judaism. It also shows how the monolithic/unified Judaism moved to plurality within the Second Temple period, becoming Judaism or Judaisms as a contestation of the scope of the history of Judaism. This is done within the aim of building a base that shows the origins of the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes in the Second Temple context.

Chapter 3: Religious Dimension

This chapter will focus on issues such as monotheism, the temple, the high priest and the pioneering of the synagogue. How the Essenes, Sadducees and Pharisees viewed all of these will be assessed comparatively from a religious perspective that embraces the contextual scope, cultural scope and historical scope in general within the three groups. The three scopes will not automatically reveal the same depth of issues as religious institutions differ from one another according to context and cultural and historical dynamics. For example, the context and cultural and historical dynamics of the temple high priest could not have been the same as those of the pioneers of the synagogue. The actions of the three groups within their religious contexts and cultural and historical scopes will further clarify the similarities and differences.

Judaism's monotheism will be shown to be unique and unanimous among the Sadducees, Pharisees and Essenes. Moreover, the strategic alignment of the Pharisees with the institutions such as the temple, the high priest and the synagogue reveal the important depth of the Pharisees' attachment to and influence on the greater society. Equally, the distancing of the Essenes from these institutions show their uniqueness within the greater society because of their isolationistic approach. Lastly, the clinging to the high priesthood and the temple and the rigidity of the written law by the Sadducees disadvantaged their position before the ordinary masses, who had

entrenched devotion to the oral law as the tradition of the forefathers. In these strategies and tactics, the three groups were revealing their influence on the greater society.

Chapter 4: Social Dimension

The comparison here will focus on social factors such as social hierarchies, rural and urban factors, the role of the literati (educated), and marriage. Each of these social features will be assessed to determine the points of similarity or differences among the Essenes, Sadducees and Pharisees. The social comparison of the three groups will show their dynamics in relation to the social factors of the Second Temple period.

This comparative assessment will be carried out from a social perspective that probes the contextual scope, cultural scope and historical scope within the three groups. The three scopes will not automatically reveal the same length of issues, as social factors differ according to context, culture and historical dynamics. For example, the context, the actions of the three groups within their social contexts and the cultural and historical scopes will further clarify the similarities and differences of the three groups within the religious perspective of the Second Temple period.

Moreover, the strategic alignment of the Pharisees with Lenski's (1984:1892–96) social classes—the upper class, retainer class, merchant class, peasant class, artisan class and expendable class—gave them a deep attachment to and influence on the greater society. Equally, the priestly aristocracy of the Sadducee ruling class served to their disadvantage before the greater society because of their top-down approach, which was not highly entrenched in the ordinary masses of the greater society, who were attached to the traditions of the forefathers through oral law. Lastly, the classless posture of the Essenes, entrenched through their communal living in Qumran, created an identity which was more unique than that of the Sadducees and Pharisees. The social class strategies and tactics of the three groups determined their influence on the greater society. It is within these postures that the Pharisees' attachment to the greater society is also brought to the surface and compared to that of the Sadducees and Essenes.

Chapter 5: Political Dimension

The political comparison will include local political institutions such as the Hasmoneans and the Herodians and the broader levels of the Persian, Greek and Roman

Empires. As in the religious and social features, the political comparison will assess the differences and similarities between the Essenes, Sadducees and Pharisees to show their dynamics within the political institutions of the Second Temple period.

It will also focus on the political perspective, embracing the contextual scope, cultural scope and historical scope within the three groups. The three scopes will not automatically reveal the same depth of issues as political institutions differ in context and cultural and historical dynamics. For example, the actions of the three groups within their political contexts and the cultural and historical scopes will further clarify the similarities and differences between the three groups.

The politically minded view of the Sadducees, the invasion theology of the Essenes, and the adaptation to and survival of the Jewish Wars by the Pharisees (Cook 1998:243) will reveal the strategic and tactics of the groups within the political sphere of the Second Temple period. It will also show that the Pharisees had a unique posture within the political sphere of Second Temple Judaism, one which made them more politically entrenched than the Sadducees and Essenes in the eyes of the ordinary masses of the greater society.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The comparative methodology, as applied in this study, therefore recognises the dynamics of the comparative perspective in the religious, social and political institutions of the Second Temple period of Judaism. It also embraces the contextual, cultural and historical scopes of the religious, social and political perspectives of the Sadducees, Pharisees and Essenes, all of which point to the diversity of Judaism.

In the same vein, the conclusion of this study will draw from the unfolding of the three groups. The religious, social and political dynamics of the three groups will be the key contributing factors in determining the outcome of the groups. It is their positions or decisions towards the religious, social and political issues of Second Temple Judaism which determined their similarity or difference from the other groups.

CHAPTER 2: THE SECOND TEMPLE JUDAISM: FROM MONOLITHIC TO PLURALITY IN JUDAISM(S)

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The Second Temple period, as noted in the previous chapter, refers to the period from 516 BCE to 70 CE; however, the effects of the period extend beyond the period. Furthermore, the Judaism that was initially practised under Persian rule evolved with the penetration of the Hellenistic culture of the Greek Empire and under the influence of the Roman Empire. The study of Second Temple Judaism has also witnessed several developments during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. This chapter locates the present study within the ongoing developments in the study of Second Temple Judaism.

This chapter is structured as follows: Firstly, it discusses the various classifications of Second Temple Judaism and terminological issues. Secondly, it discusses the shift from a monolithic view to a pluralistic view of Judaism. Thirdly, it briefly discusses some of the issues associated with the three groups on which the focus of this study falls, namely the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes.

2.2 CLASSIFICATION AND TERMINOLOGICAL ISSUES

Initially, scholars approached the study of Second Temple Judaism from the perspective of the rise of Christianity; therefore, those who studied it tended to contrast Christianity and Judaism. Several terms have been used to describe Judaism during the Second Temple period:

Judaism as a legalistic religion: During the Reformation period, Judaism was labelled as a "legalistic religion" which pursued justification or righteousness through the works of the law in contrast to the Christian concept of justification through faith by grace (see Dunn 1990; Gaston 1979). However, the classification of Judaism as a legalistic religion has not gone unchallenged. Sanders (1977) rejected the long-standing legalist classification which viewed Judaism as propagating distorted teaching, arguing instead that Judaism maintained the right balance between grace and works; Judaism was

centred on "covenantal nomism", which has to do with "getting in", a divine action through which sinners are brought into the covenant, and with "staying in", which has to do with obedience in order to maintain one's position in the covenant (1977:75, 420). Sanders' study prompted a new era to emerge within Christian scholarship on Paul and Jesus with the emergence of the "new perspectives", the "new perspective on Paul" (championed by James Dunn) and the "new perspective on Jesus" (championed by N.T. Wright). However, as Yinger (2009) points out, among some Christian scholars there is still the lingering quest for a legalistic Judaism, which in some sense represents a return to the pre-Sanders legalistic view. As the saying goes, "old habits die hard."

Spätjudentum *(late Judaism):* The term *Spätjudentum* was used from the perspective of the rise of Christianity to describe Judaism as "late", with overtones of decline. Wellhausen, in his book *Israelitische und judische Geschichte* (1894), contrasted pre-exilic Israel and Jewish history after the exile, arguing that Judaism after the exile deteriorated with the scribal activity through an emphasis on the writing down of oral regulation, thereby suffocating the prophetic spirit; however, it was with Jesus that the prophetic spirit was raised from the ashes (Schimdt 2001:66–69). The view of Wellhausen and those such as Emil Shurer and Wilhelm Bousset was based on the view that Christianity came to replace Judaism, which was viewed as in decline relative to the prophetic spirit and chronologically, and so the designation 'late'.

Intertestamental period: The term "intertestamental" period reflects a Christian view. It is particularly used to refer to literature which arose within Judaism between the last writing of the Old Testament and the first writing of the New Testament or between the Bible and the Mishnah (Nickelsburg 1972). However, some of the books in the Hebrew Bible or the Old Testament originated from this period, and furthermore, Christianity itself emerged as a strand within Judaism, and the New Testament texts are also concurrent with other Jewish writings such as those of Josephus, *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* (Collins 2012).

In modern scholarship, other terminologies are used to describe Judaism during the Second Temple period:

Palestinian Judaism: Sanders (1977) utilised the classification "Palestinian Judaism" to refer to what he regards as the various forms of Judaism reflected in Jewish literature

from around 200 BCE to 200 CE. Sanders was neither the first nor the last to utilise this classification. However, during the 1960s and 1970s, the term was predominantly used by New Testament scholars whose interest was to understand Paul, Jesus or Christianity in the context of Judaism (see Bonsirven 1964; Sandmel 1969; Eskola 1997; Bockmuehl 2012). The classification has also been used to distinguish Palestinian Judaism from other forms of Judaism, such as Hellenistic Judaism or Diasporic Judaism (Smith 1995).

Ancient Judaism and Middle Judaism: This classification is used by Gabriel Boccaccini. *Ancient Judaism* refers to Judaism in the period from the sixth century to the fourth century BCE, and *Middle Judaism* refers to the period 300–200 CE (see Boccaccini 1991; 2002). Blenkinsopp notes that Boccaccini fails in his distinction to indicate how Middle Judaism emerged from Ancient Judaism. However, Blenkinsopp (2009) refers to what Boccaccini classifies as Ancient Judaism as the "first phase" of Judaism, which dates back to the time of Ezra and Nehemiah.

Early Judaism: The term *Early Judaism* is used to describe Judaism between the Bible and the Mishnah (Collins and Harlow 2012; 2010; VanderKam 2001; Nickelsburg and Stone 2009). However, others tend to describe Early Judaism with reference to the Second Temple period. In this view, early Judaism was characterised by diversity, and it was only after the destruction of the temple that normative Judaism emerged (see Greenspahn 2018).

Second Temple Judaism: The term *Second Temple Judaism* is particularly used as a form of periodisation, 516 BCE to 70 CE, the time in which various forms of Judaism emerged (see Anderson 2002; Flusser 2007, 2009; Grabbe 2010; Stuckenbruck and Gurtner 2019). As noted above, the terms *Early Judaism* and *Second Temple Judaism* are often used to refer to the same thing. Schiffman (2004) refers to Judaism during the Second Temple period as "the Judaism of the Hebrew Bible". However, as Greenspahn (2018) notes, while Judaism has its roots in the Bible, it emerged after the period described in the Bible. The canonisation of the Bible is considered to have taken place within Judaism. As Yeshuyahu Liebowitz states, "Judaism is not founded on the Bible; the Bible is founded on Judaism" (1992). As Schiffman (2003:4) argues, the rabbinic Judaism that emerged from Second Temple Judaism "represents the flowering of ideas that were already part of the earlier approaches and provided a rallying point around

which a consensus emerged. Far from being something radically new and different, the Judaism of the Rabbis was deeply rooted in that of their predecessors."

The issue of the different terminologies that are used links with the debates regarding the emergence or beginnings of Judaism. There are various views concerning the beginning of Judaism, some of which are described briefly here.[21] The concern among scholars in this regard is to define the boundaries or the transitional points. In this case, the core issue is the transition from one religion to another.

The first view is that Judaism as a religion emerged during the Babylonian exile. The idea is that during the Babylonian exile there was an identity shift from a national or political identity to a religious identity. Central to this view is the impact that the destruction of the temple and the exile in Babylonia exerted on the Judaean community. However, the problem with this view is its disconnect of the religious dimension from the political dimension, as though pre-exilic Israel or the Judaean community simply had a political or national identity.

The second view is that while Judaism began within the Babylonian exile, the changes that led to the rise of Judaism as a religion had to do with the changes in religious practices such as circumcision, Sabbath observance, and synagogues, when they assumed prominence (Wyatt 1990; Noth 1990).

The third view is that Judaism began with Ezra's return with the "book of the law" and therefore, Ezra was a "father of Judaism".[22] However, as Brettler (1999) notes, Ezra should rather be viewed as having worked within the context of an emerging biblical canon, rather than as a creator or innovator.[23]

The fourth view is that Judaism began during the Hellenistic period, as it is during this time that various forms of Judaism emerged with the influence of the Greek empire and Hellenism that ensued from the empire. Fraade (1992:1054) argues that "while the Gk term *ioudaioi* for Jews (rather than simply Judeans) is first attested in inscriptions from

[21] For a detailed discussion on the different views, see Brettler (1999), Coehn (1989); Smith (1980). See among others Kaufman (2003), Coggins (1989), Albright (1957), Bright (1981).

[22] Wellhausen (1957); Bright (1981); Ahlstrom (1993).

[23] For other criticisms of the view, see also Koch (1974).

the 3rd century B.C. in Ptolemaic Egypt, the Gk term *ioudaïsmos*, from which the English "Judaism" derives and for which there is no ancient Hebrew or Aramaic equivalent, is not attested until the 2d century B.C.E"; it was only in the context of the "international cultural matrix we call Hellenism" that Judaism took its shape. Fraade's observation with regards to the terminology is essential; however, the new terminology does not necessarily equate to discontinuity with the established practices and beliefs.

The fifth view is that the various forms of Judaism are a continuation of pre-exilic, exilic, and postexilic Israelite religion (Albertz 1994; Knohl 1995). However, as Brettler (1999:443) notes, "there is no neat transition between ancient Israel and Judaism—not in the Babylonian exile, or with Ezra, or with the conquest of Alexander the Great." Brettler proposes that the term *Judaism(s)* be used to highlight the continuation of tradition and practice from the pre-exilic period.

In this study, we prefer the term *Second Temple Judaism(s)*, as it captures the periodisation and concurrently locates the origins of the various forms of Judaism or groups within this period. The Second Temple period was one of fluidity considering the changes over time and the overlaps in beliefs and practices in the various groups, and it is only in this period, not the time after the destruction of the temple in 70 CE, that our interest lies.

2.3 FROM MONOLITHIC JUDAISM TO PLURALITY WITHIN SECOND TEMPLE JUDAISM(S)

In this section, the aim is to highlight some of the developments within the study of Second Temple Judaism and the two dominant views: monolithic or unified Judaism and plurality within Second Temple Judaism(s).

2.3.1 Monolithic or Unified Judaism

Second Temple Judaism was generally viewed as monolithic or unified, although scholars recognised the existence of various groups. As already noted, the study of Second Temple Judaism has been commonly undertaken from the Christian perspective, thereby projecting Judaism as a background to Christianity. Christian scholars projected Judaism negatively as a legalistic religion or a religion in which deterioration occurred. Scholars such as Emil Schürer, Wilhelm Bousset, Ferdinand

Weber, and Gerhard Kittel, while recognising the parallels between the Rabbinic teachings and those of Jesus in the gospels, still projected Judaism negatively. These scholars were more interested in contrasting Christianity against Judaism. Wilhelm Bousset, however, tended to regard Judaism as a loosely knit church with a sense of disharmony.

Moore (1966) held the view that Judaism is catholic (universal), referring to the ability of Judaism to achieve unity of belief and observance. In Moore's view, Jews managed to overcome many barriers, such as the language barrier between Aramaic-speaking Jews and Greek-speaking Jews. Moore found discernible patterns within Judaism that held it together, which he considered "normative Judaism" (Moore 1996). However, he describes normative Judaism in terms of the Talmudic literature without regard to what he considered heretical, sectarian, non-normative or fringe sects, so he therefore disregards the Pseudepigrapha and sectarian writings as not representing normative (authentic) Judaism and regards the homiletic midrash or haggadah as the teacher's own creation. He relegates the Targumim (Targum Onkelos and Jonathan, and Palestinian Targumim) to a later period and regarded as only reflecting Tannaitic or later interpretations of Scripture and thought the Tannaitic midrash contained the most ancient form of the haggadah.

Unlike Moore, Sanders (1977) gave due attention to the wide range of Jewish writings such as the Tannaitic literature, the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Apocrypha and the Pseudepigrapha. While he recognised Judaism as a dynamic and diverse religion, Sanders still recognised a sense of unity and therefore argued for "covenantal nomism" based on orthopraxy in Judaism based on the shared Scripture, which was the common ground for Jews all over the world.

Sanders describes covenantal nomism as a structure or pattern which exhibits the following dimensions: God has chosen Israel and has given them the law; the law implies both God's promise to maintain election and the requirement to obey; God rewards obedience and punishes transgression; the law provides a means of atonement, and atonement results in the maintenance or re-establishment of a covenantal relationship; all those who are maintained in the covenant of obedience, atonement and God's mercy belong to the group which will be saved. Covenantal nomism serves to embrace an exceedingly wide range of texts, thus diminishing the differences. All the

texts of “Palestinian Judaism” are deemed similar because they share a fundamental defining character, while “covenantal nomism” excludes Paul.

For Sanders, common Judaism is not defined through any particular group; instead, it had to do with internal assent. The normative aspects of common Judaism are those aspects which were supported by common opinion. However, some, considering the existence of multiple groups within Judaism, disagree with Sanders’s view regarding common Judaism.

This study sees the monolithic/unified Judaism as an important part, though not the totality, of the Second Temple period. It acknowledges that Second Temple Judaism had practices common among all groups that made for the groups’ similarities. These similarities show that the Sadducees, Pharisees and Essenes of Second Temple Judaism originated not from a baseless past but from a common past based on monotheism. It is in the monolithic features that the Sadducees, Pharisees and Essenes show that they have one source: one God, the Sabbath and the Torah. However, though monotheism is foundational, this monotheism did not beget a monolithic culture.

2.3.2 Plurality: Judaism(s) versus Plurality within Judaism

The view that Judaism was unified did not go unchallenged. Goodenough (1953) argues that the various religious writing by the Jews in antiquity did not indicate or even suggest one another; had only the traditions of the Jews survived through the ages, there would not even have been a suspicion that the whole body of apocryphal and pseudepigraphal literature existed. He also asserts that different religious and literary sources represented different ways of being religious; the Jews who wrote the apocalypses of Enoch and Adam had quite a different conception of the aim of religion from that of halakic Jews.

Neusner (2000), following Goodenough (1953), differs from the notion of a common Judaism solely because it generalises the groups of Second Temple Judaism as if there were no conflict or differences. Thus, Neusner regards all groups of Second Temple Judaism as common and ignores the aspects on which the groups differed. Criticising Moore and Sanders, Neusner argues that if all that is known about Judaism is that the group believed in the Sabbath, one God and the Torah, it would mean that the structure and systems of the groups’ Judaism cannot be accounted for. Hence, he argues that

there was no single Judaism in real social terms; however, there were infinite and diverse Judaic systems, and such systems were various social entities that gave expression to their way of life, their worldview and the theory of the social entity that they formed.

Scholars of unified Judaism such as Moore (1966) and Sanders (1977) disregarded works such as the apocrypha, the pseudepigrapha or sectarian writings and others and took them as not representing normative (authentic) Judaism. In contrast, Neusner argued for a plural Judaism to avoid the harmonious tendencies found in the common Judaism view.

From the perspective of Neusner, this plurality changes things from singularities; that is, what existed is no longer Judaism, but Judaisms. This notion falls in line with the appreciation of the diversity of sources. For Neusner (1993:8), Judaism is composed of three elements: a worldview, a way of life and a social group that, in the here and now, embodies the whole. The worldview explains the life of the group and ordinarily refers to their view of God's creation, the revelation of the Torah, and the goal and end of the group's life at the end of time. The way of life defines what is special about the life of the group. The social group, in a single place and time, then forms the living witness and testimony to the system as a whole and finds in the system ample explanation for its very being.

Neusner (1975:218) states that while there may be no single unitary Jewish history, there is a single (but hardly unitary) history of Judaism; each of the Judaisms must be understood on its own. The history of Judaism itself is extraordinarily complex, involving the construction of definitions of Judaism capable of both defining and linking data spread over a long continuum.

For Neusner, an investigation into "a Judaism" (that is a group) has to take into consideration its "worldview" and "way of life". However, this does not discount the fact that there was "the paramount status of one Judaism" (Neusner 1993:9), and as Satlow (2006) argues, Neusner's model, while it is helpful, is an essentialist model which attempts to account for the diverse Judaisms under a single history.

In line with Neusner (1993), Smith argues for a "polytheistic" model, which views each Judaism as a plurality: "We need to map the variety of Judaisms, each of which appears

to be a shifting cluster of characteristics which vary over time" (1982:18). As Satlow (2009) notes, Smith's polytheistic view allows for each group or Jewish community to be mapped considering the history of the community, its own setting, and so its textual and behavioural tradition. This view, considering that a Judaism group or Jewish community, as Satlow (2009:846) argues, "is not made by a collection of text or norms but by historically and socially situated human beings who engage, filter, and activate their traditions according to their local understanding". The polytheistic model allows for each group to be analysed and compared with other groups considering their diversity and self-understanding over time.

However, scholars such as Baumgarten (1997) and Karel van der Toorn (2005) maintain a middle position by arguing for internal plurality. For Baumgarten (1997), the various groups within Judaism are variations of the same theme. This recognises that the variations occur in the interpretation of the same themes. It is in these various interpretations of the understandings that the plurality of Judaism emerges. Therefore, the variations do not primarily contest that which is common, but they reveal the plurality even in that which has common characteristics where necessary.

For van der Toorn (2005:484), the use of the singular does not prevent one from acknowledging the diversity within a particular religion or, expressed differently, the 'internal pluralism' of a particular religion. This perspective advances the view that upholds that the plurality found in Judaism is not something that can be denied; rather, it must be placed where it is relevant. In this manner, plurality is located internally in the broadness of Second Temple Judaism. In this view, the plurality of Judaism is not consumed by the commonality of Judaism.

Those who advance the view of plurality within Judaism are more interested in maintaining the uniqueness of each group than in attempting to harmonise the various strands of Judaism. This broad and inclusive perspective causes the internal pluralism as viewed by van der Toorn (2005) to be relevant to both common Judaism and plural Judaism because it recognises the good of both sides, thus revealing the scope of Second Temple Judaism.[24] It is called internal pluralism because there are similar

[24] The perspective of van der Toorn (1995) should be understood not as in contrast to Neusner's view of plurality in Judaism but as recognizing it yet emphasizing the importance of acknowledging that as diverse as Judaism was, its plurality is within the broader context of Second Temple Judaism. In this

factors which are shared by these groups. Van der Toorn does not dispute the reality of the similarities or differences found in the various groups. He argues that, in some respects, similarities do exist in the plurality found in Judaism, but such similarities cannot override the reality of plurality strengthened by the diversity of issues and the uniqueness of the groups. In this light, the view of Neusner (1994) is shown to be accurate: in social terms, there was never a single Judaism, but there were only the infinite and diverse Judaic systems as various social entities gave expression to their way of life, their worldview and their theory of the social entity that they had formed. It is within this realisation that the plurality found in Judaism is not the denial of the common aspects; rather, the uniformity denies the diversity. Hence, van der Toorn calls this a harmonisation of common and diverse aspects of internal plurality.

It is in this harmonisation that the groups, in their plurality and diversity, are recognised as pursuing their uniqueness internally. It is also as groups persuades this harmonization of uniqueness that even their similarity can be found even though there are factors that make them different from one another. Wilson's (1967:24–29; 1970:36–47, 48–188; 1973:18–28, 53–69) classifications of sectarianism offers a model to help understand plurality and diversity within Second Temple Judaism as an internal plurality:

> 1. Conversionist sects seek to change the individual's hearts. They are especially concerned with the recruitment of new members (e.g., the revivalist offshoots of Methodism and the various schismatic groups that emerged from Pentecostalism).
>
> 2. Revolutionist (or transformative) sects are waiting for a supernatural intervention that will change the world (e.g., Seventh Day Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses, Rastafarians and, more generally, every millennial movement).
>
> 3. Introversionist sects tend to withdraw from society and to found isolated communities (e.g., the Hutterites, the Doukhobors and the Amish Mennonites).

perspective, van der Toorn's view cannot be identified as in contrast to Neusner's view of plurality within Judaism but in perfecting it by recognizing that it is an internal plurality which is within the broadness of Judaism.

4. Manipulationist sects claim to possess special or esoteric knowledge that enables them to influence the world (e.g., Christian Science, Theosophy and Scientology).

5. Thaumaturgical sects believe in oracles and miracles dispensed by supernatural agencies (e.g., the French and Belgian Antoinists, the American "snake handlers" and the "Zionist" churches of South Africa).

6. Spiritualistic sects emphasise communication with the dead (e.g., Kardecism and the Umbanda cult in Brazil).

7. Reformist sects try to provide a moral and ethical example for the rest of the society (e.g., contemporary Quakerism).

8. Utopian sects are committed to rediscovering an ideal way of life that has been corrupted by the existing society (e.g., the Oneida Community and the Brotherhood of New Life or the Bruderhof).

Wilson casts the revolutionists, introversionists, reformists and utopians as objectivists and conversionists, manipulationists and thaumaturgists as subjectivists (see Wilson 1973:27). Wilson's classification provides a perspective from which to understand the multiple ways in which the various groups within the Second Temple period operated.

As Piovanelli (2007:158–159) highlights, sectarian groups differed radically in their discourses about God, the faithful and the world; therefore, their different views should be appreciated despite aspects that may be considered common, and so the different Second Temple Jewish movements and groups should be considered "sects."

Saldarini (1988:71–73, 286–87), following Wilson, classifies the groups as follows: early Christianity as a conversionist sect; apocalyptic groups as revolutionists; magicians and healers as thaumaturgists; and the Jesus movement (early Christianity) and the Pharisees as reformists, the latter with introversionist and revolutionist tendencies (see Saldarini 2000). Baumgarten (1997:13) classifies the Sadducees and Pharisees as reformist and the Qumranites as introversionists. The fusion below shows Wilson's classification with relevance to the plurality within Second Temple Judaism:

	Enochians	Hasidim	Sadducees	Pharisees	Essenes	Qumranites	Millenialists	Zealots
Conversionist					X	X	X	
Revolutionist	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Introversionist						X		
Manipulationist	X				X	X		
Thaumaturgical	X				X	X	X	
Spiritualistic	X				X	X		
Reformist			X	X				
Utopian		X			X		X	X

Schematic graph of Judaism Sectarianism in line with Wilson's (1973) classification.

Plurality within Second Temple Judaism allows all the groups to be understood, identified and recognised according to the nature of their characteristics and to interrelate with others where relevant. Wilson's classification of the groups in this manner shows the operation of the groups of the Second Temple Judaism. It recognises both the inclusive realities of common Judaism, as viewed by Sanders, and plural Judaisms as viewed by Neusner.

This is the perspective which completes the common Judaism view; it recognises that Judaism did not remain harmonious at each and every level of its content. Monolithic as it is, it has developed the pluralistic dimensions which are important to the complete picture of Judaism. It is in this pluralistic dimension that the Sadducees, Pharisees and Essenes confirm their monolithic and their pluralistic realities. It is in these similarities and differences that the strategic uniquenesses in strength and weakness are brought to the surface. It is this pluralistic nature which is also amplified through the religious, social and political features of the groups in their comparative spaces. Such pluralistic amplification also contributes to showing out the characteristics or the strategic positionings of the groups which make them unique and separate from the others. In the context of this thesis, Cook's (1998:243) assertion that the Sadducees were primarily politically minded, the Pharisees adapted and survived Jewish wars and the Essenes adopted an invasion "theology" in heaven not earth tells why some scholars could articulate why the Pharisees survived the destruction of the temple in 70 CE. It is within the pluralistic characteristic of this thesis that the comparative reality of the Sadducees, Pharisees and Essenes can answer this gap in research by showing the pluralistic religious, social and political differences between the three groups.

2.4 ORIGINATION OF PHARISEES, SADDUCEES, AND ESSENES IN THE SECOND TEMPLE CONTEXT

Second Temple Judaism included multiple groups which fall beyond the scope of this study. This study focuses on the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes as it seeks to prove the merit of mass ideologization through a comparative perspective within the religious, social and political spheres up to the period of the destruction of the temple in 70 CE. As part of understanding the origination of the groups in the Second Temple context, it

is important to know that different terminologies refer to the various groups in Second Temple Judaism. Josephus,[25] as an early witness, made use of the following terminologies to refer to the various groups (Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, and "Fourth Philosophy"): *hairesis* (factions or parties, 2.137; *Ant.* 13.171), philosophies (this considering the groups' tenets, *War* 2.119; *Ant.* 13.289. 18.9, 11, 23), *proairesis* (*Ant.* 13.293, 15.373), *phylon* (tribe), or *tagma* (unit).

Josephus[26] even claimed to have tried all these groups within a year but settled with the Pharisees (*Life* 10–12). It is also this perspective from Josephus which contributes to a spotlight focus on the uniqueness of the Pharisees when compared with the Sadducees and Essenes within the religious, social and political analysis. On the other hand, Philo, when describing the Essenes, states that "their persuasion is not based on birth, for birth is not a descriptive mark of voluntary association" (*Hyp*. 11.1–2). What is evident from Josephus and Philo is that the various groups could be referred to using various terms and that their association was voluntary (Baumgarten 2007; 2016).

A debated issue among scholars is whether groups should be referred to as sects or not, considering that the origins of the word "sect" only goes as far back as the Middle Ages and arises within the Christian context. The term also became associated with Josephus's term *hairesis*, which became the term commonly used to refer to various groups in Second Temple Judaism (Blenkinsopp 1990). Sanders (1977) refers to the groups as "sects" and "parties". He uses the term sects based on "soteriological exclusivism"—that is, that which distinguished the group in terms of getting into and

[25] According to Saldarini (1989:108–109), Josephus seems to imply that from here on, the three previous schools of thought, presumably traditional, ancient and legitimate, were joined by a fourth kind which led to rebellion. Josephus is said to present the three traditional philosophies for his Gentile readers as a respectable and permanent part of Judaism but to discredit the fourth philosophy, which led to the war, here and all through his book. It is from this perspective that Botha (1996: 241) asserts that Josephus is trying to impress his audience with the depth and verity of Judaism and to expose the "rebels" as the true anti-social elements abandoning their admirable traditions. The three schools are viewed as dealing with important, universal (from a Greco-Roman point of view) human issues, whilst the rebels do not deserve the charge of misanthropy. It is in regarding this misanthropy issue which Botha (1996:241) identifies scholars such as Meager (1979;4–7), Bilde (1988:118–121); Botha (1995b: 1006) and Moehring (1975: 155–156) as conscious of Josephus's view in *AJ* 16.174–178 that misanthropy is well known as a common accusation against the Jews in antiquity.

[26] About the broadness of his views, Botha (1996:241) asserts that Josephus takes great pains to entertain his readers by writing excitingly and shaping his account in a dramatic and also often in a rhetorical form (Bilde 1988:204). This is to appeal to readers' desire to be entertained (Moehring 1975:156–157; Mason 1992:70–71; Downing 1982:558). Moreover, in the writings, "all three schools are portrayed positively" (Mason 1991: 374).

staying in the group—and as parties considering they still belonged within the broader category of "people of the land". For Cohen (1988), the early Jewish sects developed during the Greco-Roman period, particularly in the Hellenistic setting, as their corporate identity assumed greater importance than their individual natural ties; therefore, sectarianism is the "culmination of the democratization of Judaism". Baumgarten (2007) uses the term "sect" to capture the voluntary association with a group, the sense of protest against the way others do things and the new identity formed as the group distinguished its members from others, thereby establishing a new class of aliens. In this study, however, the neutral term *group* is preferred to reference the various groups, no matter the overtones. Groups originate from a common purpose to serve various needs, be they social, religious, political, and so forth. Furthermore, groups evolve; for example, a group may emerge to serve particular religious needs but venture into other dimensions or evolve into something else.

Scholars have also debated the issue regarding the emergence of the various groups or sectarianism. For Weber and Talmon, the origins go back to the period of transition from exile to a post-exilic situation which provided the environment for the formation of groups. For Weber (1952), the formation of the groups occurred in the transition from a nation-state to a confessional community. Talmon, following Weber, argues that the shift to sectarianism developed as a strategy for those who went into exile in an attempt to avoid assimilation into the Babylonian Diaspora. Therefore, when the *golah* community returned to the land, they utilised the same strategy to avoid assimilation with those who had remained in Yehud. For Smith (1961:18), the origins of the sectarian groups of Judaism extend as far back as Nehemiah 10, wherein there is evidence of the formation of the earliest groups, which were precursors to the late groups such as the Pharisees and the Essenes; Nehemiah 10 provides "the basic covenant of a sect, a group of special observants, in the tradition of Nehemiah, but now particularly concerned with the observance of their obligations towards the temple". Blenkisopp (1990) further highlights that sectarian groups arise within a situation which would favour unrest and dissidence, and therefore, what happened with the *golah* community when they resettled in the land could be reproduced in other times as well. Blenkinsopp (1990:19) argues that "sects which emerge as the result of forcible or voluntary separation from the parent body tend to draw their legitimation from the parent body, claiming in effect to take over the function and mission which the larger

entity has, for whatever reason, forfeited". While we agree with Blenkinsopp's observation that the rise of sects or groups can be reproduced in different times, it does not necessarily follow that the groups saw themselves as mutually exclusive; instead, in Second Temple Judaism, we are drawn to a period wherein various groups existed, and while they certainly opposed each other to some degree, they also had to co-exist with each other, and in some instances, they even collaborated.

In this study, the focus falls on the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes, to which our attention now turns. The aim is simply to highlight the dynamics of the origin of these groups. However, a disclaimer is necessary here. What we know about these groups, particularly the Pharisees and Sadducees, is located in the following sources: Josephus, the New Testament, and Rabbinic literature. Therefore, the information about these two groups does not stem from their own literary sources but instead is drawn from secondary sources. In the subsequent chapters, the religious, social, and political dynamics that shaped these groups are considered in depth.

2.4.1 Sadducees

As Beckwith (1982) notes, establishing the specifics of the origin of the Sadducees is difficult because they left no literary artefacts.[27] Due to this lack, they have been whipping boys for Jewish and Christian writers (Botha 1996). Furthermore, the information about the Sadducees is very sketchy and tends to be over-interpreted by most of those who write about them (Grabbe 1992:484; Porton 1992:892). Hence, although the Hasmoneans, John Hyrcanus (*Ant.* 13.288–96) and Alexander Jannaus (*Ant.* 13.399–404), as well as the high priests Josephus Caiaphas (who headed the Sanhedrin that turned Jesus over to Pilate, Acts 10:17) and Annaus son of Annaus (*Ant.* 20:199), who sentenced Jacob (as in Aramaic and Greek; English James) the brother of

[27] Botha (1996: (235-280) shows that scholars such as Baron (1952:35–46), Sunberg (1962), Reicke (1968:153–156), Jeremias (1969: 228–232); Mansoor (1971), Loshe (1976:74–77), Vermes (1977:118–119), Freyne (1980:100–105), Neusner (1984:25–28) and Zeitling (1988:21–23) place a noteworthy emphasis on the varied character and complexity of the Sadducees. He considers the expositions of Mantel (1977) and Mulder (1973) prejudiced and those of Rhoads (1976:39–42) and Schiffman (1991:107–112) nuanced. He considers the inquiry of Saldarini (1989:298–308) very useful, with appropriate "care and restraint … in characterizing them" (Botha 1996:(235-280). He believes that Van Aarde (1993; 26–27), Van Eck (1996:205–206) and Murphy (1991: 239–242), who were influenced by Saldarini, express caution with regard to portrayals of the Sadducees. He says that Portion (1992) showed a good study within this perspective, although it is brief. In the perspective of the Sadducees seen as aristocrats while the aristocrats were not Sadducees, he says that Sanders (1992:317–340) has provided the best discussion by far.

Jesus, to death, were all Sadducees, knowledge about them in the Second Temple period is scarce and obscure (Regev 2006). However, these personalities do show the aristocratic level of the Sadducees within its religious, social and political context. It is also part of a positioning which gives a glimpse of understanding into the uniqueness of the group within the context of greater society. This greater society issue should be put into context. The Sadducees were more aristocratic than the other groups. These class dynamics had an effect on their ability to ideologize the ordinary people in the greater society. Issues of aristocracy within the Sadducees should be interrogated to see how they have advantaged or disadvantaged the group in the eyes of the ordinary masses of the greater society.

The two key sources for understanding the Sadducees have been Josephus and the New Testament. However, simply relying on these two sources poses limitations as it shows by definition that our knowledge of this group is derived from the perspectives of others (Knight 1993:927; Cohen 1984:28). Josephus as a source was concerned with providing a historical overview and claimed to have had first-hand knowledge of the three groups and yet chose not to stick with the Sadducees owing to a personal conviction:

> At about the age of sixteen I determined to gain personal experience of the several sects into which our nation is divided. These, as I have frequently mentioned, are three in number—the first that of the Pharisees, the second that of the Sadducees, and the third that of the Essenes. I thought that, after a thorough investigation, I should be in position to select the best. [*Life* 10–12]

In the advancement of the negative view of the Sadducees, Botha (1996:243) argues that Josephus enumerates the doctrines, origins and source documents of the Sadducees. This immediately comes to mind when he set down his descriptions of their concepts (Porton 1992:892). It is said that the artificiality with which Josephus claims to have fully investigated the schools of Jewish thought (*Life* 10) confirms the suspicion that Josephus had very little exposure to these schools (Attridge 1984:186). It is from this perspective wherein Smith argues that Josephus made use of a composite account of the three sects as the source for his portrayal; this, among other reasons, is why his description in the discussion of the Essenes in *Wars* with *Antiquities* is circumstantial and self-contradictory (Smith 1958:276–293). Smith (1958:278) considers the account

by Josephus of his training in the three schools an absurd exaggeration, and Padfield (2017) argues that Josephus did not mention the origin of the Sadducees even though his first reference of the Sadducees occurs during the days of the Maccabean revolt (*Ant.* 13.171).

The New Testament makes several references to the Sadducees (Matthew 3:7; 16:1, 6, 11, 12; 22:23–24; Mark 12:18; Luke 20:27; Acts 4:1; 5:17; 23:6–8), where its primary concern is to advance the Jesus movement. Saldarin (1978) asserts that the New Testament does not provide information for a historical understanding of the Sadducees; the gospels in the New Testament were written many years after the period they describe. Lauterbach (1927) argues that information gleaned from the New Testament should be carefully scrutinised for various biases which may have been projected into the record (Neusner 1979, Schiffman 1981).

Thus, interpretations of the Sadducees' religious, social and political standing rely heavily on secondary sources.

Botha (1996:254–255) highlights three important historical moments which defined the Sadducees as a group. Such important historical moments show the dynamics and the complexities of understanding the origins of the Sadducees.

Firstly, the "priestly upper classes" were not exclusively Sadducean and had conducted political affairs since the Persian period; they gradually became estranged from "Jewish religious interests". These leading priests collaborated with foreign powers in order to maintain their positions of eminence.

Secondly, the Sadducean aristocracy and allies retreated "of necessity" into the background during the Maccabean period. During the time of the Maccabean revolt, the office of the high priest remained vacant until Jonathan Maccabeus was appointed and a new dynasty (Hasmonean)[28] was founded. Some limited compromise was reached between the Hasmonean and the Sadducean aristocracies, and such was the situation until John Hyrcanus.

[28] In the question whether the Hasmonean was Zadokite, Josephus (*Life* 1.1–6) shows that the root of the Hasmonean dynasty comes from Matthias son of John, son of Simeon, a priest of Jerusalem who settled in Modeim. See also 1 Macc 2:1–2 and *Ant.* 12.265–66.

Thirdly, from the time of John Hyrcanus, the Sadducees once again attained the position of power as the ruling party. This, however, was briefly interrupted under Alexander. The Sadducees managed to retain political power even though they were challenged by the Pharisees, who were gaining spiritual authority among the people. The Sadducees succeeded in retaining political power until the fall of the Jewish state in 70 CE.

In an objective view, the above perspective shows the complexity of claiming one view about the origin owing to the historical factors attached to the originality of the Sadducees. Hence, other scholars contribute as follows.

Manson (1937) asserts that the Sadducees originally formed the body of the leading men of the Jewish nation who under the leadership of the Hasmoneans formed the executive and administrative councils. Other scholars trace the origins of the Sadducees to the high priest Zadok, thereby tracing their origin to an earlier period (Neusner 1970; Schiffman 1992). Zietland (1969:17–18) writes that the contestation of the oral law (Pharisees) versus the written law (Sadducees) also shows that the high priests who were of the Zadokite family, known by the name of the Zadukim, were Sadducees, the Sons of Zadok. Knight (1993) also accepts the title Sadducees (Hebrew *Zedukim*) is derived from the name Zadok the high priest in the days of David (2 Samuel 8;17; 15:24;1 Kings 1:34–45). In line with Zietland, Neusner and Schiffman, Geiger (1863) also asserts that the Sadduceeic sect of Judaism drew their name from Zadok, the first high priest to serve in the first temple, with the leaders of the sect proposed as being the *kohanim* (priests, the "sons of Zadok", descendants of Eleazar, son of Aaron). Scholars such as Baumgarten (1979:233–236), Davies (1987:51–72), Schürer, Vermes and Miller (1979:405–407), and Saldarini (1989:225–227) recognise that the term Zadok has a wide range of meaning within which the connection between the Zadokites and Sadducees falls. In line with Botha's three items of historical importance and the perspectives of the above scholars, the Maccabean period, even in the fervency of its revolt, emerges as the best space in which to place the origin of the Sadducees in Second Temple Judaism.

Hence, Josephus argues that it was during the time of Hyrcanus I that the Sadducees came to occupy a prominent place, when Hyrcanus switched groups from the Pharisees to the Sadducees (*Ant.* 13: 288–98), thus affirming that they were active in Judea during the Second Temple period, starting from the second century BCE through the

destruction of the temple in 70 CE (*Ant. 13.10.6*). He also identifies Annaus the Younger as a Sadducee (*Ant.* 20.199–200). The Sadducees are also identified with the wealthy upper class of the population (*Ant.* 13.298; Finkelstein 1962:80; Simon 1967:24). As they were not of one mind (Botha 1996:262), their identity as aristocrats in the mind of the Jewish population resulted in them exerting little influence over that population (Rivkin 1978:42; Simon 1967:24). However, the Sadducees played a part among the so-called chief priests, men who belong to the four or five families from whom the high priests were drawn (Jeremias 1969:1943; Schürer, Vermes & Millar 1979:234).

According to Josephus, the Sadducees were often pressured by the Pharisees to accept Pharisaic interpretations of the Scriptures (*Ant.* 18:17).[29]

With the Sadducees' Zadokite history, it is important to note that the religious ideal is well placed only in the best context of the relevant fervent times of the groups in Second Temple Judaism. The Maccabean revolt of 167–160 BCE was fertile ground for the emergence of the groups of Second Temple Judaism (Justiss 2016:3). The Sadducees as the historical custodians of the Zadokite high priesthood and written law emerge as a leading factor of these times. Their origin in this period is qualified by the religious Zadokite lineage which is the custodianship of the practices of the written law. It is this custodianship of the law which renders them the source of all the other groups that emerged during this period. Thus, it is not surprising that Danby (1933) argues that the Sadducees were such a dominant group that their influence in the first-century world has still not been fully documented. This also lends credence to the notion that they are the group from which the other groups emerged. Perhaps it is the rigidness of the Zadokite high priesthood's standards and perspective on the written law—their equation of oral law with written law in particular—that led Finkelstein to assert that

[29]From this perspective, Botha (1996) shows that Josephus can be critical of the Pharisees and often laments their prominence (*Ant.* 13.400–432, 17.41–45, 18.12–15; cf *War* 1.110), adding that the focal point of his dislike is their reputation in the laws of Moses. However, Botha (1996) shows that Josephus's commitment to order and good government becomes clear in his elaborate characterisations; in these he "approves the Pharisees when they are a force for stability and disapproves of them when they challenge the dominant, traditional and stable government and way of life of Judaism" (Saldarini 1989:129). On the discussion perspective, drawing from scholars such as Mason (1991:230–245) and Saldarini (1989:128–133), Botha (1996:240) asserts that he greatly doubts the value of claiming Josephus' inept handling of his sources as a solution to the problem of his multi-faceted depictions of groups.

the Sadducees displayed contempt for scholarship (Finkelstein 1962:768). Josephus[30] portrayed them as boorish and rude (War 8:166), which could have been a result of a stand against the perspectives that were contrary to the perspective of their Zadokite historicity and consistency with the written law. By contrast,[31] Silver and Martin (1963:222–23) praise the Sadducees for their sturdiness, robust faith and emphasis on such things as God's grace, God's majesty, the Torah and the temple (Silver & Martin 1963:222–23).

It is in the pre-Maccabean era, the Maccabean era and the post-Maccabean era that the Sadducees situated their origins and manifestations, which places them religiously, socially and politically within the Second Temple period. This places the founding of the Sadducees in a period that portrays them as the custodians of the written law.

2.4.2 Pharisees

Scholars regard the years leading up to the Maccabean revolt (167–160 BCE) to have been fertile ground for the fervent Jewish sectarianism (Justiss 2016:3). The earliest mention of the Pharisees appears to be during the time of Jonathan Maccabee, 152–142 BCE (*Ant.* 13:171; Kampen 1988). This implies that sectarianism existed before the consciousness of the written context. Based on the literary sources, the Pharisees emerged during the Hasmonean period (152–63 BCE; *War* 15:1; Justiss 2016). It is within this period that the formation of the Pharisees begins to have traceable footprints. However, Schiffman (1981) argues that the Pharisees could not have suddenly emerged during the Hasmonean period; the theology and organisation of the Pharisees most

[30] Josephus adds that the Sadducees are indeed more merciless than any other Jews when they sit in judgement (*Ant.* 20.199). Botha (1996:243) asserts that given their importance in Judaean politics, it is curious that Josephus hardly refers to individual Sadducees in any of his works at all. His generalization that the Sadducees were supposedly dominated by the Pharisees is belied by his historical narrative (Smith 1956:77–79; Grabbe 1992:485; Sanders 1985:316). It is from this perspective that Cohen (1984: 37) asserts that the rabbis also like to tell stories in which the Sadducees are intimidated, a sign which shows that perhaps the rabbis too have "rabbinized" Pharisaic history.

[31] Hence, in promoting the negative view towards the Sadducees, Botha (1996:243) argues that when Josephus enumerated the Sadducees' doctrines or source(s) it immediately came to mind to set down his descriptions of their concepts (Porton 1992:892). It is said that this artificiality in which Josephus claims to have fully investigated the schools of Jewish thought (*Vita* 10) confirms the suspicion that Josephus had, in fact, experienced very little exposure to these schools of thought (Attridge 1984:186). It is for this reason amongst others that Morton Smith argues that Josephus made use of a composite account of the three sects as a source for his portrayal; hence the circumstantial and contradictory nature of his description in the discussion of the Essenes in *BJ* with *AJ* (Smith 1958:276–293). Hence, Smith (1958: 278) argues that the Josephus account of his training in the three schools is an absurd exaggeration.

likely began to form earlier, although such earlier times cannot be determined exactly. Beckwith (1982) shows that the most persuasive attempt to narrow down their origins places their beginnings no later than 340 BCE. It is within this context that the Hebrew word *perushim,* "ones who are separate" is identified with them (Neusner 1970). Such self-understanding of the Pharisees would have emerged from their interest in the law of Moses.[32] However, as others note, the separatist ideology may have been a response to what they viewed as an excessive influence of Hellenism (Marcus 1952; Lapean 2003:125). From this perspective, Silver and Martin (1963) show that over two centuries, the proto-Pharisaic ideology acted to counter the Hellenistic influence in Palestine (Smith 1956). After the Maccabean revolt, the Pharisees organized more formally and enjoyed some sway with the Hasmoneans before differences developed between them and the Sadducees (Ben Sasson 1976, Schürer 1979). However, Rivkin (1978) shows that the split between John Hyrcanus and the Pharisees resulted in the Pharisees being expelled from the Sanhedrin by the Sadducees (see also *Ant.* 13:288–96).

This expulsion by the Sadducees resulted in different perspectives towards the Pharisees. The identity of the group as Pharisees emerged from their opponents. Some (e.g., Bruce 1971:72) suggest that the term comes from *Persianizers*[33] as a way of insulting the group. Others (e.g., Wise, Abbeg & Cook 1996) suggest that some of the group's opponents viewed the group's interpretation of the Law as distorted and branded them as *"seekers after smooth things"* while others argue that the group was referred to as "builders of the wall". Knight (1993) argues that Jewish leadership gave this expelled group the name *perushim* (separatists). Zietland (1913:487) states,

> The nomenclature perushim, Pharisees, was a nickname of reproach applied by the Sadducees to a certain group of Judeans. It was at the time of the canonization of the Pentateuch that there arose a difference of views in regard to the written law. One group wanted that only the laws recorded in the Pentateuch were binding, while the customs and laws which had come into vogue among the people, whereas the unwritten laws were not binding. This group consisted of the high priests who were of the Zadokite

[32] Scholars who identify with the terminology from what Baumgarten (1983) defines as the approbative sense include Jeremias (1960), Geiger (1857) and Black (1934).

[33] Scholars who identify with the terminology of what Baumgarten (1983) defines as a derogatory sense include Schürer, Vermes, Millar and Black (1973), Lauterbach (1951), Le Mayne (1966), Finkelstein (1950), Guttman (1970), Urbach (1975), Rivkin (1978), Mansoor (1971) and Herr (1981).

> family, known by the name of the Zadukim, Sadducees, the Sons of Zadok. The other group who maintained that the unwritten laws were as binding as the laws in the Pentateuch was considered heretics in the eyes of the high priestly family, the Zadukim, Sadducees. Those who held these heretical views were nicknamed Perushum, Pharisees, separatists, who had separated themselves from the God of the Judeans and the people. This radical view was considered heretical in the eyes of the Zadukim, Sadducees.

From Finkelstein's (1962) perspective, the Pharisees were characterised by a love for scholarship and intellectual pursuits. Simon (1967) unfolds them as schoolmen and scholars. Josephus asserts that they seem to interpret the laws more accurately (*War* 1:110), as they enable others to excel in the accurate knowledge of their country's laws (*War* 38:191). Enhancing this perspective, Paul the Apostle, identifying himself as a Pharisee (Acts 23:6), asserts that he was taught according to the perfect manner of the law of their fathers (Acts 22:3).

Josephus also unfolds them as well:

> Now, for the Pharisees, they live, and despise delicacies in diet; they follow the conduct of reason; and what that prescribed to them as good for them, they do; and they think they ought earnestly to strive to observe reason's dictates for practice. They also pay respect to such as are in years; nor are they so bold as to contradict them in anything which they have introduced. (*Ant.* 18:12)

Knight (1993) notes that in Mathew 23:29, 33 the Pharisees are mentioned as hypocrites and a generation of vipers. Finkelstein (1962) defines them as urban people. Zietlin (1990) also portrays them as leaders of Jewish society and advocates for the Jewish people. With scholars aligned to this perspective, Schiffman (1981) asserts that the Pharisees were immensely popular. It is from this perspective that they are termed the people's party (Baeck 1966). They are also defined as extremely powerful and influential and enjoying the strong support of the masses (Rivkin 1978:38–39).

From a different perspective, Smith (1956) opines that the Pharisees may have been the largest and most influential of the sects, but they did not reflect normative Judaism. Other scholars[34] have challenged the traditional view by arguing that the Pharisees were

[34] Knight (1993) considers Neusner among the leading scholars challenging the traditional view with his three-volume work (1971), which strongly focused on the study of the Pharisees.

simply one of the sects, each with limited membership, competing for the attention of the unaffiliated majority (Goodblatt 1989, Neusner 1971, Schwartz 1983).

While the origins of the Pharisees are debatable, in this study our concern is not how they were formed as a group but on the operations of the group over a period of time. This thesis focuses on the way that they operated in comparison with other groups considering their religious, social, and political consciousness through their strength of oral law and their influence on the greater society.

2.4.3. Essenes

Nodet (1997) calls the Essenes the third school and associates them with the Sadducees and Pharisees. This confirms Justus's (2016:3) assertion that the years leading up to the Maccabean revolt (167–160 BCE) were fertile ground for fervent Jewish sectarianism. On the other hand, Josephus specifies the Essenes as a group that came into existence under Jonathan, ca. 150 BCE (*Ant.* 13.171). This again shows that Essenes were indeed the last in the order of the Sadducees and Pharisees to originate. This leads to the following hypotheses concerning the origins of the Essenes, which is debated among scholars.

Schiffman (1992) views the Essenes as a breakaway group from the Sadducees; those who broke away were unwilling to accept the status quo established in the aftermath of the Maccabean revolt. Wise, Abbeg and Cook (1996) view the Zadokite separation as coming twenty years before the arrival of the Teacher of Righteousness.

There are different theories about the origins of Essenes of Qumran: the Essenes hypothesis, the Groningen hypothesis, the Enochic/Essene hypothesis and the Enochian Zadokite traditions (van Peursen 2001).

According to the *Essenes hypothesis*, the beginning of the Essenes movement lies in the Antiochene crisis period, which gave rise to the Maccabean revolt. The Essenes were part of the larger movement of the Hasidim. A dispute arose between their supporters and their opponents when the non-Zadokite Maccabean family assumed the office of high priest. The Zadokite party was defeated and withdrew to the desert. The Wicked Priest was the Hasmonean Jonathan, who accepted the high priesthood in 152 BCE. The Teacher of Righteousness was the leader and priest of the Zadokite party,

perhaps the high priest of the so-called intersacerdotium (159–152 BCE; Vermes 1997:26–90, Dimant 1984, Cross 1995).

The *Groningen hypothesis* attempts to explain the similarities between the Essenes and the Qumran community without necessarily equating the two. This theory was propagated by F. Garcia Martinez and J. Trebolle Barrera (1995) and states that the ideological roots of the Qumran community are located within the Palestinian apocalyptic tradition before the Antiochene crisis.

In this view, both Essene and Qumran communities originated before the Antiochene crisis. The Essenes are seen as a separate entity which arose from the Palestinian apocalyptic tradition before the Antiochene crisis. The Qumran community is not identical with the Essenes movement but originated after a split within this movement during the reign of John Hyrcanus I (134–104 BC). The split in the Essene movement was motivated by different opinions about the halakah, especially on issues related to the calendar, temple worship and purity. The title "Wicked Priest" refers not to one individual but to a succession of high priests from Judas Maccabeus (164–160 BCE) to Alexander Jannaeus (103–76 BCE; Van der Woude 1982:349–359). This theory has great impact on the interpretation and classification of the Qumran literature. In Dimant's (1995:23–58) view, the Groningen hypothesis considers the non-biblical Qumran literature, which contains works from four stages in the community's prehistory and history: the first group consists of works of the apocalyptic tradition from which Essenism is derived (the apocalyptic stage); the second contains works that reflect the Essenes' thinking and agree with what classical sources tell us about Essenism (the Essene stage); the third comprises works from the formative period of the Qumran community (the pre-Qumran stage); the fourth consists of sectarian works (the Qumran stage).

The *Enochic/Essene hypothesis* begins with the traditional Essenes hypothesis and traces the roots of the Qumran community back not to the Palestinian apocalyptic tradition but to the Ezekielian and Enochic traditions of the exile period F. Garcia Martinez and J. Trebolle Barrera (1995).

The first line of traditions that distinguishes is the Ezekiellian line wherein he follows Wacholder, who speaks of "Ezekiellianism" (1992:187) to indicate a movement that

had the book of Ezekiel as its starting point. The influence of Ezekiel in later Jewish literature is impressive because it established the basis for a number of apocalyptic and speculative traditions in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Many of Ezekiel's images, symbols and descriptions recur in later apocalyptic literature while the visions of the *merkabah* (Halperin 1988:63–114) establish the point of departure for the speculations about the heavenly environs in apocalyptic and mystical literature (Laenen 2001:29–37). It also exerted a strong influence on some Qumran texts such as the *Song of the Sabbath Sacrifice*.[35] The Enochic/Essenes hypothesis focuses on the exilic period with Ezekielian and Enochic traditions

The Enochian and Zadokite traditions are noted by Van Peursen (2001) as a tradition of the established Zadokite high priesthood in Jerusalem wherein the Sadducees are the most direct descendants; they transmitted literature which included most of the biblical books and further works such as Sirach and Tobit, which share a priestly Ezekielian background. They have an interest in the calendar and matters related to purity (Stone 1989:73). Their main difference is also related to their views of the post-exilic rebuilding of Jerusalem. The Zadokites claimed that God's order had been fully restored with the construction of the Second Temple, whereas the Enochians still viewed its restoration as a future event. Wacholder (1992:191) considers this a split

[35] In Wacholder's view (1992:187, 191), the Benei Zadok who figure in Ezekiel are not a "pre-exilic high priestly family whose successors established the post exilic theocratic state" but "a movement that stood in opposition to the sacerdotal authorities who controlled the first temple from the time of Solomon, and whose descendants ruled Judea until the Seluecid persecution. The name Benei Zadok is employed to contrast the high priests of the past sanctuary with the true 'Sons of Zadok' of the future temple. Ezekiel is viewed as the forerunner of an anti-Zadokite opposition party using the term 'Ezekielianism' to refer to the'sectarian' movement that was initiated by Ezekiel" (187,191). He distinguishes between "early sectarianism" or Benei Zadok 1 (a designation based on Ezekiel 40-–48) and "late sectarianism" or Benei Zadok 2 (a designation based on CD III 21–IV 4. Boccaccini (1998) combines Wacholder's "Ezekielianism" with the concept of "Enochic", which was developed by Sacchi (1990:61–71) and Stone (1989), saying that these scholars have argued that the book of 1 Enoch is of the utmost importance for the reconstruction of post-exilic Judaism. The book belongs to the oldest extra-biblical Jewish literature. Certain sections of it, namely the Book of the Watchers (1 Enoch 1–36) and the Astronomical Book (1 Enoch 72–83) can be dated to the third century BC at the latest. The theory that 1 Enoch is Maccabean or post Maccabean has become untenable after the discovery of parts of this book in Aramaic among the Dead Sea Scrolls. The traditions reflected in the Enochic literature are even older, while a literary-critical analysis of the Book of the Watchers and the Astronomical Book brings us to the third century BC, a tradition-critical analysis which takes us back much earlier. The traditions in the Enochic literature go back as far as the Babylonian milieu of the exilic age and to the pre-exilic mythological heritage of ancient Israel. A Babylonian influence in the Enochic traditions is evident in, for example, the astronomical theories in the Book of the Luminaries, the map of the world presumed in various parts of 1 Enoch, in names and mythical personages in the Book of Giants, and in parallels between traditions about Enoch, "the seventh in descent from Adam" (Jude 14) and Mesopotamian traditions about the seventh king (Stone 1984:383–441, Van der Kam 1995:6–16, Dimant 1994:176–177).

between the pragmatic rebuilders of Jerusalem and those who awaited a sanctuary erected by God himself.

Sacchi (1990:61–71), Stone (1989) and Boccaccini (1998:76–77) write that Enochism emerged as a distinct entity probably in the fourth or third century BCE; for some centuries, Enochism and Zadokite Judaism developed separately, but after the Maccabean revolt, the Zadokites had become so dominant that non-Zadokite Judaic movements including Enochic Judaism, could no longer ignore the Zadokite literature. This explains why Daniel incorporated Mosaic traditions and why the Jubilee group presents itself as a revelation of Moses (Bocaccini 1998:74).

In these hypotheses and traditions, it is clear that, like the Zadokites, the Essenes are deeply intertwined with the historical past of the pre- and post-exilic era. These historical hypotheses and traditions make it more understandable that the Maccabean revolution and the Hasmonean period most likely point to the origins of the Essenes with extensions to places such as Qumran (Justiss 2016:3). The synergy of the Sadducees and Pharisees being found to exist earlier than the Essenes, and the Essenes too become well placed within this Maccabean period, yet they originated long after the Sadducees and the Pharisees had been established. Hence, even the emergence of the Teacher of Righteousness, who is associated with the Essenes in general and in Qumran in particular, is identified with times such as those of 152 BC. These periods extend to long after the earlier phases of the Maccabean period and as early as the origins of the Sadducees and the Pharisees.

2.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter covered the classification and the issues regarding terminology pertaining to Second Temple Judaism. The transformation of monolithic Judaism into a plurality of Judaisms and the origins of the Pharisees, the Sadducees and the Essenes in the Second Temple context lay the perspective from which the history can be studied. It is from this perspective that the comparison will bring to the surface the influence the three groups had on the greater society before the destruction of the temple in 70 CE. Against this background, chapter 3 covers religious comparisons; chapter 4 engages in social comparisons, chapter 5 draws political comparisons and Chapter 6 draws conclusions. This will show the perspective of scholars who hold the traditional view

towards the comparison which shows the Pharisees having a unique stand and influence on the greater society even up to the destruction of the temple in 70 CE.

CHAPTER 3: RELIGIOUS COMPARISON

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Multiple and diverse Jewish groups existed during the Second Temple period; however, the diversity did not rule out the possibility of commonality in certain aspects (Kalimi 2011:73–74; Schiffman 2001:272–273). In this chapter, the focus falls on the religious perspectives of the Sadducees, the Pharisees and the Essenes, the subjects of this study. Therefore, this chapter aims to compare the religious perspectives of the three groups taking into consideration the unique expressions of the views and practices of each group (Regev 2006:128; Baumgarten 1997:7). However, as this is done, attention must be paid to some of the central features within Second Temple Judaism. For the purpose of this study, the following central features are suggested: monotheism, the Torah/law of Moses, the temple, and the high priest, while any relevant features which may enhance the religious historicity from a comparative perspective must also be recognized.

The comparative approach adopted in this study is anchored in the principle of the centrality of Judaism, which features an internal pluralism of the diverse groups (Van der Toorn, 2005). Internal pluralism recognises the common aspects of the various groups, and external pluralism allows an assessment of the central features of the groups from various perspectives.

3.2 MONOTHEISM

Monotheism refers to a belief in one God. This belief is expressed in Judaism through Deuteronomy 6:4: "Hear, O Israel: YHWH our God, YHWH is one," which is well known as the *Shema*. The Mishnah, which falls outside of the period of our focus, contains rules for the daily recitation of the Shema (*Berakoth* chapters 1–2). The Talmud, which accords a high value to the Shema, regards the *Shema* as the first thing that a child should learn to say and the last word of the dying (*m. Suk.* 42a; *m. Ber.* 61a).

Historical critical studies, which are focused on the biblical text, tend to regard the *Shema* as going back to the pre-deuteronomistic stage when the slogan was used as a form of allegiance in the worship of YHWH at the central cultus in Jerusalem (Bade

1910; Emerton 1984; Tigay 1996; Veijola 1992). However, for those concerned with reading the biblical text in its ancient Near Eastern context, the worship of YHWH alone was a denial not of the existence of other gods but of their worthiness for worship (Walton 2006:87–95). There are many Second Temple sources which express the *Shema* or monotheism as a pillar of Jewish life (Pseudo-Aristotelian 132, Philo *Decal*. 65, *Spec. leg*. I.12). Thus monotheism[36] was the fundamental principle which they inherited from their Judaistic religious centrality (Stemberger 2001:192; Simon 1967:11).

From a perspective that the recitation of the Shema dates back as early as the Second Temple period, the following observations of the perspectives of various scholars is taken from Gribetz (2015):

Reif (1995) states that "the substantial archaeological and literary evidence for the use of the Shema, together with the equally theologically significant Ten Commandments, as a form of amulet and as a daily prayer in and outside the temple, clearly establishes Deut 6:4 as one of the earliest forerunners of the synagogal liturgy." It is important to note that Reif is showing the importance of Shema as it has progressed during the centuries. This is shown by the identification of the different times of the emergence of the writings of the Ten Commandments, which is far earlier than the emergence of the synagogues. The historical time-space of the two shows that the depth of monotheism was from a flow which is older than the Second Temple period.[37]

Falk (1998) assumes that references to Deuteronomy 6:7 in Second Temple sources presuppose the recitation of the Shema and can be used as evidence for the Shema in this period. Again, this perspective places monotheism at the centre, which is not limited by time or the diversity of events. Hence even the words of the Rabbis, "the

[36]Monotheism is the belief in one God. Judaism is entrenched in monotheism. This means that the three groups under study are monotheistic, religious tributaries of Judaism.

[37] Lambert (2016:23) argues that the Torah of Moses became a revelation and identifies the following scholars as showing the historicity in which the undisputed principle of monotheism also surfaces even in the context of the perspectives that contested the view of uniformity in the development even of early biblical interpretation. Even though this writing elaborated on the development of the canon, the monotheistic principle was still advanced, even before the Deuteronomist compilation. See Lim (2013); Van der Kooij & Van der Toorn (1998); Landmeester & Helmer (2004). McDonald & Sander (2002).; Landmeester & Helmer. (2004). Kugel, (1998); Najman (2012:497–518).

Holy One, blessed be He, spoke and Moses wrote," confirm the monotheistic character in the formative phase of the Pentateuch (b. Menah.3oa).[38]

Sanders (1992) writes that the Shema was "fundamental to Jewish life worship" between 63 BCE. and 55 CE and "seems to have been very widespread", not only among elites and learned or pious Jews but also within the larger Jewish population of Palestine and the Diaspora; the Shema was part of the so-called "common Judaism" of the period. Like Reif (1995), yet from a different perspective, Sanders is showing the depth of monotheism being at the centre of the Jewish life irrespective of their geographical locality, social, educational, political, spiritual, economic or cultural standing within the diverse Jewish society at large. This again shows that the Shema on its own was a central feature which unified the Jewish people irrespective of their differences, which may have been born even by the possibilities of the halakah.[39] This demonstrates monotheism as a cord which weaves together all Jewish people, who are from different backgrounds yet conscious of the oneness of God. This places the Shema as a religious ideology which has become entrenched in the masses of the Jewish people beyond the differences that could have been present. Wolfson (1947), in his extensive study of Philo's writings, assumes that the practice of reciting the Shema was prevalent in both Palestine and the Diaspora during the Second Temple period. He argues that Philo never mentions it because it was taken for granted by Philo's readers. However, the impact of the central monotheism of the Jews has also been felt by those who were not Jewish, for example, Seneca the Roman citizen (Baumgarten 1985:20). Stern (1976–80), in his writings about the Greek and Latin authors, confirms this impact of monotheism beyond the border of Palestine, quoting Seneca as asserting, "The Jews, however, are aware of the origin and meaning of their rites." This is a recognition of the strength of the Jewish people who are monotheistic in the religious approach by a person who was a bitter opponent of Judaism. Indeed, Wolfon's perspective was

[38] In support of this perspective, a parallel also appears in *b. Bat*. 15a. Moses Maimonides is seen as one of those who influentially articulates this basic principle of Judaism in the *Commentary on the Mishna*. Sarna (1983:19–27), Levenson (1988:205–25), Sommer (1999:422–51), Shapiro (2004), (Heschel 2005:538–657) and Twersky, ed (1972:420–21) are also relevant to this perspective.

[39] The dynamics of the importance of the halakah will be elaborated more broadly from the positions of the three groups in the relevant chapter covering the Torah. The aim to fuse the halakah with the Torah stems from the fundamental principle which upholds its interpretation while upholding the Scripture.

correct: the practice of reciting the Shema was beyond the indigenous territory of the Jewish people at Palestine.

Cohen (2008) proposes that the presumed antiquity of the Shema lies in the practices of binding phylacteries and affixing mezuzot, both of which are based on the same passage from Deuteronomy and which date to the Second Temple period; abundant textual and material evidence exists to support this claim, not least the numerous sets of phylacteries discovered at Qumran (Crawford 2005; Yadin 1970; Devaux & Milik 1978). These broad elaborations supporting the presence of monotheism indicate that its importance has been the driving force in the evolution and development of Judaism. It has propelled its vibrancy and motion towards various destinies for different purposes. Without the Shema, there is indeed no Judaism, and therefore there could not have been even a leap to what we call the Second Temple period which avails the opportunity to religiously explore the comparative dynamics of the groups of the time. The basis of its historicity, which deepens far beyond the times of this study, tells about the depth which monotheism possesses as the foundational bedrock of this study. Therefore, it is important to understand that its true nature and identity cannot be limited by a modern narration.

Lange (2014) presents the following perspectives of various scholars who attempt to answer the question when a monotheistic understanding of the Shema began.

Lange and Weigod (2012) assert that it is found in the textual witnesses of the Shema from the Second Temple period as well as in quotations of and allusions to Deuteronomy 6:4 in the Jewish literature from the same period, which are admittedly relatively sparse (Lange 2014:207).

Because compilation cannot precede conceptualization Hidalgo (2016;15) argues that it is difficult to date the origins of the Shema with certainty because even critical scholars who date Deuteronomy during the Josianic reformation still recognise that the Shema exhibits roots of a deeper liturgical tradition. These ancient traditions are ancient confessions that found their way into the framework of Deuteronomy's legal core (Veiljola 1992:530). Therefore, the Second Temple period has been a recipient of what

was conceptualised long before at the Pentateuch phase of conceptualisation and compilation.[40]

Hanson (1979) shows that the earliest allusion to the Shema can be found in Zechariah 14:9, which forms part of an extensive addition of the Book of Zechariah from Persian times (see also Peterson 1993:3–6). This is important in showing that the perspective of monotheism has been with the Jews even in their most difficult moments, such as those of Persian domination. It has been an identity which was part of who they were even in difficult times. This is another perspective which shows that the mixture of law and narrative has been at the centre of demonstrating the broader field of production which includes not only material construction of the text but also ongoing societal construction of its authority, purpose and nature.[41]

Eusebius says that another reference to Deuteronomy 6:4 is to be found in a Jewish Pseudo-Orphic fragment attributed to the famous Greek seer Musacos (*Praeparatio Evangelica* 13:12.5). This is a demonstration of the impact which monotheism had even outside the religiosity of the Israelite lineage.

Lange (2014) asserts that in his allegorical interpretation of the Pentateuch, Aristobulus refers to this Pseudo-Orphic text to demonstrate how even the founders of Greek culture were guided by Moses in their ideas (Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica* 13:12.4).

Holladay (1995:162–65) opines that since Pythagoras, Socrates and Plato investigated everything thoroughly, they began to follow the Pseudo-Orphic text in saying that they heard God's voice by reflecting on the cosmic order as something carefully created by God and permanently held together by him; moreover, Orpheus in verses entitled "Concerning the Holy Word", also expounds on being governed by the power of God, the origin of what has come to be, and God's being over everything.

[40] For more interrogation, see Najman (2000:202–16), Blenkinsopp (2001:41–62) and Pakkala (2011:193–222).

[41] Blenkinsopp (2001:41–62) and Hidalg (2016:17) attest to the universal principle which Zechariah 4:19 shows as the continuous growth of the monotheistic perspective, even in foreign lands.

Josephus, in a description of the Decalogue, expresses the view that by the first century CE at the latest, the monotheistic nature of the Shema also became accepted in Judean Judaism (*Ant*. III. 91–92; Thackeray 1967).

From the perspective of Lange (2014), Gibert (2015) and other scholars of monotheism, it is clear that Second Temple groups like the Sadducees, Essenes and Pharisees inherited a doctrinal path that was greater than any of one them. It is this doctrinal path that shows common elements of Judaism that transcend the factional boundaries of any individual group (Sanders 1992).

This perspective goes further to show that the impact of monotheism has been contested and even shaped the Greek world view of the philosophers of the time; it further confirms that monotheism was basic to Jewish life and worship, far more so than the differences over other issues, whether from the written law or oral law. Like Lange (2014) and Gibertz (2015), indeed the writing of Josephus also showed that the monotheistic character of Judaism infiltrated even the groups like the Sadducees, the Pharisees and the Essenes (*War* 2.119–166, *Ant*.13.171173. 18.11–25). They inherited this fundamental principle from their Judaistic religious centrality (Stemberger 2001:192; Simon 1967:11), in which a supreme doctrine of monotheism is entrenched. This supreme doctrine of monotheism is also intertwined in the temple, which is the key visible element of this Judaistic religious centrality (Baumgarten 1997:7; Kalimi 2011:72). In other words, the religious practices in the temple are based on the affirmation and advancement of this monotheistic perspective (1 Macc 1:44–50). It is important to note that all these three groups were in favour of the temple practices that preceded the advent of the one the Essenes called the Wicked Priest, who became the opponent of the Essene Teacher of Righteousness due to the contestations over positional legitimacy concerning the high priesthood and the practices in the temple (Kalimi 2011:72, Otzen 1990:8).

Whatever the religious doctrinal differences, the Sadducees, Pharisees and Essenes upheld the fundamental doctrine of monotheism. Monotheistic features present in Judaism at large appear to have been present among the Sadducees, the Pharisees and the Essenes (Small 2001:61; Simon 1967:7).

The monotheistic principle transcended the doctrinal differences of all three groups. They all agree without challenging each other that the Lord their God is one (Deutoronomy 6:4). It is important to note that, although they broke away from the temple, the Essenes upheld monotheism like the Sadducees and Pharisees did. In monotheism, all the Jewish sects find common ground. Therefore, monotheism extends beyond sects and cannot be contested regarding domination like the temple contestation between the Sadducees and Pharisees (Broshi 2007:26; Otzen 1990: 151, Hultgren 2011:136). It is a vehicle in which the identity of the three groups shows a similarity of consciousness. This monotheistic consciousness shows that Dunn (2010) correctly identifies the pillar of Second Temple Judaism as God, salvation, Israel and Torah as an intertwinement that anchors monotheism. This shows that the Shema perspective is indeed so deep that, according to Hanson (1979), its earliest allusion can be found in Zechariah 14:9, which is part of an extensive addition to the Book of Zechariah from Persian times (see also Peterson 1993:3–6), as stated above. This historicity also reveals that monotheism is older than the events or places to which the Israelites had been.

Therefore, within this uncontested feature of monotheism, in its historicity, the decisions which the three groups made worked to their advantage or disadvantage and determined their standing and impact. This principle governed the unfolding of all three of the groups of Second Temple Judaism: each could be influential or unpopular with the masses and still be fundamentally monotheistic.

The radicalism of the Essenes, which caused them to totally break away from the temple and greater society, remains the key disadvantage of their type of monotheism. Although the Essenes were monotheistic like the Jewish people of the greater society, their disconnection made the greater society see them as no longer on a par with it. This situation turns the focus to the differences from the common ground of monotheism. It is this difference that causes the monotheism of the Essenes to lose its impact on its neighbours in the greater society. This demonstrates that the actions of the Essenes diluted the impact of their monotheism on the greater society not because they were ethically incorrect but because they were strategically detached from the centrality of the temple.

In the same vein, the Sadducees clung to the centrality of the temple without flowing with the rhythm of greater society, and thus their monotheism was disadvantaged.

Although the Sadducees were still monotheistic like the Jewish people of the greater society, their internal temple clinging birthed a condition that made the greater society see them as not being on a par with it. Similar to the Essenes, the focus in this situation shifted to the differences from the common ground of monotheism. It is equally this difference that diminished the impact of the monotheism of the Sadducees.

However, the monotheism of the Pharisees reveals a difference from that of the Essenes and the Sadducees. The Pharisees applied the balance-of-probabilities principle. Their monotheism was linked with both the temple and the greater society. They did not send a divided message to the greater society by their identification with the temple. While the Essenes broke away from the temple, the high priest and greater society, irrespective of the validity of their reasons, the Pharisees held onto both the temple and the greater society, which gave an advantage to their monotheism on both sides. Also, while the Sadducees were following the practice of emphasising temple rituals and showing no concern for the welfare of discharging the same rhythm to the greater society, the Pharisees were doing the opposite.

Even in monotheism, the Pharisees were demonstrably more in tune with the greater society, which increased their impact on the greater society over that of the Essenes and the Sadducees. Although all the groups were monotheistic, their actions were different and determined their impact. Hence, the Pharisees stood above the Sadducees and Essenes solely because of their consistency with the greater society.

Scholars of Second Temple Judaism should be able to recognise that the commonality of monotheism did not serve the groups well as the Essenes and Sadducees shunned the importance of greater society and the traditions of the fathers regarding oral law. Again, this shows that a group's failure to entrench consistently in the greater society has the potential to disadvantage that group even when it has upheld Scripture and Scripture supports their positions.[42] The culture of the correctness of Scripture was tested by the culture of consistency regarding the consciousness of the greater society and the traditions of the fathers. When cultures contradict one another, the scope of two

[42] For review of the writings relevant to expounding the historicity of Scripture, Najman (2012:497–518), Smith (1993) and Kugel (1998) are worth reading.

subcultures vie for the loyalty of the greater society determines their comparative impact.

Therefore, it becomes clear that the contestation of the groups was not only doctrinal but also religious, either conscious of the greater society and the traditions of the fathers by embracing them or crafting a religious doctrinal life careless about greater society and the traditions of the fathers. The Essenes and Sadducees were identified as those who had crafted a religious doctrinal life that was careless about the greater society and the traditions of the fathers. These actions were anchored in a monotheism that was anchored in Scripture alone. This monotheism was already unpopular because it was consistent with what was written and not with what the greater society and the traditions of the fathers dictated.

This shows that the religious dimensions of the groups must be judged not on the accuracy of their monotheism or other doctrines alone but on the complete view of their impact on the whole of society. This is also correct from the perspective of the monotheism which is part of that common Judaism, which Sanders (1992) describes and to which Neusner (2001) objects because the groups took contradictory positions regarding several religious issues apart from monotheism. These contradictory positions show that monotheism alone was not the complete position of the groups; the same groups show diverse doctrinal positions beyond monotheism. In the issues emerging from the greater society and the traditions of the fathers, the Pharisees occupied a more favourable position than did the Essenes and Sadducees. This foretells the possibility that the Pharisees would not be on the same wave length as the Sadducees and Essenes during the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE.

It is in this dimension, wherein the halakah features as a strong divisive factor with respect to the great foundation of monotheism, the temple as a major central feature within monotheism is also worth focusing on.

3.3 TEMPLE

The Jerusalem temple was the most highly esteemed central, unifying and powerful institution among all the Jewish people from all walks of life. For both Josephus and Philo, there was “one temple for the one God” (*Ag. Ap.* 2.193; Philo, *Spec. Laws* 1.67).

During the Second Temple period, the temple functioned not merely as a religious or cultic centre but also as a political centre for the Jews.

As a cultic centre, the temple was a place of pilgrimage as well as the place where the people would worship during the main religious festivals, which were held in high regard by the Jewish people, those living in the land and those in the Diaspora (Parker 2013:64; Small 2001:69). The key religious festivals—the Feast of Tabernacles, Purim, Pesach or Passover and Pentecost—drew together Jews from all over to the centre. These festivals were unifying activities in which Jewish people went to the Jerusalem temple centre whatever their differences. The cultic rituals at the place advanced the unification. This enabled Jewish people of different groups to see each other as part of one people even though they had their internal differences. However, a disclaimer is necessary: the Jerusalem temple was not the only centre for the Jewish people during the Second Temple period. There were four other temples: the temple at Elephantine, the temple of Onias in Leontopolis (Egypt), the Tobiad Sanctuary at Araqel-Emir in Transjordania, and the Samaritan temple at Mt Gerizim. While the temple in Jerusalem was the dominant and prominent centre, it was not the only centre of worship for the Jews (VanderKam 2001:203).

The temple not only had cultic significance, it also fostered Jewish identity (Stemberger 2001:204; Ilan 1995:4; Otzen 1990:57). The Jewish people were willing to put their lives at risk to defend it; however, that was also the very thing that led to its destruction by the Romans (Stevenson 2001:179; Bohak 1999:6–7; Rajak 1984:206–211; Theissen 1989:275; Ben Zeev 2011). As Stevenson (2001:172) argues, "In times of national crisis, the temple and the national identity were mutually inclusive." The distinction between Jews and Gentiles was also embodied in the temple; the Gentiles were not allowed into the inner courts of the temple. This, according to Josephus, was clearly demarcated by the inscription on the balustrade, which warned: "No foreigner is to enter within the forecourt and the balustrade around the sanctuary. Whoever is caught will have himself to blame for his subsequent death" (*War* 5.193–194; 6.124–126).[43]

The Sadducees, Pharisees, and Essenes related to this centre in their unique ways. However, it is debatable as to when the Sadducees as a group actually originated. One

[43] See Segal (1989:79–84).

school of thought identifies the Sadducees with the Zadokite priestly line: Zadokite priesthood was restored during the post-exilic period in the figure of Joshua, the son of Jehozadak (Hag 1:1; Ezr 7:2). In this view, the Zadokite priestly line was disrupted when Menelaus, who was likely not an Oniad (see 2 Macc 4:23 in contrast to Josephus, who regards Menelaus as an Oniad, *AJ* 12.238–239) was installed as high priest in the place of Jason, a Zadokite (Oniad). With the Zadokite priestly line disrupted, there most likely arose division within the Zadokites as some continued to struggle to retain control, whereas others decided to part ways altogether from the Jerusalem temple and constituted the leadership of the formation of the Essene or Qumran community.[44] Hultgren (2007:253) argues that it was likely that pro-Hellenistic Zadokite priests formed the Sadducee group. However, such a view implies that the Hasmonean priesthood was not aligned with the Sadducees as they would have ousted the Zadokite priestly line associated with the Sadducees. The Essenes or the Qumran priests, as Schofield and VanderKam (2005:83) argue, did not regard the Hasmonean priests as illegitimate on the basis of genealogy; rather, for them, the Wicked Priest, who operated at the Jerusalem centre from which they distanced themselves, now stood in violation of God's law. The Hasmoneans, as Schofield and VanderKam (2005) argue, were in all probability Zadokites: firstly, they were linked with Phinehas (1 Macc 2:54); secondly, the Bible connects the family line of J(eh)oiarib and the Zadokite genealogy; thirdly, the Qumran priests did not delegitimise the Hasmonean priesthood on the basis of genealogy; and fourthly, the schism between Hyrcanus and the Pharisees was not based on genealogy but rather on the status of his mother, who had been a prisoner.

The temple, thus, was in the control of the Sadducees in their close association with the Zadokites for the greater part of the Second Temple period, except for those times when they were ousted from power through external influence in the Hellenistic period. While the Sadducees as a group likely emerged in association with the Zadokites, the group evolved over time to the extent that the Zadokite high priests could choose to align or not with the group. The switch of John Hyrcanus (134–104 BCE) from the Pharisees to the Sadducees (*Ant*. 8.10.5ff) and the close association of Hyrcanus II with the Pharisees is indicated, whereas Aristobulus II aligned himself with the Sadducees

[44]Regarding the group that was behind the Qumran community, see Cross (1969:72). Baumgarten (1979:233–36) suggests that the priests at Qumran preferred for themselves the title "the sons of Zadok" because of its association with "righteousness".

such that those in the position of high priest could choose to align themselves with different religious players among whom the Sadducees and the Pharisees were dominant.[45]

The temple, however, was more than just a cultic centre during the Second Temple period; it was also a relative political centre for the Jewish people, relative because the people of the land continually found themselves under foreign powers: Persians, Greeks, and Romans. The high priesthood, thus, became more than just a religious office; it was also a political office because the high priest functioned as the head of the advisory council, which was variously referred to as *gerousia* (senate), *boule* (council) or *synedrion* (Sanhedrin). This body had religious, judicial, and political functions. However, there are different scholarly opinions with regard to the composition of the Sanhedrin. Some (Kalimi 2011) think it was dominated by Sadducees; others (Brownlee 1982 suggest Pharisees; others (Neusner 1979) view it to have been a mix of the two groups (cf. John 11:47). During the Roman period, the Sanhedrin to a great extent exercised its powers under the oversight of the Roman authorities, and tensions arose when it exceeded its authority (*Ant*. 14.165–179). The Sadducees and the Pharisees, while they may have been dominant, were not the only ones who were part of that body; it also included scribes and elders (see Matt 26:57–59; Mark 14:53–55). The New Testament refers to the scribes. Furthermore, in certain points of history, some of the high priests also assumed the office of king—for example, Aristobulus (104–103 BCE) was the first to assume the title of king—and therefore, their support depended on the group with which each priest-king aligned himself.

As the history and identity of the temple in Jerusalem become the ground for the positioning of the groups of Second Temple Judaism (Stemberger 2001:204; Otzen 1990:23; Birenboim 2009:261), any group was bound to have a positional view towards the temple practices and its authenticity. Such a position also became a determining

[45] The office of high priest also was identifiable with a particular group at a particular time based on the dynamics of the time. The Sadducees appear to have been most favoured by the high priests, though the masses favoured the Pharisees (see Kalimi 2011:74). Moreover, candidates for the office of high priest aligned themselves with the groups. Hyrcanus II associated with the Pharisees and Aristobulus II associated with the Sadducees (see Brownlee 1982:6). The exaltation by Queen Salome Alexandra of the Pharisees to the position of power is another sign that the power behind the Hasmonean high priest forces alternated between different groups, especially between the Pharisees and Sadducees, for different reasons (see Neusner 1979:62).

factor in the influence, or lack thereof, of such a group vis-à-vis the greater Jewish society.

Although the Essenes recognised the temple in Jerusalem, change occurred which led them to do away with the attachment to the temple practices. Their religious radicalism led them beyond the bounds of law and society and determined their uniqueness; it led them to be isolated from Second Temple Judaism, both from the greater society and from Qumran.[46]

While the Essenes broke ties with the temple, the Sadducees and the Pharisees saw their separation as farfetched and not worth following. Unlike the Essenes, both the Sadducees and the Pharisees saw the temple as an institution bigger than the interests of their individual groups, sacrosanct at its establishment and in its mission irrespective of who or what was right or wrong at a particular time.

Moreover, like the sacrosanctity of monotheism, the centrality of the temple was so important that the Sadducees and Pharisees could see no other way except to negotiate their differences while they agreed on the value of the temple. The religious contestation of the Sadducees and Pharisees was not driven by mere differences but also similarity of principle. It is this similarity of principle which resulted in the two adhering to the temple completely even though their perspective towards the internal operations differed. The religious significance of the temple had the power to force the Sadducees and Pharisees to work together while differing in their doctrinal perspectives.

This shared attitude towards the temple shows that the Sadducees and the Pharisees were aligned without cutting their ties to the greater society; the temple and the greater society had synergy for both groups that transcended the priorities of either particular group. The temple was the symbol of monotheistic principles which were greater than either individual group's halakah. Although the Essenes had cut ties with the temple in Jerusalem, they cut ties not with the legitimacy of the temple but rather with the high priesthood, which they considered illegitimate. This confirms that the temple of

[46] Brownlee (1982:1–37) unfolds the dynamics around the birth of the differences between the Teacher of Righteousness and the Hasmonean high priest of the time. This shows that the Essenes were no longer part of the temple practices in Jerusalem.

Jerusalem in particular was an institution of common Judaism at its foundational perspective as it was able to embrace the groups of different views.

Through their interpretation of Scripture, the Pharisees harmonized the teaching of the Torah with their own ideas, whereby they interpreted the law according to action through a ramified system of hermeneutics (Knowles 2014:177). The Pharisees were not a group that just believed in the fate of everything. It is from this perspective that they developed their own ideas of worth within the scope of their interpretations of the law (Stermberger 1995:68) through the social, economic and political realities in which the Jewish people found themselves. Not all Jews in the Second Temple period were able to find the centrality of temple worship relevant and accessible (War. 2.162–165).

Although the Jerusalem temple was not the only temple of the Jewish people, its existence created a dimension of continuity of worship for those far away from Jerusalem in the Diaspora (Simon 1967:33). This continuity was anchored and identified through the Pharisees, who wanted to make sure that Judaism had a progressive approach towards tendencies affecting the religious life of the Jewish people wherever they were (*Ant*. 13.10.6).

Although they valued and honoured the centrality of the Jerusalem temple, there was now another encounter in which a need to go beyond the physical Jerusalem temple should be catered to (Otzen 1990:118). In other words, the Pharisees saw a need for religious worship beyond physical Jerusalem and the temple. It is from this dimension that the Pharisees encouraged the development of the synagogue. The synagogue in its impurity was an affirmation that the mind of the Pharisees was more progressive than that of the Sadducees, who upheld the centrality of the temple as the sole means of furthering their beliefs (Otzen 1990:104). Synagogue worship allowed individual piety to express itself in ways that were impossible in temple worship, and it expanded the scope of the physical and religious expressions of the Jewish people (*Ant*. 8.61–123).

Unlike before, the Jewish people now had the synagogue as a progressive relevant institution suitable to meet their needs as they were scattered in the Diaspora.[47] This

[47]It is true that the Diaspora has to be tied to the political reality. Equally, within that political reality, the pioneering of synagogues was identified with the Pharisees. In the very political reality, the Pharisees' idea of synagogues benefited those who were in Diaspora irrespective of how they had arrived.

emergence of the Synagogue can also be identified with the Pharisees' notion of believing that the law should be interpreted with relevancy regarding the developments and challenges born from new conditions (Rivkin 1970:30).

This progressive, foresighted and universal approach is the innovation of creative minds pursuing the belief that the God of the written law should become relevant to people who find themselves in novel situations. As a result, the Pharisees with their twofold view become the religious group qualified to share in this unique and progressive view that the membership regarded as the central line in Jewish religion: the law is the norm for every detail of individual life. In other words, Pharisaism perceives the law as the only norm of every detail in an individual life (Marcus 1952:155).

Moreover, this emergence of the synagogue should not be seen as following the pattern of the Essenes when they totally broke away from the centrality relationship with the temple, a move that aimed to do away with temple worship (Otzen 1990:151). The breakaway of the Essenes from the temple was aimed not at advancing ties with the temple but at expressing total hostility to the temple practices of the Hasmonean order.

Pharisaism and Essenism thus have much in common, although they differ in pace of operation. The Pharisees upheld the centrality of the temple, whereas the Essenes broke their ties with it and pioneered their path beyond the scope of any relation with temple practices (*War.* 2.119–161).

The new dispensation needed an approach more universal than centralized; the Pharisees thus were progressive by pioneering the synagogue, the Essenes were radical beyond the norm and the Sadducees entrenched their loyalty to the temple practices without changing direction (Rivkin 1970:30). It is from this perspective that synagogue worship was originally intended not to replace, as with the Essenes, but to supplement temple worship (Otzen 1990:103). Whatever supplements must recognize the thing to be supplemented (*Ant*. 15.380–425). Whatever aims to replace, however, does not recognise the thing to be replaced. Wilson's (1996) perspective clarifies the origin and the development of the synagogue in line with the time in which Pharisees' role of pioneering the synagogue emerged.

The synagogue can be perceived as an institution pioneered to cover dimensions which the temple could not cover at different phases of its history (Wilson 1996). According to Wilson (1996), the following helps in understanding the different scholarly perspectives in the Jewish religious practices in history that led to the development of the synagogue as an institution:

Scholars (e.g., Eisenberg 1974:30) generally assume that the institution of the synagogue arose after the destruction of Jerusalem and the first temple in 586 BC because of a need to find a substitute form of worship when temple worship was no longer possible. The Jewish exiles faced a crisis in religious worship, and some scholars assume that Ezekiel may have played a role in establishing synagogue worship. This assumption is based on Ezekiel 11:16, where the Lord states that although he has removed his people to distant places and scattered them in various lands, he will nevertheless be to them as a "small temple" *(miqdāš mĕ'at).* The "small temple" is interpreted as the synagogue.[48]

Some (Meyers 1994) see a possible reference to the origin of synagogues in Jeremiah 39:8, which mentions the destruction of the palace and also of a structure called the *beth ha'am* (house of the people) in Jerusalem at the time of the Babylonian exile. If the *beth ha'am* really represents a synagogue (or at least the forerunner to synagogues), that would mean that the institution was already in place before the destruction of the first temple. Such an idea is not really farfetched. The temple and synagogue, after all, had separate functions. The latter was not really a substitute for the former: the main activity at the temple was sacrificial worship, and such was never attempted by the synagogue.

There are scholars (Finkelstein 1975:4) also who assume (based on later pronouncements that followed the destruction of the Second Temple) that, after the destruction of the temple, prayer was an acceptable substitute for animal sacrifice and therefore the synagogue was really a replacement for the temple. But this assumption

[48] Meyers (1994:252), on the other hand, questions any such involvement of Ezekiel in establishing an alternative to Jerusalem temple worship in view of the fact that he was a priest who supported the temple cult and eagerly anticipated the prospect of a restored temple. However, there is a view which also asserts that there is a need to keep in mind that the synagogue was not really a substitute for temple worship because the two had differing roles, and Ezekiel's support of the one does not necessarily mean that he did not support the other.

ignores the fact that prayer and study always went hand in hand in Judaism, and there had to be facilities for such activities even when the temple was still functioning. It therefore makes a great deal of sense to assume that even during the time when the temple in Jerusalem was fully operational there would have been other institutions for religious education and the *beth ha'am* may have been just such an institution. The mention of this building in the same context as the palace suggests that it was a meeting place for the general populace and hence quite possibly a centre for religious discussion and education.

Additional evidence for the existence of a synagogue type of worship during the first temple period may perhaps be found in the periscope of the Shunamite woman in 2 Kings 4:23. The husband says, "Why would you go after him? Today is neither a new moon, nor a Sabbath!" Finkelstein sees this locution as an indication that there was already some institution of religious instruction given on a regular basis during the first temple period. He also cites Solomon's dedicatory prayer in 1 Kings 8 as evidence because that prayer mentions people praying at the temple but not sacrifices. He therefore thinks that that exclusion indicates that prayer was an alternative form of worship to sacrifice even during the time of Solomon (Finkelstein 1975:4).

These diverse scholarly perspectives cast doubt on the notion that the Pharisees pioneered the synagogue and trace the origins of the synagogue to a time before the Pharisees. Therefore, it is important to pursue clarity regarding the dynamics of the synagogue from both the Palestine and Diaspora perspectives. There has to be an intention to find a historical place in which a group participates in the relevance of the synagogue, which in turn is relevant to the operations of the group. In this vein, a deeper understanding of the operations of the synagogue is needed.

The term synagogue (Gr. *synagōgē*) had two meanings. Initially, it referred to an assembly of people, without regard to any building. Only later did the term come to be applied primarily to the building where such an assembly took place. The early "synagogues" were actually assemblies of townsfolk meeting for secular purposes as well as for religious purposes. These meetings usually took place in the town square or near the gate. These assemblies became increasingly associated with a particular building (Wilson 1996).

In the Diaspora, synagogue buildings were used for various types of religious activities, but in Palestine, while the temple was still functioning (particularly during the Second Temple period), the synagogue was a place for reading the law but not for much else of a religious nature. The presence of the temple satisfied all other religious needs. The synagogues were used for banking, political meetings, hostels for strangers and sites where money for charity could be collected (Levine 1987:9; Horsley 1995:226). Functions such as marriages, circumcisions and funerals took place in private homes.

It is clear from this demonstration of the Palestinian and Diaspora functionalities of the synagogues that the claim that the synagogue stems from the Pharisees is completely unfounded. The formative stage of the synagogue was earlier than the Hasmonean period and its purpose greater than religious gatherings; the Hasmonean period found the formation of the synagogue already in place. They were perhaps present at a different magnitude before the Hasmonean time or any other time before or after their effective impact. As such, the multiple purposes of the synagogue both in the Diaspora and in Palestine is undisputed as it resonates with the realities of the greater societies both religiously and secularly. Therefore, the question arises: when did the Pharisees' identification with the Synagogue begin?

Wilson (1999:273) shows that according to Zeitlin (1975), the transition of the synagogue from a mainly secular establishment to a mainly religious establishment may have taken place when the Pharisees converted the continual daily sacrifice from a sacrifice made by the wealthy to a sacrifice offered for all of Israel. To bring this change about, they divided Israel into twenty-four *ma'amadot,* and a few people from each *ma'amad* were expected to go to Jerusalem to participate in the prescribed sacrifices at the specified times. Those who stayed at home in their villages were then expected to gather together in their local meeting places at precisely the time that sacrifices were being offered in Jerusalem and to read the portions of the Torah dealing with sacrifices. These meetings made the establishment of the permanent gathering places more important than ever but also converted the synagogue from being a mainly secular to being a mainly religious institution (Zeitlin 1975:14–26).

Though the Pharisees are identified as having played a role in converting the synagogue from a mainly secular institution to a religious one, it is worth noting that they were not the originators of the synagogue (Wilson 1999:273). Moreover, although the Essenes

broke away from the temple practices in Jerusalem, the Masada synagogue from a broader perspective shows the importance of the synagogue to the purpose of advancing religious practices beyond the temple. The role of the synagogue in its original mission was larger than that of the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes. Its role among many was to advance the reading of the law, which was not contrary to the role of the temple nor what the Sadducees and the Essenes stood for. In its development, which includes what Wilson (1999:273–74) calls the assembly, secular and sacred edifice phases, it is clear that the synagogue served for dictation of not only the oral law of the Pharisees but also the Torah, which was central to the temple and in the group operations of the Sadducees and Essenes.

These scholarly perspectives about the origin, role and development of the synagogue reveal that the temple and the synagogue supplemented each other. It is in this process of mutual supplementation that groups such as the Pharisees found a way to contribute to the synergy between the temple and the synagogue. Hence even the Essenes, who had cut ties with the temple, still showed signs of accessing the services of the synagogue, as in, for example, the Masada synagogue. Like the temple, the synagogue had a powerful role in Second Temple Judaism which could not be broken by the different groups' factionalism. Both the temple and the synagogue were important in Second Temple Judaism, and their functions were intertwined. This strategic importance of the temple infusing its impact also through synergy with the synagogue, lays a foundation for the role and importance of the high priest within Second Temple Judaism. Moreover, it also shows that the Pharisees' strategic influence on greater society was still intact as compared to that of the Sadducees and Essenes. In both the temple and the synagogue, the role of the Pharisees, being more conscious of aligning themselves with the ordinary people of the greater society, was greater than that of the Sadducees and Essenes, who differed from the greater society by being identified with the priestly aristocracy and radical exclusivism. This foreshadows the Pharisees having more influence on the greater society when the temple was destroyed in 70 CE than did the Sadducees and Essenes. Their consciousness towards the greater society was unequalled by either the Sadducees or the Essenes.

3.4 HIGH PRIEST

From the time of the first or Solomonic temple, the high priest was an overseer,[49] functioning as a link between the people and God—a mediator between God and God's covenant people. However, the high priest, as already noted, was more than just a religious figure. During the Second Temple period, religious, political, and judicial functions converged in the person of the high priest. Furthermore, the high priest was also a symbol of national identity within Second Temple Judaism (Kalimi 2011:73; Newman 2006:71–72).

The Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) also profoundly revealed the importance of the high priest; it was viewed as a day of hope for freshness and a new beginning for the individuals and the collective of the Jewish people at large (Kalimi 2011:72; Driver, Briggs & Brown 1979). The high priest played an important role in this ritual of moral cleanness and self-denial of atoning the impurities of the temple and altar, and also for the sins of all the people which included himself, his close family, his priestly clan and all Israel (Lev 16:10–11, 16–19, 21–22, 24, 29–33; 23:27; Num 29:7; Exod 30:10). This Day of Atonement demonstrates the unparalleled importance of the high priest. "All Yom Kippur's ritual is unacceptable unless it has been performed by him (high priest)" (*T. Hor*. 2:1).[50] This shows the great value of the office of the high priest within the priestly hierarchy (Lev 16:1–28, 32–33).

Anderson (2001:88) asserts that during Second Temple period, it was the Zadokites who had the "lion's share of priestly power", while the rest of the Aaronides served in secondary and subservient roles. Therefore, it is highly likely that there would have been continuing tensions, especially early in the Second Temple period, over who has the rightful claim to the office of high priest. The biblical books of Ezekiel and

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[49] See Hoenig (1966:351), Brownlee (1982:50), Otzen (1990:12), Parker (2007:74) and Regev (2006:126).

[50] Persuaded of this, Kalimi (2011:73) asserts that the uniqueness of Yom Kippur and its rituals are obvious when they are compared to the Babylonian New Year Festival (Akitu) in the month of Nisan. Akitu lasts not for one day like Yom Kippur but for eleven or twelve days, with its aim mainly to atone for the temple and parenthetically also for the king, who went through humiliating rituals. He further shows that the Babylonian rite high priest was not involved in the atonement for the temple as it is done by lower-ranking temple servers. The Babylonian high priest just read a hymn to the gods early in the morning and spoke some words at the end of the service. On this, the similarity between Yom Kippur and Akitu is very general and superficial. For further elaborations, see Leviticus 1–16 and Klein (1992:138- 140).

Chronicles engage in those early debates over priesthood (McConville 1983; Duguid 1994; McDonald 2015; Hunt 2006; Blenkinsopp 1998). Schofield and Vanderkam (2005) give the clearest chronological overview of the high priest positions and a series of its important changes as follows:

- Zadokites in the family line of Joshua the son of Jehozadak had passed the office along in hereditary fashion for about 350 years before Menelaus, a person with different family connections (2 Macc 3:4), usurped the office in 172 BCE.

- At Menelaus's death in 162 BCE., Alcimus, whose familial connections are unknown, succeeded him by royal appointment (162–159 BCE). After Alcimus came that sacerdotal black hole from 159–152 BCE.

Other scholarly perspectives (e.g., Klausner 1963:110–139; Tcherikover 1970:429–93; Goldstein 1976:75; Vermes 1999:130–31; Paolo Sacchi, 2000:237–38; Rooke 2000:255–56, 280–82) have contested the legitimacy of the Hasmoneans because it is not clear whether they were Zadokite or not. The Pharisees and Essenes also showed discomfort with the Hasmonean priesthood in different ways (Schofield & VanderKam 2005:73). Both 1 Macc 2:1–2 and Josephus (*Life* 1.1–6) as primary sources reveal the genealogical background of the Hasmoneans with the priestly historicity from the family of Joarib. Mattathias, whose zeal for the law led him to kill a Jew and an officer offering strange sacrifices, is likened to Phinehas who did the same against Salu (1 Macc 2:26). This act played a further role in advancing his zeal for correct priestly sacrifices. It shows signs that his commitment to the priestly role was not as an outsider but as one who can be historically identified with the Zadokite family roots and roles. This seems to also be aligned with the family teaching: on his deathbed (1 Macc 2:54), he encourages his children "to show zeal for the law." Rarely would he emphasize something which has no relevance to his family at a critical moment of his death. He says, "Phinehas our ancestor, because he was deeply zealous, received the covenant of everlasting priesthood," which shows that his family line was Zadokite.[51] It also shows

[51] Abel (1949:48); Abel and Starcky (1961:101); Schofield and VanderKam (2005:73–87); Liver (1967–68:23); Hengel (1989:149–54).

that he was speaking beyond the general notion as an Israelite but specifically as from the Zadokite priestly line.

The office of high priest in Judaea during the late Second Temple period[52] also was identified with a particular group at a particular moment based on the dynamics of the time. The Sadducees appear to have had the advantage of being favoured by the high priest partly because they were not embroiled in the controversy over the Hasmonean high priesthood (Kalimi 2011:74). To the Sadducees, the Hasmonean was a Zadokite with whom they saw no need to differ, as 1 Maccabees (2:54) supported it. The biblical evidence regarding the line of J(eh)oiarib makes it likely that it belonged in the Zadokite genealogy; it also suggests that J(eh)oiarib was a prominent priestly entity before the rise of the Hasmonean family to the high priesthood (Schofield & VanderKam 2005:74).

Moreover, the alignment with the groups by candidates to the high priestly office is clear: Hyrcanus II associated with the Pharisees, and Aristobulus II associated with the Sadducees (see Brownlee 1982:6). Queen Salome Alexandra's exaltation of the Pharisees to the position of power is another sign showing that the power behind the Hasmonean high priest forces varied between different groups, especially between the Pharisees and Sadducees for different reasons (see Neusner 1979:62). This attests to the Sadducees' constant battle to have the upper hand in influencing the direction of the high priesthood as they were the Pharisees' opponents.

The New Testament, Josephus, and Rabbinic sources also attest to the issue of the high priesthood once belonging to the Sadducees (Acts 5:17–18, *Anti*. 20:199; *M. Suk.* 4:9).[53] This signifies that the Sadducees had religious power through their identification with the office of high priest. Moreover, this domination is shown to have spanned many

[52] Kalimi (2011) attests to the importance of the high priesthood in the Persian, Hellenistic and particularly Hasmonean periods. For more depth in this matter, see Schwartz (2001:13–25).

[53] Kalimi (2011) says that secondary sources such as Stern, ed (1976) and Schürer (1979) have detailed discussion on the terms "Sadducees" and "Pharisees/Zadokites", which provide details on issues such as their origins, religious beliefs and doctrines as well as political leadership and closeness to Hellenism. Scholars such as Goodman (2007) and Kalimi and Haas (2006) expand the perspective around the issue of the Sadducees and also show that their mention in the early Hasmonean age does not mean that they originated at that time.

generations. Thus, the Sadducees' entrenchment in the high priestly office shows that they were a formidable power beyond solely religious influence.

However, even though the Sadducees usurped the high priesthood, the Pharisees were able to impact even the domain of the high priest. Hence Josephus asserts that the Pharisees "are, as a matter of fact, extremely influential among the townsfolks; and all prayers and sacred rites of divine worship are performed to their exposition … [the Sadducees] perform formulas of the Pharisees, since otherwise the masses would not tolerate them" (*Ant*. 18.15–17). This is also attested by Rabbinic sources, in one of which a father tells his high priest son, "My son, although we are Sadducees, we are afraid of the Pharisees" (*B. Yom.* 19b). This shows that the contestation of the Pharisees against the high priestly power of the Sadducees had force which was felt even in the highest echelons of the Sadducees. Hence the destiny of the Sadducean high priest was deemed unfavourable when he publicly attempted to change the traditional Pharisaic customs (Kalimi 2011:74).

Josephus's (*Ant*. 13.288–98) account of the Pharisees' challenge of the Hasmonean high priest is evidence that the Pharisees' knowledge about John Hyrcanus's background was questionable. Eleazar, a Pharisee, states at the feast, "since you have asked to be told truth, if you wish to be righteous, give up the high priesthood and be content with governing the people" (*Ant*. 13.291). Though Eleazar is accused of merely lacking social sense, this incident speaks to the fact that the high priest was holding religious power and political power, something unusual in the history of the high priest. However, Eleazar is going beyond merely wanting to relieve the high priest of one of his two roles. Eleazar specifically mentions the high priestly office, not the political office, as the one to be relinquished. This shows his reasoning: it is the high priestly office which has control over the people's religious perspectives.

When Hyrcanus asks why he should relinquish the high priestly role, Eleazar replies, "Because we have heard from our elders that your mother was a captive in the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes" (*Ant.* 13.292). This answer clarifies why Eleazar did not ask John Hyrcanus to relinquish the other position: his high priesthood was not beyond reproach. Schofield and VanderKam (2005) assert that when Eleazar requested John Hyrcanus to relinquish the high priest position,

> he was appealing to the law in Leviticus 21:14–15 regarding the leading priest: "A widow, or a divorced woman, or a woman who has been defiled, a prostitute, these he shall not marry. He shall marry a virgin of his own kin, that he may not profane his offspring among his kin; for I am the Lord; I sanctify him."

The passage was understood to include women who had been captured in war and who thus were likely to have been raped. The defilement will render her children unclean and consequently unfit to the high priesthood (*Ap*. 17; *m. Ketub*. 2.9).

In this contestation of the religious laws, John Hyrcanus was been placed in the assessment to show him unfit to be the high priest of the nation of Israel. According to Klausner (1963), the principal stance for Pharisees against John Hyrcanus was that he was a high priest who fought wars and shed blood, a ruler who was not from the Davidic line, a high priest who was not from Zadok's line, and a ruler and high priest who considered himself the messianic king who would come from the tribe of Levi, not from Judah.

Other scholars see the situation differently. Finkelstein (1966) claims that the fundamental difference in political viewpoint between Pharisees and Hyrcanus led to the schism, which means that the political perspective of the Pharisees had a strong appeal contradictory to that of Hyrcanus. From this perspective, then, they had a strongly political anti-Hasmonean view. Schofield and VanderKam (2005) show that other scholars have attributed Hyrcanus's turn from the Pharisees to the Sadducees to the needs of the developing Hasmonean state and the friction they caused with the Pharisaic ideal.[54] It is from this view that any of the three groups which emerged in Second Temple Judaism has been in a position to take the high priesthood at any given time within the period (Kalimi 2011:71–72; Simon 1967:33–34). Therefore, the temple has been the religious cornerstone of the identity of Second Temple Judaism (*Ant.* 18.1–3).

The Essenes, by parting ways with the temple, automatically parted ways with the leadership of the religious high priest. This parting of ways was born from the event known as the conflict of the Wicked Priest against the Teacher of Righteousness. Key

[54] Levine (1980:61–83), Thoma (1989:196–215) and Jeremias (1969) argue that the problem was the origin of the high priesthood. See also Tcherikover (1970:260, 492–93).

to these accusations against the Wicked Priest is that he opposed the Teacher of Righteousness and his inspired message (Schofield & VanderKam 2005:80).

1QpHab VIII, 8–13 (on Hab 2:5–6) asserts that "the Wicked Priest … was called by the name of the truth when he first arose." This indicates that the Essenes were at first part of those who recognised this leader before they differed with him. They formerly called him a man of truth. They say further, "But when he ruled over Israel his heart became proud, and he forsook God and betrayed the precepts for the sake of riches." Firstly, he seems to have been a man of truth before he became ruler of Israel. Secondly, pride in his heart came when he ascended the throne of rulership. Thirdly, this led him to forsake God. Fourthly, he betrayed the precepts. And fifthly, this all happened because of his love of riches.

These accusations speak of a personality which drastically changed from how it was known and expected to be. This demonstrates that the Essenes' approach laid down grounds of justification for their later decision to part ways with the high priesthood of the temple in Jerusalem. As if this were not enough, the accusation continues, "He robbed and amassed the riches of the men of violence who rebelled against God, and he took the wealth of the peoples, heaping sinful iniquity upon himself." Sixthly, robbery is attached to this personality which is associated with truth. Not only is robbery heaped on him, but also violence in the process of getting such wealth. Moreover, such wealth is of the people who rebel against God. Instead of being the one who empowers the people, he is taking from the people, which is again another sign of bad leadership. Lastly, such action is not bringing blessings to the priestly leader. It is revealing bad results unnecessarily.

Worst of all, the accusation sums up by saying, "And he lived in the ways of abominations amidst every unclean defilement." These layers of accusations show that the priestly leader is no longer in the ways of truth but in the ways of abomination. The multiplicity of it tells the total difference from how he was before he ruled over Israel.

In 1QpHab VIII, 16–1X, 1 (on Hab 2:7–8a) he is accused as "the Priest who rebelled [and violated] the precepts [of God … to command] his chastisement by means of the judgment of wickedness." It is important to note that of these accusations there is none challenging the Hasmonean genealogy as not being Zadokite (Schofield & VanderKam

2005:81). This shows that the Essenes' parting of ways with the high priesthood in the Hasmonean era was for reasons other than the genealogical issue.

This parting of ways with the high priest in the temple at Jerusalem demonstrates the zeal of the Essenes towards the law through their desire to pursue the Torah to the very end. Hence the criticisms which they heap on the high priest they call the Wicked Priest revolve around the challenge of not being in right standing with the Scriptures as a leader who is serving between God and the nation at large. The Essenes consider their criticisms of the high priest objective and fair as they acknowledge that before he ascended to rule the entire nation of Israel, he was a man of truth; they do not focus on the static acknowledgement of the law but on the continuous movement of the law by its application on a daily basis as the Torah demands.

This shows that the parting of ways with the high priest and temple in Jerusalem was a desire to pursue righteousness outside the leadership which they identified as defiling the high priestly office and the temple of God, a perspective totally different from that of the Sadducees and Pharisees. The Sadducees supported the Hasmonean high priesthood, so they were expected to support it. However, though the Pharisees were not in favour of John Hyrcanus as high priest, they were able to separate that issue from the importance of the office of the high priest itself. They did not automatically stop recognizing the office of high priest solely because it was occupied by someone who did not have total legitimacy. This shows that their strategic tactic of not throwing the baby out with the bathwater enabled them to see individual high priests come and go while the office remained. This separation of the office from the incumbent gives the Pharisees a unique approach towards the tension concerning the high priest during the Hasmonean era. It shows that the Pharisees' principle of consistency towards the institution was more inclusive in recognising the office which the ordinary masses of the greater society recognised. This tendency to hold the value of the office as more important than the incumbent at the time further strengthened the Pharisees' position during the time leading up to 70 CE.

The Torah dimension was thus an important central feature which had dynamics beyond a particular view, as seen by the approach of the Pharisees in the high priest issue.

3.5 TORAH (LAW OF MOSES)

As the five books of Moses are fundamental to Judaism, the historical groups of Second Temple Judaism are also trapped within them in a way that fuels their characterisation of what Scripture is (Smith 1993). In pursuit of this perspective, some scholars note that there is a need to move away from a uniformitarian view[55]and infuse the history of interpretive traditions relevant to early biblical interpretation,[56] as readers of the Bible (and of any text) operate within broader field of production[57] of an ongoing social construction which precedes structure and textual practices commonly called interpretation (Bourdieu 1996). The Book of Jubilees carries marks which help in a model of the growth of biblical literature that incorporates the identification of divergent documentary purposes[58] in the understanding of the composition of the Pentateuch.

Lambert (2016:25) poses a perspective which triggers the following: [59]

No straightforward, non-critical reading of the Torah might ever arrive at something like the Documentary Hypothesis. Equally, it would also be impossible to conclude that the five books of Moses in their known form were dictated to Moses at Sinai, the inclusion of his death at the end of the Deuteronomy being only one of the more vaunted shortcomings of this view.

Ska (2009) suggests that looking at the biblical criticism of the seventeenth-century French priest Richard Simon's work is one way to test the claim. Simon suggested Pentateuchal law originated from sources different from its narrative, and while Simon's work says these laws were transmitted by God to Moses, the Torah never states the same about the narratives, though Moses would have had those events that transpired during his lifetime recorded in the public record on his behalf (hence, in the

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[55] Helmer and Landmesser (2004); McDonal and Sanders (2002); Van de Kooij & van der Toorn, eds (1998); Lim (2013).

[56] Kugel (1998); Najman (2012); Reeves (2010).

[57] Ulrich (2011).

[58] Kugel (2012); Segal (2007); VandeKam (2008); VanderKam (1989); VanderKam (1994).

[59] See also Heschel (2005), Shapiro (2004), Sommer (1999), Levenson (1988), Sarna (1983) and Twersky (1972).

third person). As for the history that preceded Moses's life, the book of Genesis, Simon proposed that Moses depended upon ancient books or received tradition for his knowledge of the past. Simon's view perceptively highlights that there is nothing in the Pentateuch itself to suggest that, as a text, it is a direct product of revelation since Pentateuch sources do not frame stories about the past as objects of oracular pronouncement.

Baumgarten (1985) asserts that one of the characteristic aspects of Judaism was the notion that the Torah was the possession of all Jews, not only of the clergy or priesthood; this perspective was built on the content of the Torah itself. He identifies Deuteronomy as a primary source which shows it as a book to be possessed by all: "In cases of a scaly affliction be most careful to do exactly as the Levitical priest instructs you. Take care to do as I have commanded them" (Deutoronomy 24:8). This idea of the Torah being for all Jews carried a historicity which affected the Sadducees, Pharisees and Essenes during the Second Temple period.

Halivni (1897–1982:11) shows that the concept of a dual Torah had been commonplace in Jewish thought and in scholarship on Judaism. Neusner (2004) sees it as the totality of Jewish teaching, culture and practice. Indeed, Baumgarten (1985) was correct to say that what was the private priestly Torah in the eyes of Deuteronomy was no longer so by the time of the completion of the Pentateuch. This inherent foundation of the Torah as a public document also infuses legitimacy into the groups regardless of which direction they took for their doctrinal consideration.

Bickerman (1976) asserts that many peoples of the ancient Mediterranean had Scriptures, but none of these Scriptures were ever translated into another language as they remained the private possession of priests in their native tongue. In showing the uniqueness of the Torah, Baumgarten (1985) asserts that the Jews took the steps that their neighbours never took because the Torah was a public document in Judaism, the possession of all Jews, known and available to them, so it was translated into other languages when the need arose. This brings the Torah to the surface as part of the ideologization of the masses of the greater society. It is through this principle which the Sadducees, Pharisees and Essenes are also to be viewed comparatively as they advance their sectarian perspectives.

In line with the perspective of the Torah as a public document among the Jews, Philo, in *De Specialibus Legibus* (2.62), shows that Moses required his people to assemble for seven days to hear the law as part of making sure that "none of them should be ignorant of the law" *(Hypothetica* 7.12). Hence Baumgarten (1985) asserts that this aspect of biblical tradition was responsible for decisive steps taken by the Jews in antiquity. Philo continues that Jews

> do not resort to person learned in the law with questions as to what they should do or not do, nor yet by keeping independent transgress in ignorance of the law, but any one of them whom you attack with inquiries about their ancestral institutions can answer you readily and easily. The husband seems competent to transmit knowledge of the law to his wife, the father to his children, the master to his slaves. (*Hypothetica* 7.14)

Like Philo, Josephus shows that Jewish legislators allowed no excuse for ignorance and so insisted that "every week men should desert their other occupations and assemble to listen to the law and to obtain a thorough and accurate knowledge of it" (*Ag. Ap.* 2.175). Baumgarten (1985) notes that Jews differ from others because they all know their laws and have no need for recourse to legal experts. Hence Philo claims that "should anyone of our nation be questioned about the laws, he would repeat them all more readily than his own name" (*Ag. Ap.*, 2.178).

Baumgarten (1985:18) shows that the similarity in perspective between Philo and Josephus has a broader scholarly historicity which draws parallels between *Hypothetica* and *Against Apion* (Motzo 1911–12; Bernys 1885; Wendland 1896; Crouch 1972; Küchler 1979; Kamlah 1974). Through common knowledge of the law, Jews are said to agree with each other:

> Among us alone will be seen no difference in the conduct of our lives. With us all act alike, profess the same doctrine about God, one which is in harmony with our law and affirms that all things are under his eye. (*Ag. Ap.*, 2.181)

No wonder Baumgarten shows that unity had long been regarded as a virtue in antiquity. Eusebius in *Praeparatio Evangelica* (11.4.5), in a thought aligned to that of Malherbe (1983), proposes that those philosophical groups which had preserved a

unified doctrine boasted of its achievement while Justin (*Dialogue with Trypho*, 80) shows that the charge of disunity was hurled at various groups by their opponents.[60]

Though Baumgarten (1985:19) disagrees with Josephus, saying he is attempting to utilize this ancient prejudice in favour of unity to support his apology for Judaism, but he claims that that the Torah did command centrality to the diverse groups of Second Temple Judaism. Even though Baumgarten claims that the Sadducees denied divine foresight while the Pharisees acknowledged it (*War*, 2.165), he still claims that both groups, though they differed on particular issues, doctrine or halakah, upheld the Torah as the central command of their common ground irrespective of their doctrinal differences. Their differences did not automatically mean that they had no common origin in the Law.

When Josephus asserts that the Jews have never changed (*Ag. Ap.* 2.1810, 2. 283), that does not mean that they were always up to the standard expectation of the law. Common knowledge of the law should not be understood as a formality which cannot have differences within. No wonder Josephus did not see the difference in the Sadducees' and the Pharisees' beliefs in the resurrection as a contradiction of the fact that both groups emanated from the common knowledge of the law (*War* 2.165, *Ag. Ap.* 2.218–19).[61]

This perspective of the Torah as deriving from common knowledge for the Jewish people has been even understood by non-Jewish authors, as Baumgarten (1985:19) attests. Their perspective also confirms that the practices of the Jewish people emanated from one source. Hence Juvenal, speaking about the Roman citizen converted to Judaism, shows that "they learn and practice and revere the Jewish law, and all that Moses handed down in his secret tome" (Stern 1976–80:301). This portrayal by Juvenal shows exactly a perspective which focuses on the common features central to the Torah.

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[60] According to Baumgarten (1985:19), the charge was regularly hurled against Christians. Hence he identifies sources like Clement of Alexandria (*Stromateis* 7.15.89, 2–4; in *Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller* 17.63) and Origen (*Contra Celsum* 3.12; in *Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller* 2.21112) and claims that Origen returned to this point in *Contra Celsum* 5.61 and 56.65. Moreover, he asserts that Jews, medical doctors, and philosophers were regularly cited by these Fathers as counter-examples proving that division into groups is not *a* sure sign of falsity . Grant (1966) is also well placed in this perspective in his writing about Gnosticism and early Christianity.

[61] See Stern (1976:80) on the perspective of Greek and Latin authors on Jews and Judaism.

Equally, this does not mean that uniqueness among the Jewish people was not there; it was there, in their halakah, which will be shown later. However, the law had the upper hand over the differences which had been there within the contestation over the implementation of the law.

It is within the scope of the law that the groups had their internal differences; this did not mean that they were not aware of the origins and meanings of their rites (Stern 1976–80:281). Hence Josephus asserts:

> The Pharisees have delivered to the people a great many observances by tradition from their fathers which are not written in the laws of Moses; and for that reason, the Sadducees group reject them, saying that only those observance are obligatory which are in the written word, but that those derived from the tradition of the forefathers need not be kept (*Ant.* 13.10.6).

Like the Sadducees, the Pharisees perceived the Torah as their source of truth, guideline and reference for all the issues they needed to deal with.

In addition, they also upheld the traditions of the forefathers, which they defined as oral law. It is this oral law which the Sadducees did not support, and such will be the focus of the discussion of the halakah as it relates to the Torah. However, this difference shows that the Sadducees and Pharisees had shared esteem for the Torah. The Sadducees accepted only the written Scripture as fundamental and could not compromise: only what could be confirmed by the affirmation of Scripture was valid. Their approach towards Scriptures evolved within the literal view (*Ant*. 13.171–173).

Moreover, their literalistic approach does not necessarily mean that no perspectives of interpretation within context existed; they upheld a principle that checked and balanced the interpretation within the validity affirmed by the Scriptures (Baumgarten 1987:69; Levine 2001:122; Birenboim 2009:266).

In other words, only interpretations with no basis in the written law is unrecognized (*Ant.* 13.10.6). Nickelsburg (2003) thus legitimately challenges the view which says that the Sadducees were biblical literalists who had no tradition of interpretation in light of situations not envisioned in the code and did not consider interpretation as independent and of equal standing with the written law: “Those derived from the traditions of the forefathers need not to be kept” (*Ant.* 13.10.6). This is a denial not of

the centrality of the Torah, the common knowledge of all the Jewish people, but of the infusion of anything which is not rooted in the Torah.

However, while the written law is portrayed as the common knowledge of the law (*Ag. Ap.* 2.179), it is in this perspective that the future of the Sadducees in the bigger picture has been architectured; the Sadducees'' view has been perceived as a way of rejecting the oral law as the tradition of the forefathers towards contributing to the challenges and relevance of the future (*Ant.* 13.10.6). It is in this context that Epstein (1986:96) asserts that if Torah meant only the written text of the five books of Moses, it was evidently impossible to obey it under the new conditions. The reality of the new conditions remained a vacuum. It is this vacuum which creates a space for new grounds beyond the standing of the Sadducees' rigidity in written law only. Regev (2006:139) sees that not attending to the vacuum disadvantaged the Sadducees.

Instead of the Sadducees' monomorphic view of the law of Moses or Torah, the Pharisees had a twofold view towards it: they perceived the Pentateuch from the two different angles of approach expounded by Josephus (*Ant*. 13.10.6), the written law and the oral law or tradition of the forefathers as analysed through many schools of thought (Rivkin 1970:30; Rabbinowitz 2003:439; Parker 2007:74). According to Birenboim (2009:269), the oral tradition carries equal authority, as the Pharisees believed that the law that God gave to Moses was twofold: the written law and the oral law, which includes the teaching of the prophet and the oral tradition of the Jewish people.

Moreover, they had traditions from their fathers and elders which were not part of the written law, as identified in New Testament writings (Mark 7:5; Matthew 15:2; Galatians 1:14). These traditions are the ones which they value as oral law, which they perceive as having the same force as written law (*Ant*. 13.10.6).

Nickelsburg (2003) notes that the heart of the Pharisees' religion was the scrupulous observance of Torah according to the interpretive traditions they claimed to have received from their ancestors (Schiffman 2001:267).

Moreover, it is also from this perspective that the Pharisees' view shows that if Torah includes oral law, its interpretation discovered from the written text is the true meaning as it is applied to the needs of their own times. To the Pharisees, the oral law seems to have ignited the contents of the Pentateuch, which are the fundamental layers of Second

Temple Judaism at large (*Ant.* 13.408–409). In other words, the Pharisees perceived oral tradition as the context unfolding and fulfilling the realities and relevancies of the written law within different times and generations (Simon 1967:34–35, Parker 2007:73). No wonder they believed that if Torah meant only the written text of the five books of Moses, it was impossible to obey it under new conditions which have different realities. They perceived oral traditions as the carrier and accomplisher of the purpose of the written Law. To them, different dynamics from different conditions can only be met through the recognition of the context of oral tradition (*Ant*. 13.10.6).

While the Pharisees and Sadducees contested a monomorphic view versus a twofold view of the law of Moses (*Ant.* 13.10.6), the Essenes seemed to see it in a manner which upholds it as a "revealed word" (*Ant*. 18.18–22), as shown by the perspective of their halakah towards the Torah. They desired absolute faithfulness to the revealed word, which they believed possessed the correct understanding (*Bell*. 2.119–161). However, this revealed word is not interpreted at the same vein as oral tradition within the twofold view of the Pharisees (Garcia, Martinez & Trebolle 1995:32; Otzen 1990:135).

This correct understanding seems to cut across both the Sadducees' monomorphic view and the Pharisees' twofold view (*Ant*. 13.10.6). As a unique group, wherein Essenism was "Pharisaism raised by the power of ten" (Otzen 1990:151), it may mean that its uniqueness was by far compared to both Sadducees and Pharisees. If it were of twofold views, like the Pharisees, it means that to the Essenes it would have been at a radical perspective ten times more than that of the Pharisees (*War* 2.8.2–13).

The Essenes broke away from temple practice, which might signal that their perspective towards the law of Moses resembles only slightly those of either the Sadducees or Pharisees and be more radical through the Teacher of Righteousness (Schiffman 2001). Oral law is what separated the Pharisees from the other groups, but the Essenes had their own interpretations, as can be seen in the Perashim and rewritten biblical works found in the Dead Sea Scrolls (*Ant*. 18.18–22).

The radicalism of the Essenes' revealed word, the rigidity of the Sadducees in denial of the unoccupied vacuum of the oral law and the Pharisees' interpretive combination of the written and oral law account for the unique standings of the three groups. In these standings, the Torah is still held from different angles of contestation within Second

Temple Judaism. None of the groups is vehemently rejecting the supremacy of the Torah as the origin of their religious perspectives. This affirms Baumgarten's (1985) claim that knowledge and observance of the law are the characteristics of the Jews, whether native born or converts. This elaboration carries a hypothesis which shows that irrespective of the doctrinal differences between the groups, the Torah as a public document of the Jewish people has central features which are seen even by the outsiders. It is the outsiders like Seneca who, at the effectiveness of Torah to marshal Jews and non-Jews, writes that "the vanquished [the Jews] had given their laws to the victors [the Romans]" (Stern 1976–80:186). This was Seneca's way of understanding borders within the line of Josephus's understanding of the common knowledge of the law (*Ag. Ap 2.179*), an understanding which sees the Torah at an umbrella level rather than at an individual group's doctrinal level. It is at this umbrella level that the common features override the doctrinal differences between the groups.

The Essenes, though keeping their identity with the revealed word, seem to sense the reality of oral interpretation; this will be clarified in the discussion of halakah identity below. They believed that the revealed word has the potential to speak to new conditions as it cannot be static in its revelatory nature; they thus show themselves clearer than the Pharisees on matters of Judaism. Their depth is ahead of the Pharisees. They are not juniors in matters of Scriptures when compared to Pharisees, but they totally distanced themselves from the temple, which was the central force of all Jewish people from all different walks of life (*Ant*. 18.18–22).

This act of cutting ties with an old institution caused them an indirect disadvantage concerning their appeal and connection with the greater society. Pursuit of the purest form of correct personality and applications of things led them to an extreme radical position of isolation from the temple and greater society. Parting ways with or running far ahead of the temple and the greater society can jeopardise the very good intentions of upholding religious purity. Therefore, the Essenes' strategies and tactics and not their content became the source of concern towards their mission (VanderKam 2009:423).

From the perspective of the Pharisees, the twofold view of Torah as written and oral law carried a profound strategic position which recognised both worlds of written and spoken word. Those who are of the written word are embraced, as are those of the oral law. The Pharisees demonstrated inclusivity of both laws whereas the Sadducees

demonstrated exclusivity towards oral law. The Pharisees demonstrated a middle-ground approach, whereas the Essenes demonstrated radicalism, which led them to part ways with the temple, which was highly valued by the greater society. This inclusivity principle of the Pharisees was deeper and gave them an advantage in their posture towards the religious appetites of the ordinary masses of Second Temple Judaism (Ilan 1995:8; Regev 2006:131; Doran 2007:74).

As the Sadducees were more inward at the temple and not entrenched in the greater society where the masses of ordinary people were, the Pharisees were highly entrenched at both the temple and outward in the greater society. Their oral law perspective was thus effective in linking them with the ordinary masses and the temple, and their twofold perspective on the law served them broadly in all spheres of religious life. Their strictness outclassed even that of the Essenes, which, as Otzen (1990:151) says, was "Pharisaism raised by the power of ten". As the Essenes were radical in their pace and approach, the Pharisees were strategic in their pace and approach. They built a web that consolidated their identity and effect beyond the monomorphic view. In their posture, the Pharisees reveal a more solid approach which gave them an upper hand compared to the Sadducees and Essenes, who were isolative and exclusive of the greater society in their approach.[62]

The law of Moses, when brought into the already religious identification and polarisation of the three groups, as in the case of the high priest, temple and monotheism, brings to the surface the new perspective of the three groups. Its content alone becomes the determining factor on surfacing the complete scope of the impact advanced by each of the three groups. In this dimension, the groups are operating within the historic power of the Torah, which is far beyond the limitations of a singular interpretation.

Therefore, the law of Moses as it stands suits the already-established decisions of groups with unique perspectives, which makes it a vehicle which is automatically sacrosanct; its sanctity and scope of impact depend on how each group interprets its relevance to their doctrinal directions. It is from this perspective that the clarity of the

[62] See Hoenig (1966:342), Brownlee (1982:27), Schiffman (2001:263), Taylor (2007:174) and Stacey (2008:7), who unfold more about the upper hand of the Pharisees compared to the Sadducees and Pharisees.

sacrosanctity of the Torah is best revealed in the views of the three groups of the halakah, discussed below. This serves to further the importance of the Torah within the space of halakah and to reveal the halakah's important intertwinement with the Torah.

The context of the Pharisees', Sadducees' and Essenes' identities of dissent and secession are visible in their views of halakah (Newman 2006:187). Halakah elements which are able to enhance the doctrinal position of the Jewish law[63] in the three groups both directly and indirectly. Halakic issues of the Pharisees and Sadducees are mentioned in Josephus, the Taunattic literature and Christian literature, whereas Essene issues appear in Josephus and Philo Alexandria (QOP. 80).

Halakah is defined as a system of binding rules of behaviour derived from Scripture, both explicitly and through study, whose authoritative status comes from Scripture (Davies 1990:38); this definition shows the distinction between a group's halakah and those rules and procedures within that group, which are not always[64] as authoritative as those of its halakah (Newman 2006:184). Hence Schremer (1999) asserts that tradition-based observance has resisted text-based observance, the pattern which wants the halakah to drink its finality from the Torah.

Therefore, one can say that halakah was not every rule and regulation or procedure upheld by the group, but its distinction was that it be derived from the Scripture (Davies 1990:38). These rules and procedures are not given an equivalent status with Scripture because they are derived from other sources of authority such as the group's various purposes (Newman 2006:184). Schiffman (1981:5) unpacks one good example of rules and procedures in the Qumran scrolls which are products of the wishes of their leaders because of various purposes.

Moreover, all three groups were involved in the study and interpretation tradition of the biblical law (Newman 2006:188). Therefore, the distinction between the three groups

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[63] For the religious praxis of the halakic rulings in its mode of religiosity, see Schremer (1994:64–130), Marty and Appleby (1994:197–235), Golberg (1987:235–55), Golberg (1997:310–40), Steiner (1997:41–49) and Chavel (1997:122–36).

[64] In the perspective which shows that the religiosity of the halakah has a historical base in the tradition-based observance which was entrenched in the praxis of common and accepted custom wherein they also faced a challenge from the text-based observance, see Eshel and Loner (1996:1–22) and Schwartz (1998:250).

cannot be based on differing or non-existent interpretations of halakah issues: all three groups value halakah (Rivkin 1978:329). Perhaps the correct perspective of difference could be based on the upholding of halakah in contrast to the rules and proceedings that the group has derived from the Scripture (*Ant*. 18.81–82). Such will also reveal the position of the very group towards its consistency with the Torah. Hence Soloveitchik (1994) asserts that the shift of authority to Scripture (Torah) as the sole source of authenticity had far-reaching effects. Besides the shifts contributing to the tendency of religious stringency and altering the nature of religious performance, they also transformed the character and purpose of religious education and redistributed political power (Schremer 1999:106–107).

The difference between dissenting groups and seceding groups also emerges. If all the three groups were involved in the biblical interpretation of the law, both the dissenting groups and the seceding groups were involved in biblical interpretation (Otzen 1990:122). Therefore, interpretation cannot be the sole yardstick for differentiating between the dissenting groups and the seceding groups (*Ant*. 18.11–15).

Dissenting groups are associated with the norm-oriented approach and seceding groups with the value-oriented approach; the seceding groups did not treat their halakot as absolute truth, eternal and uncompromising, but the norm-orientated approach of the Pharisees and Jerusalem Sadducees stated that the ruling of the normative court was the supreme value (Newman 2006:188). The seceding Essenes could not determine their position through the court's ruling because they esteemed their halakah as absolute truth, eternal and not to be compromised (Newman 2006:232). This makes the Essenes utterly distinct from the Pharisees and Sadducees (*War* 2.162–163). These types of religiosities are what Sloveitchik (1994:83) calls "text-based observance", which is a reformative and revolutionary character, as opposed to "tradition-based observance", which is known to students of religion from other religions and periods (e.g., the seventh-century Karite movement in Babylon or the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation).

Within the principle of halakah, the three groups further entrenched the fundamental patterns which had been drawn by their position towards the greater society. Though halakah upheld the interpretation within Scripture that suited the view of the Sadducees, who had already limited themselves by not accepting any interpretation beyond the

Scripture, their acceptance of halakah within Scripture interpretation means that they were not accepting of interpretation beyond Scripture—oral tradition—which served to detach them from the greater society, which accepted oral tradition.

Though the Sadducees were a dissenting group like the Pharisees, they were still not in touch with the greater society because their religious conservatism did not allow them to go beyond Scripture and embrace oral law (Nickelsburg 2003:167, Birenboim 2009:260, Kalimi 2011:74). Moreover, Regev (2006:126) shows that though the Sadducees were prominent in the Hasmonean and Herodian periods, with high priests Joseph Caiaphas (who headed the Sanhedrin that turned Jesus over to Pilate) and Annaus son of Annaus[65] (who sentenced Jacob,[66] the brother of Jesus, to death) as Sadducees; knowledge about this group is scarce and obscure. Hence there are no primary sources which emanate from their ranks; only other groups or outside personalities speak about them. The only extant halakic expressions anchoring in Scripture are their denial of the traditions of the fathers as equal to written law.

Like the Sadducees, though, the Essenes accepted the interpretation of the halakah within Scripture; moreover, they had their literature which advanced their perspective in line with Scripture. Hence their Damascus Document asserts the centrality of God even in the elaboration of the emergence of the Teacher of Righteousness[67] as their leader:

> And they understood their iniquity and knew that they were guilty men. And they were as blind as those who grope for a way for twenty years. But God considered their works, that they had sought Him wholeheartedly. And He raised up for them a Teacher of Righteousness to guide them in the way of His heart (CD 1; 10–13).[68]

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[65] The English NT calls this person Annas (Ἅννας).

[66] The English NT calls this person James, though the Greek is Ἰάκωβος.

[67] Schremer acknowledges that there are scholars who identify Zadok with the biblical figure; however, he and other scholars identify Zadok with the founder of Qumran. He identifies those who identify Zadok with the founder of the Qumran as Cothenet (1963:164), Liver (1967:74), Yadin (1983:1.394–95), Wacholder (1983:112–19) and Baumgarten (1998); those who identify Zadok as the biblical figure from the Davidic period or a bit later are S. Schechter (1910: xxi), Ginzberg (1976:21), Maier (1960:48), Dupont-Sommer (1960:141), VanderKam (1984:561–70), Schiffman (1993:53), and Herr (1979:51–55).

[68] See 1 Enoch 90:60–17; Jub. 23:16–20; M. Kister (1986:1–15); Baumgarten and Schwartz 1996).

Their *Manual of Discipline* contains a vow to return to the Torah of Moses (1QS 5:710). Members of the sect were expected to devote themselves "to read in the book of the Torah and to seek guidance regarding the law," (1QS 6:7). Schremer asserts that in consistency with the Torah, the author of 4QMMT expresses the expectation that his opponent will do likewise: "We have written to you so that you study [carefully] the book of Moses" (CD 73).[69]

Like the Sadducees, the Essenes demonstrated the centrality and importance of the Torah even in their halakah. Their view of Scripture was high even though they divorced themselves from greater society and the temple practices (Otzen 1990:151; Birenboim 2009:255; VanderKam 2009:426). According to the Temple Scroll 56:34, halakic decisions are to be drawn on the basis of the Torah source exclusively: "And you shall do according to the instructions which they will tell you from the book of the Torah and will tell you truly."[70] It is from this perspective that Shremer (1999:111) argues that changes made by the author of the Temple Scroll to the Masoretic text of Deuteronomy 17:8–13 were aimed at emphasizing the importance of establishing halakah on the written text of the Torah alone, thus excluding the "tradition of the fathers" as a legitimate halakic source.[71] Schremer asserts that the author of the *Peshur on Psalms* is accusing the sect's opponents as they are choosing a worthless and easy way of religious life[72] while the *Damascus Document* says they chose the good life.[73]

Schremer (1999:111) asserts that the tendency to religious stringency is clearly apparent in *4QMMT,* while Sussman (1990) observes that all laws in this halakic document display a rigorous approach to the halakah. Schremer (1999:112) goes further to show that Qumran's tendency to halakic strictness and its bibliocentricity is the result of the important role that the Scripture plays as a source for the sect's definition and its unique halakic norms: it is also demonstrated at the Qumran community by intensive

[69] See Qimron and Strungnell (1994:58); Bernstein (1996:49–50).

[70] See Yadin (1996:81).

[71] See Krister (1998:315–16).

[72] See Allergo (1968:43) and Flusser (1970:160–61).

[73] See Eshel (1994:118).

study of Torah at the centre of its religious activities. In the *Manual of Discipline* the sessions for studying Torah were established:

> And where there are ten [members] there must not be lacking a man who studies the Torah day and night, constantly, one relieving another. And the many shall keep watch together for a third of every night of the year, to read the book and to seek [guidance regarding] the law. (IQS 6:6–7)

Schremer (1999) concludes that the Qumran revolution was a reform emphasizing the "return to the written text",[74] in contrast to the "tradition-based observance", which emphasized the *paradosiston patero*, the tradition of the fathers.[75] Hence he argues that though the Torah was assumed to be a public document in the Second Temple period, where knowledge of its commandments was commonplace,[76] it seems taken for granted that the study of Torah was always a central aspect of ancient Judaism.[77]

The Sadducees and Pharisees were the most influential religious groups in Second Temple Judaism, but Josephus, the New Testament and other contemporary sources did not describe their views concerning law and theology in detail;[78] thus the halakah dynamics of the two groups cannot be brought to the surface (Regev 2006). As such, the Rabbinic corpus, especially the Mishnah (but also the Tosefta, the halakic midrashim, the Jerusalem and Babylonian Talmuds), yield the richest evidence about what the Pharisees and Sadducees aimed for and how they interpreted the Torah (Regev 2006:126). The Rabbinic corpus was biased toward the Pharisees (Neusner 1971) and were edited centuries after the destruction of the temple. Regev has suggested a new

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[74] Schwartz (1997:27–39); Sussman (1990); Baumgarten (1997:114–36); Baumgarten (1999:33–45).

[75] See Maso (1991:230–40); *Life* 38.191; Mark 7:3; Ant.18.12; Baumgarten (1987); Schröder 1996); Gillet-Didier (1999:19–28); Goodman (1999:17–20).

[76] See Stern (1974:28). Stern notes that "Hecataeus … reflects rthe actual situation in Hellenistic Judaea" *(*1876–80:31, note to par. 5). Philo argues that all Jews are familiar with their laws because of their custom of reading the Torah on the Sabbath (*Hyp.* 7. 12–14). Schremer (1999) asserts that a similar claim is made by Josephus in *Ag. Ap.* 2.175–78.

[77] As it is usually taken for granted that the study of Torah was always a central aspect of ancient Judaism, Schremer (1999) notes scholars who have contributed to such thinking: Vermes (1975:59–91); Vermes et al. (1979:322–25); Blenkinsopp (1981:1–26); Halivni (1986:37–58); Kugel (1997:8–16); Lauterbach (1915:503–27); Epstein (1957:501–15); Albeck (1959:40–48); Halivni (1986:18–21).

[78] For focus on the Pharisees, see Mason (1991). For Pharisees and Sadducees in New Testament see Bauckham (1995:119–77); Hultgren (1979).

approach[79] to halakah wherein the re-evaluation lies in examining the Rabbinic descriptions without prejudice, searching for pieces of information that do not seem polemical and that do not seem to be a product of a later imagination (Regev 2006:127).

In the model which aims to correspond to all those halakic or religious values of the Sadducees on one hand and the Pharisees on the other hand, Regev (2006:128) defines the two concepts or worldviews known as dynamic holiness and static holiness; these were inspired by studies in cultural and anthropology. Through comparative processes Regev (2006:129–136) identifies the Sabbath, the purity laws, the sacrifices (and temple cult) and the penal laws as follows:

> The Sadducees were very strict regarding Sabbath prohibitions: abstention from any sort of moving or carrying of vessels from the house to the courtyard *(M.Erub. 6; 2),* the striking of the willow of vessels from the *omer* (*M. Men.* 103; *T. Men.* 10:23, *T.R.H.* 1:15, *B. Men* 65b), and warfare. *(*Regev 1997: 276–89*; 4Q169 Fags.* 3–4, 3:844).[80]

This tendency probably derived from the aim to observe the Sabbath as holy day. On the other hand, abstaining from any kind of work was a sacred taboo that the Pharisees softened due to certain considerations based on traditions that the Sadducees did not acknowledge.

The Sadducees emphasized purity restrictions,[81] some of which were related directly to the temple cult,[82] while the extensive definition of the menstruation concerned gender and sexual taboos. All these are associated with the observance of sacredness and the elimination of the natural negative forces (corpses, blood, etc.) from the realm of the heavenly. On the other hand, the moderate attitude of the Pharisees towards these taboos suggested their willingness to accept a state of relative pollution and desecration.

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[79] For sources in which rabbis (and not Pharisees) confront the Sadducees, see Rivkin (1969–1970:205–49). Regev takes the Boethusians as another name for the Sadducees as a whole or as being a sub-group within the Sadducees. He also sees no reason to confuse the Sadducees or Boethusians with the Qumran sectarians and to argue that the rabbis actually had disputes with the Qumranites. The first were high priests and aristocrats, whereas the latter separated themselves from the rest of the Jews and hardly influenced the governing institutions. See Regev (2006:32–58).

[80] See also Horgan (1979:49–50).

[81] See *M. Par*. 3:7–8; cf. *M. Par.* 5:4; *T. Par*. 3:6, 8. See Baumgarten (1980:157–70).

[82] See Regev (2000:176–220).

In the sacrificial rituals, the Sadducees stressed the superiority of the priest vis-à-vis lay Israelites. They objected to an equal share of financing the daily sacrifices, regulated an annual priestly consecration ritual, distinguished the high priestly ritual of incense on the Day of Atonement, and objected to the presence of the laity in the priestly court in the temple. Their attitude derives from the biblical conception in which the priests are holier than the laity. Therefore, the Sadducees distinguished the role of the priests through special rituals, and their exclusiveness was preserved. They would have regarded considerable involvement of non-priests in the cult as violating the boundary of holiness by "a foreigner" (cf. Num 3:10, 38; 18:7). On the other hand, it is well known that the rabbis diminished the role of the priests and gave prominence to non-priestly, Rabbinic religious authority.[83] The Sadducean emphasis on the priestly share of the cereal offering and the tithes may also be viewed in this light. Since it is holy, the priests are entitled to the cereal offering, and since the tithe is the priestly due, it cannot be shared with non-priests or remain stocked in a peasant's barn.

The cases of physical punishments and death penalties derive from viewing the offences as severe. The Sadducees were stricter because they were more sensitive to the implication of the offence as a sin against God. Like all previous cases, these also concern the idea of holiness. The Pharisees were latent and merciful, but they were also less committed to the aim of restoring social values or, in this case, God's "honour" or holiness that was violated by the crime. The Sadducean "penalty liturgy"[84] of execution was a ritual that externalized this restoration. These cases have much in common with those involving the Sabbath, impurity and sacrifices.

It is in the dynamics of strictness and leniency that the halakic dynamics of the Sadducees and Pharisees are revealed. In this, the Sadducees, like the Essenes, brought to the surface what Regev (2006) calls dynamic holiness, whereas the Pharisees pursued static holiness. This static holiness is not entrenched in the supremacy and tightness of the Torah, whereas the dynamic holiness is. Hence Schremer (1999:115) asserts that prior to the "from tradition to Book revolution," it was not customary to appeal to the written text of the Torah to draw halakic guidance from it.

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[83] See Fraade (1999:109–25).

[84] See Foucault (1997).

It has become clear that clinging to the traditions of the fathers by the Pharisees was the total opposite of developing a halakah consistent with Scripture. The Essenes and Sadducees upheld the supremacy of the Torah in their halakah, whereas the Pharisees compromised it to capture the loyalty of the greater society through static holiness, which regarded holiness as relative to desecration, and they were less interested in being protected by holiness from pollution and desecration (Regev 2006:137).

The supremacy of the Torah within the groups of Second Temple Judaism is only compromised or weakened when the groups descend to the operation or view themselves from their halakah perspectives. The Sadducees and Essenes demonstrated a halakic principle consistent with the Torah alone, while the Pharisees upheld a halakah which was driven by the traditions of the fathers more than the Torah alone.

3.6 CONCLUSION

Monotheism, the temple, the high priest, and the law of Moses (Torah) as religious central features within Second Temple Judaism show common threads revealing the dynamics of the Essenes, Sadducees and Pharisees. It is these common threads which show that the centrality of the Scripture has been the supreme driving factor that determined the correctness or the incorrectness of the three groups regardless of their strengths or weaknesses in the eyes of the greater society. Moreover, the oral law perspective of the Pharisees enshrined in the notion of the traditions of the fathers emerges as the element which makes the Pharisees unique. However, such oral law dynamics do not stand in contest against monotheism, the temple, the high priest and the Torah as the engines of centrality within the religious comparison and impact of the Second Temple Judaism. In this principle, even the Essenes, who broke away from interacting and recognising the temple and the high priest in the Hasmonean period in particular, continued to acknowledge their importance and reality as central features of Judaism as a whole and the nation at large. This centrality was beyond reproach even within the atmosphere of differences. Like monotheism, the Torah remained the bedrock that revealed the common ground of Judaism among the groups though the internal differences were there; oral law and written law emerged as doctrinal differences between the groups.

CHAPTER 4 SOCIAL COMPARISON

4.1 INTRODUCTION

To understand the identity of religious groups,[85] it is essential to assess their historical, theological, anthropological and social features (Ben-Eliyahu 2019:155). In this chapter, the focus is on the social comparison of the Sadducees, Pharisees and Essenes, considering and contrasting their features.[86] The social analysis focuses on the following features: social class, rural and urban factors and economic factors. An analysis of these social features reveals the strengths and weaknesses of the groups as they relate to their identities.

The social dynamics of Second Temple Judaism are integral parts of the historical reality and identity formation of the Sadducees, Pharisees and Essenes. Identity is socially constructed by the creation of distinctive markers or boundary markers for excluding the other, thereby pointing to underlying contestations in society (see Capra 2004; Rutherford 1990; Cohen 1999). This reality advanced the notion of groups, even in the social context of the Second Temple period.[87] The social features are vital to the understanding of each group's identity and the intergroup dynamics (see Tajfel and Turner 1986; Baker 2008; Hinkle and Brown990).

Therefore, this chapter argues through intergroup comparison that the groups maintained their unique identities as each group identified or differentiated itself from the other groups. For Hinkle and Brown (1990), the link between a group and the

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[85] The term "identity" is commonly used to express a person's or a group's self-understanding as a separate entity (see Moya and Hames-Garcia, 2000).

[86] For an in-depth understanding of the reasons for social identity group formations from a psychological perspective, see the social identity theory in Tajfel (1978). In principle, scholars in diverse writings such as Tajfel (1978:27–60; 1981:233–38, 268–76) and Tajfel and Turner (1979:38–40) elaborate on factors contributing to the need for social differentiation between groups. Within the same vein, yet concentrating more on Jewish and Christian writing, Esler (1998:40–57; 2003:19–39) and Jokiranta (2005) unfold this perspective with specifics which are more relevant to the groups of Second Temple Judaism.

[87] Hakola (2007) shows that the perspective of the uniqueness of the groups tends to manifest it as though it is suppressing the similarity perspective through polarization. See Hogg (2001:60), Collin (2001:32) and Räisänen (1997:27), who elaborate the dynamics of consciousness around such possibilities so that they are not seen as static.

comparative groups is affected by the group's cultural or social location. Therefore, two conditions are necessary for the social analysis: first, the groups compared must be within the same broad collective culture, and second, the groups must be engaged in a competitive social comparison. The three groups that are socially compared in this study meet the two criteria formed as part of the broader category of Second Temple Judaism. This chapter will further the religious comparative analysis of chapter 3 but with a social focus within Second Temple Judaism. For the social comparison, this chapter is structured as follows: a discussion of the social class is followed by a discussion of rural and urban factors as well as the economic factors.

4.2 SOCIAL CLASS

During the Second Temple period, Palestine was an agrarian society: the majority of people were subsistence farmers (Goff 2007:56). Oakman (2008:167) describes the peasantry as follows:

> A peasantry is a rural population, usually including those not directly engaged in tilling the soil, who are compelled to give up their agricultural (or other economic) surplus to a separate group of power holders and who usually have certain cultural characteristics setting them apart from outsiders. Generally speaking, peasants have very little control over their political and economic situation. In Mediterranean antiquity the overlords of the peasants tended to be city dwellers, and a culture-chasm divided the literate elite from the unlettered villager.

According to Lenski (1984:189–296), the agrarian societies mainly consisted of the following classes:

- The upper class—the rulers and the governing class, which would consist of 2% of the population.
- The retainer class—those who served the upper class or the ruling class such as army officials, professional soldiers, household servants, and personal retainers.
- The merchant class—those peasants who had climbed up the ladder and provided materials to the upper class.
- The peasant class—the majority of the population. The peasants carried most of the burden to support the state.

- The artisan class—the lower-income class.
- The unclean and degraded class—the outcasts of society and those considered inferior.
- The expendable class—the beggars, criminals, and outlaws.

However, when it comes to population sizes in the Second Temple period, there are no reliable figures. As Reich (2014) notes, the population estimates, particularly of the cities, are mainly based on the built-up areas and the areas inside the fortifications. However, during the Second Temple period, most people would have lived in rural areas. Reich (2014) suggests that the population in the city of Jerusalem during the time of Herod would have been between ten thousand and eighteen thousand. The ancient cities were also parasitic in that they largely relied on the surrounding villages for supplies (Hakkinen 2016).

Whenever society comprises groups, class issues also emerge. Status, whether practical, social or religious, drives the fulfilment of the identities of the groups within the greater society. This tendency is usually the result of many features that contribute to building an identity comprising features that contradict the society's stated values (Regev 2006:126). Individuals tend to affiliate with or join groups that give them a sense of belonging. According to Pfann (2007:152), the role that an individual or a group play contributes to the individual or group's success or failure. An individual's or a group's beliefs serve as vessels that constitute a class as an identity within a greater society (Schiffman 2001:272–73, Kalimi 2011:73–74).

The three groups of interest in this study, as will be detailed below, also contributed to the formation of social classes within the Jewish community in the Second Temple period. The central or unifying pillars such as the temple, the covenant, and the Torah did not hinder the groups from developing their own unique social identities (Hakola 2007).

4.2.1 Sadducees

The Sadducees are commonly associated or identified with the upper social class (Brownlee 1982:27; Grabbe 1991:487), the priestly aristocrats of the ruling class.[88] This is so because the priests assumed a leading role in society during the Second Temple period.

The Sadducees managed to strike a chord with the upper class through individuals who were within the upper class yet took a literalistic view towards the Scripture and religious issues. That is, the Sadducees seem to have been in the position of power in Jewish society's most important institutions during the Second Temple period (*Ant*. 20.197–203). This tremendous social standing was a product of the high esteem that the Jews had for the temple in Jerusalem, and therefore, whoever dominated temple practices stood a chance to have a more significant social standing in the greater society of Second Temple Judaism (LaPean 2003:113). The Sadducees' high social status was based on their identity not as a sect but as an alignment group that had an internal influence on the temple. Therefore, this significant social standing was conditioned on the Sadducees remaining influential within their internal practices and the greater society of Second Temple Judaism at large (Zeitland 1960–1:222). However, the Sadducees' association with the ruling class had its problems because lower-class people would not have been part of the group. As Grabbe (1991:487) notes, this does not mean that all Sadducees were zealous of socio-economic status, nor does it deny that the priestly aristocratic Sadducees dominated the ordinary Sadducees.

Stone (1984) notes that the priesthood was not the only dominant force during the Second Temple period. Other institutions emerged in Second Temple society that would have catered to different segments of society. One was the Sanhedrin, which was a tribunal and the political body of the Sadducees. In other words, the social standing which the Sadducees enjoyed through the alignment with the temple did not remain unchallenged (Otzen 1990:112–3).

[88] Nickelsburg (2003:166) and Regev (2006:126) unfold the class factor of the Sadducees within the central priestly religiosity of the early Judaism.

4.2.2 Pharisees

The Pharisees are commonly associated with the middle class (Cook 1998, Riddle 1939:165–66, Otzen 1990:116, Birenboim 2009:270), neither with the upper class, the final aristocracy within the society, nor with those at the bottom of the social ladder in social classification, though both lower-class and upper-class people may have been members. As some scholars argue, the Pharisees began as a national and religious revival movement among the laity of the middle class and parts of the priesthood (Riddle 1939:165–66; Otzen 1990:116; Birenboim 2009:270). The majority of the Pharisees were people from middle class (Porter 1894:170–71; Matthew 1902:179; Rivkin 1970:30–33), though some people from the lower and upper levels identified themselves with Pharisaic beliefs (Bentwitch 1913: 550; Kalimi 2011:73–74). Though the priesthood is also associated with the Pharisees, only members of the priesthood still under subjection to the high priesthood were Pharisees. There were few members of the higher levels of the official high priesthood.

The laity's social status also determined the type of class in which the newly formed group should belong. As the laity cannot command beyond their pioneers, so the group cannot go beyond its people's class factor (Cook 1998). The laity might have seen the higher priesthood as contradictors of some fundamental religious practices which they were not ready to compromise (Otzen 1990:116; Burns 2006:261; Stermberger 2007:190–91; Birenboim 2009:261). No wonder that as a popular reaction to the general development, the movement contributed to the Maccabean revolt's success (Bell.2.162–163).

4.2.3 Essenes

The Essenes[89] seem to have comprised social classes different from those comprised by either the Sadducees or the Pharisees (Newman 2006:92; Regev 2006: 126; Kalimi

[89] Most importantly, Josephus tells us that there were married Essenes (*J.W.* 2.160). It is important to remember that Josephus does not indicate that there were any differences whatsoever in lifestyle in terms of married and unmarried Essenes ("they are likeminded in lifestyle, customs and laws"), so that everything he has stated concerning his celibate Essenes applies to them. During women's pregnancy, the "married Essenes" of Josephus too—if obedient—would have been celibate, since sexual relations were thought appropriate only for procreation. Importantly, the fact that Josephus describes women as wearing a linen wrap in the bath, given that Josephus only describes the bath in terms of preparation for meals (*J.W.* 2.129), could imply that the women among the "married Essenes" also participated in pure meals, although separately, since gender-separated dining was common in the Hellenistic world.

2011:71–79). Their perspective seems to have distanced the Essenes from the classifications of the Sadducees and Pharisees (QOP. 88–91).

Though Essenes are classified as of low social class, their personal and organisational identity was swallowed by their communal lifestyle: they had no private property. Therefore, there are no guarantees that patterns of low class, middle class or upper class can be shown in this kind of identity. Communal identity becomes the order of the day. Whenever an individual joined the group, that person's status was swallowed by the communal principle, which allowed no private ownership (QOP. 76–79). Otzen (1990:138) asserts that they have a law that new members on admission to the sect shall confiscate their property to the order, with the result that you will nowhere see either abject poverty or inordinate wealth; the individual's possessions join the common stock, and all brothers enjoy a single patrimony.

Both the rich and the poor were centralised in classless, egalitarian communality. The Essenes were classless, but they did not spread communalism to the greater society (Sievers 2001:241; Regev 2005:158–76).

As individual Essenes' identities were swallowed up by communal economic life, the weak and the strong could not be easily identified from within. The social identity of oneness and equality seems to have been the centrality of the Essenes' communal perspective even at Qumran. Their socialism aimed to isolate them from the rest of the greater society even when they lived within it. Murphy (2002:59) discusses CD XIII 11–12:

> … as everyone did—the Essenes had two meals a day, but he does not describe the procedures for the evening meal; for the Serekh texts it is this evening meal (after the working day is ended) and the associated deliberations judgments, reading, and study, through the evening, that are absolutely critical. Josephus sets up the Essenes as paradigms of perfect Judaean men in terms of their exceptional lifestyle, which manifests the kind of exemplary manly virtue (ἀνδρεια) one might associate with fee Spartans of old (*Ag. Ap.* 2.225–235). Women are married not because this includes them in Essene group identity but because this enables Essenes (whom, like Pharisees and Sadducees, Josephus only configures as men) to reproduce. But Josephus is quite clear about the place of women and children within Israel, however androcentric his language may be. He

Josephus does not indicate that married Essenes would not eat with celibate Essenes and vice versa; whether married or celibate, we may in fact picture all Essene men gathering together for common meals, in accordance with what Josephus states (*J.W.* 2.129–133).

> writes: “Indeed, concerning the occupations of life, that everything done must have as its purpose piety, is something to be heard also by women and anyone of the household” (*Ag. Ap.* 2.181) (see Taylor (2011:188).
>
> “...everyone who joins his congregation he shall examine him for his deeds and his insight and his strength and his might and his wealth, and shall inscribe him in his place according to his inheritance in the lot of light” (*Ag. Ap*.2.189).

This shows that the Essenes’ primary goal was not to influence the greater society but to isolate themselves from it. This group had an internal focus rather than an external focus towards the greater society. No social dimension of this type can impact the greater society.

Unlike both the Sadducees and Pharisees, the Essenes demonstrate a social sphere that was attached to their religious view of detaching from the temple and greater society due to its strict communal operations. The greater society was not at the centre of the Essenes’ social view. They were a group that was encircled by its own socialisation, which was different from that of the Sadducees and Pharisees.

The Sadducees’ and Pharisees’ social class perspectives reflected the difference in their perspectives on the written law and the oral law. The Essenes’ social perspective drove them totally away from the other two. Theirs was beyond the traditional social boundaries of Second Temple Judaism.

Through their radical approach of total detachment from the traditional social classes within broader Jewish society, the Essenes were at a social angle which neither the Sadducees nor the Pharisees could reach physically or ideologically. They demonstrated a social perspective that was of a radical shift from the religious features that had interrelation with the social features in greater society. They created their own social identity that challenged the greater society’s social identity, whether in Qumran or other settlements. Regev (2003:257) asserts that this development began with the leader of the Jews, the Hasmonean high priest called the Wicked Priest. In the *perashim* it is this Wicked Priest who, according to Regev, persecuted the Teacher of Righteousness and his followers. As such, the attitude towards the Wicked Priest was elaborated as follows:

> ...the Wicked Priest, who was called on by the true name at the beginning of his public life, but when he ruled over Israel, he became arrogant,

> abandoned God, and betrayed the laws for the sake of wealth. He stole and amassed the wealth of men of violence who rebelled against God, and he took the wealth of the people to add to himself guilt (and) sin. And abominated ways he practiced with every sort of unclean impurity. (1QpHab 8:8–13)

This creation of their own social identity vis-à-vis that of greater society was a new social dimension that was not only at loggerheads with the temple leadership of the time but also with the social dynamism of the broader society itself. Therefore, the Essenes' social identity aimed no longer at the Wicked Priest but at the deeper social foundations of the greater society of Second Temple Judaism, which was older and established beyond the operational domains of the Hasmonean high priestly order of the day.

This strategy and tactic of the Essenes in the conflict between the Wicked Priest and the Teacher of Righteousness affected social class dimensions in ways that went beyond this conflict. It gave birth to the social class perspective which made the Essenes more identifiable yet isolated them from the rhythms of the greater society of Second Temple Judaism because of the newly established religious and social community. Their communalist, classless identity cost them the fusion and identification with the broader society. Hence the Damascus Document and Community Rule indicate that

> every man, born of Israel, who freely pledges himself to join Council of the Community shall be examined by the Guardian at the head of the Congregation concerning his understanding and his deeds (1QS VI 1314). (Vermes 1977:106)

Therefore, the three groups' social class identification reveals their strengths and weaknesses within the context aligned with broader society. No single social class can be the identity of the broader society alone; the dominance of one isolated social class necessitates the exclusion of other social classes. Such an approach automatically limits impact on the greater society. Therefore, lower-class Essenes (Cook 1998:240), like other groups, were not immune to such limitations, and its new community was a new society coming out from the greater society, unlike the societies of the Sadducees, identified as upper class in greater society, or the Pharisees, identified as middle class (Cook 1998:238–39).

As such, the three groups' social class dimensions reveal that the Pharisees had a tactical advantage over the Essenes and the Sadducees. The positioning of the Pharisees

as middle class gives them an advantage over the Sadducees of the upper class and the Essenes of classless communalism (Regev 2006:131).

4.3 RURAL AND URBAN FACTORS

In the previous section, we noted that most Palestinian people during the Second Temple period lived in rural areas or small towns and were peasants. However, the cities were the centres of power during the Second Temple period, particularly Jerusalem, the cultic centre. This perspective shows that there were two groups of identifiable people: city dwellers and peasants (Finkelstein 1962a:82).

Horsely and Hanson (1988) investigate the various resistance groups at the time of Jesus. Their interest is mainly to examine the role of the common people and the Jewish peasantry. However, their study helps understand the social dynamics behind the Jewish revolts against the empires and rulers.

Horsely (2007) asserts that when Babylon conquered Judah, the majority of the peasantry were not taken to captivity. However, though the priests of the temple and the scribes were captured and taken to Babylon, some members of the Aaronide priesthood, Levites and the Abiathar lineage remained. This connected the two elements of peasantry and priesthood. The class factor of priestly aristocracy was centred around the two elements of the land and religiosity (Nurmela 1998).

On the other hand, when the Persian Empire replaced the Babylonian Empire, the Judean elite were restored to their land from captivity. These included men of diverse skills who were diversified even in their exposure to the social life of Babylon. These were brought back to advance Persian domination over the new temple state resurrected by the authority given by Emperor Cyrus (Blenkinsopp 1998:25–43).

Among both those Jews who remained and those who were captured and restored were people from both rural and urban backgrounds. Because of the religious contestations of the time and the class factors, these people formed visible identities as urban and rural in the new temple state under the Persian Empire. Though this does not provide a complete picture of the emergence of the rural versus urban identities of the Sadducees and Pharisees, it gives a glimpse of the basis of the polarization in the Jewish society of the Second Temple that began at its formative stage.

With this foundational understanding of the dynamics of the divisions which existed in the restoration of the Jewish society from Babylonian domination through Persian Empire, we see that the perspectives of class as also fuelled by geographical identification do find a place in a society which is struggling to reconnect itself while facing diverse challenges. Therefore, it is possible that within the emergence of the Sadducees and Pharisees, seeds of class factors and geographical entrenchment are at the depth of their visible postures through the people aligned to these groups. Hence some scholars have identified groups with differences in such things as career, place, behaviour and class. Such identifications or classifications were not just born from nowhere but formulated through historical traceable social processes which such groups are associated with or through.[90]

Some scholars do not consider the Sadducees city dwellers (Rivkin 1970:33; Noam 2003:78–79; Regev 2006:133). Josephus considered the Sadducees boorishly behaved peasants (*Ant*. 20.9.1). The boorish behaviour came from the geographical settlement, while peasantry is attached to the rural or geographical settlement of the groups or persons. Many scholars (Hoenig 1966:344; Schiffman 2001:268; Broshi 2007:28) follow the logic: if the Sadducees were not identified with urban life, their outlook may have been identified with rural life. This rural outlook seems to be associated with the backward side, which is different from the soft speech, and the Sadducees were not identified with urban life, so they may have been identified with rural life in their outlook, not with the polished manners of city dwellers.

Moreover, the aristocratic Sadducees seem to have drawn a following among the peasants, who are known to be rough and of unrefined manners. This perspective of boorishness, even among themselves, shows that they were not urban but from the rural peasantry (*Ant.* 20.9.1). This identity as rural peasantry does not automatically translate to the advancement of features of inclination towards the greater society. It only confirms that wherever they were found or identified, peasantry or aristocratic, they also had a uniqueness which included boorish behaviour.

[90] Horsley (2007) has more details about the conflicts and the foundational polarization which was present at the formation of the temple state through the powers of the Persian Empire.

This tendency of the Sadducees seems to unfold their true identity and character as being rural. Therefore, they cannot be seen as positively inclined toward characteristics born from urbanisation or city dwelling (Finkelstein 1962b:627; Schiffman 2001:269; Noam 2003:78–79; Birenboim 2009:261). No wonder Finkelstein asserts that everywhere urbanisation led to conflict between the inhabitants of the town and the landed aristocracy (1962a). This shows that the rural and urban factor is also relevant within the context of the groups of Second Temple Judaism period.

The Sadducees are said to be of more peasant background, which is rural aligned, but this does not mean that there were no Sadducees from urban backgrounds. It only means that they were dominated by the peasant outlook. This peasant outlook reflects or reveals the type of people who advance the course of the group. It is interesting to realise that the peasant outlook has rural patterns of dominance. It is this rural alignment that shows the bias of the Sadducees compared to the urban side.

The Sadducees, in their peasant outlook and domination by a rural-aligned posture, also revealed an upper-class isolationistic identity (Cook 1998). Though peasantry is generally seen to be at the heart beat of greater society, this also furthered the Sadducees' lack of concern with the needs of greater society. They were more interested in the needs of their own group in their peasant outlook and rural approach than in the needs of the greater society. They navigated the course of doctrinal rigidity based on the written law within the corridors of power in the Second Temple Judaism.

This pattern could not lead the Sadducees to have a perspective inclusive of both rural and urban views. They did not embrace both sides' views in their contestation within Second Temple Judaism. The preference of one at the other's expense carries a limiting factor, isolating other Second Temple Judaism stakeholders due to their different geographical alignment.

This peasantry of the Sadducees drove them to devotion to the written law to the exclusion of consideration of realities born from the experiences people encounter beyond the Torah (Baumgarten 1985). These experiences beyond the Torah are what the Sadducees were outrightly against, so they interlinked the issue of rudeness raised on social grace and the issue of not emulating the polished manners of the city-dwelling Pharisees.

This again still shows that the Sadducees' religious perspectives influenced their social dimension, even in the contest between urban and rural. The Sadducees advanced socially what was visible in their religion, their position on oral law and written law.

On the other hand, social evolution through urbanisation led to a situation where some became urbanised and others remained ruralised. From these two perspectives, the Pharisees seem to have been identified as urban and pro urbanisation (Hoenig 1966:341; Comstock 1981:625; Regev 2006:134, Kalimi 2011:80).

Urban characteristics or tendencies seem to have been elements with which they identified. No wonder the Pharisaic views rooted in the Torah and free from material motivation had a special appeal in Jerusalem's market place (*Ant.* 3.10.5). In this context, the market place can be identified not with the rural factor but with the urban factor, and therefore, urban dwellers who were being exposed to the evolution of urbanisation saw Pharisaism as more relevant and meaningful to their dimensions of life (Finkelstein 1962b:632; Hoenig 1966:340; Ilan 1995: 8; Small 2001:61).

However, this does not mean that all urban dwellers were pro Pharisaism, though the majority seem to have conformed their actions to its doctrines. That is why Finkelstein speaks of the special appeal that the Pharisees had in Jerusalem's market place; the special appeal that the Pharisees had in Jerusalem's marketplace should be seen as identifying the Pharisees with the urban perspective (Finkelstein 1962b:632; Regev 2006:135; Stacey 2008:7; Hultgren 2011:107). This urban perspective seems to have been enhancing the twofold view towards the Law of Moses wherein oral law becomes equal with the written law (*Ant*. 13.10.6).

Where the written law was without a direct answer on how to operate, oral law supplemented and advanced God's relevance. Therefore, one could argue that oral law and urbanisation have worked together to make Pharisaism relevant to those Jewish people who found themselves within contexts outside the scope of the written law (Finkelstein 1962b:628; Rivkin 1970:29–36; Schiffman 2001:268; Taylor 2007:174). Pharisaism appealed to those who found themselves in new life situations through the social evolution of urbanisation. From this perspective, unlike all other urban struggles known to them, Pharisaism (and the long process of which it was part) was a demand not for the right but for the opportunity to serve (*Ant*. 189.18–22).

The Pharisees had special appeal in the marketplace (an urban place), but this does not mean that there were no rural-aligned Pharisees; it simply means that majority of them were more aligned to an urban pattern. The Pharisees in isolation can be identified as a group with a pattern similar to that of the Sadducees, but at an opposing angle. Where the Sadducees are rural-based peasantry, the Pharisees are aligned to the urban marketplace. Peasantry and marketplace pose two directions and identities of people in a socio-religious perspective.

These two different directions and identity show the spheres of influence within the contestation of the two groups. Though Sadducees were identified with the upper social class, they were unable to influence the urban marketplace, which outshines the rural environment because of the variety of its activities.

Moreover, the Pharisees' identity with the marketplace and the middle class enabled them to be more compatible with them than the Sadducees could be. While the Sadducees were oriented towards the peasantry and the upper class, the Pharisees occupied the gap in the middle, in the marketplace where the urban populace lived, that the Sadducees had abandoned. Thus the Pharisees were able to influence urban life.

Urban life has social leverage that enables it to spread ideas to rural society. The Pharisees were not governed by socio-religious rigidity, so they were able to have an impact on the greater society without placing its group interests above those of the greater society. The Pharisees were interested in serving the marginalised so they could have influence at the centre of the greater society.

The Pharisees wanted the strategic centre to drive the socio-religious perspective as a result of the social perspective driven by both the oral traditions and the written law. This social perspective born from the twofold view gave the Pharisees' voice more impact even among classes and geographical environments that they were not generally aligned with. Their impact was advanced not solely by their physical presence but also by their forefathers' oral law, which impacted the social perspective of the greater society of Second Temple Judaism.

The Pharisees' identification with oral law advantaged them over the Sadducees and all other groups that rejected the oral law at all levels of Second Temple Judaism's social life and made them central to the greater society. To the Pharisees, the urban-versus-

rural geographical factor was not ultimate since the oral law was not limited by geography. Even in rural places where the Sadducees were identified as the key group, the Pharisees were of great significance as the upholders and defenders of the oral law.

Moreover, the rural and urban factors seem to be more unique when it comes to the Essenes' identity. This study, unlike those of Newman (2006) and other scholars who believe that Essenes and Qumran are two separate groups, as stated in chapters 1 and 2, sees the Essenes and Qumran as inseparable. Though Otzen does not deny the authentic existence of other Essene societies outside Qumran (Otzen 1990:144), Qumran is only comprehensible in the wider context of the Essene movement; any understanding of Essenism without Qumran is incomplete (Garcia Martinez and Trebolle Barrera 1995:79; Broshi 2007:26; Dunn 2010:335).

Therefore, the Essenes should be understood as both urban and rural from the broader angle of Essenism which includes all Essenes. Josephus and Philo seem to present this perspective through their different views towards the residentiality of the Essenes (*War* 2.119–161).

Josephus claims that Essenes lived in all towns, but Philo says they lived not in towns but in villages. These contradictory views show that Josephus did not see the Essenes in villages whereas Philo did not see the Essenes in towns. However, the Essenes may have lived in both the rural villages and the urban areas. Philo not seeing them in urban areas does not mean that there were no Essenes in the urban areas. Equally, Josephus not seeing Essenes in rural areas does not mean that there were no Essenes in the villages. Their perspectives show that the idea of associating Essenes with only Qumran cannot be correct (Newman 2006:89).

This also suggests that the social dimension of the Essenes had both urban and rural aspects. However, it is the degree of differentiation between the rural and urban areas, in conjunction with the impact of the two, that is noteworthy. The two sources indicate that Josephus shows the spread of the Essenes in urban centres known as towns.

In other words, Josephus considered the Essenes urban and Philo considered them rural. The two perspectives tell of the social demographics in both worlds. However, the Essenes seem not to have impacted the greater society, even though they were in both urban and rural worlds. They seem to have been crafting their own path within the two

worlds and thus did not capitalise on the opportunity to assimilate into the greater society and represent it but charted a course that was navigated from within, which shows that the Essenes were not zealous to influence the greater society; rather, they were constant in their social standing without making compromises for mere public influence. Their rigidity in their social course was born from their religious rigidity, which could not change on the social level. What they stood for on the religious level still stood at the social level.

Therefore, in both rural and urban makeup, they were still upholding their view, which they could not change, not even for the benefit of dominating, outside their socio-religious purpose. Those who were to follow them, both from urban life and rural life, were to do so out of the choice of abiding by Essene socio-religious doctrines. This shows that the Essenes were not changing their tune in different places but offering one perspective in both urban and rural settings. They did not want to attract those who wanted to join them yet still uphold other doctrinal views different to theirs. They wanted to cut the tie by making sure that those who followed them fully understood that the Essene way was without compromise.

This uncompromising way of doing things is highly contested and most visible in the Essenes' community at Qumran. In this set up, the isolation of the Essenes shows that their goal was not to dominate the greater society by any means nor to convert it to their way of doing things. This isolationistic pattern of Essenes at Qumran matches the patterns in both the rural and urban spheres of Second Temple Judaism.

This shows that wherever the Essenes were, they were isolationistic in their scope. Their isolationism was born out of the tendency to preserve their doctrinal outlook and chart their identity wherever they found themselves socially or otherwise. What was seen in rural Essenes had to be what was seen in urban Essenes and even in Qumran. They were all driven or led by the same doctrinal agenda.

In both rural and urban settings, the Pharisees emerged above the Sadducees and Essenes as most aligned to the greater society. Though the Essenes upheld both rural and urban features, they were still disadvantaged by their strategy of total isolation, which saw greater society, with its recognition of the temple and high priest, as a field to be converted but broken away from. And though the Sadducees were largely

peasants, they were not separable from the priestly upper class and the rigidity of the written law; thus, they did not accommodate the oral law, which was highly acclaimed by the ordinary masses of the people in greater society.

Neither the rural or urban locations of the Essenes nor the identification with the peasantry of the Sadducees were able to overturn the comparative social dynamics to their advantage because their religious consciousness and social consciousness were not entrenched in the consistency and consciousness of the greater society; instead, both groups were like drops in an ocean. Their foundational perspectives were at loggerheads with the greater society's religious and social postures.

As part of advancing the Pharisees' identity with manners and other qualities of civility, social grace[91] was also a notable achievement, though others thought of it as hypocrisy; their social grace did not bring all Second Temple Jews into their religious sect (Finkelstein 1962a:83, Stacey 2008:7). Its centre did not hold, though its mission seems to have been noble. Though the Pharisees held the perspective of social grace in highest esteem and identified with the public through it, other religious groups like the Sadducees were not impressed (*Ant*. 4.8.13).

As a notable achievement, following the example of earlier plebeians, the Pharisees carried their tenderness not only into their home lives but into the courts of justice and were noted for leniency of their penalties (Finkelstein 1962a:83, Kalimi 2011:74, Rabbinowitz 2003:439). Instead of tenderness and leniency, the Sadducees were distinguished by their security (Finkelstein 1962a:83, Regev 2006:126, Vanderkam 2009:420), which caused ordinary people to perceive them differently from the way they perceived the Pharisees (*Ant*. 4.8.13).

According to Josephus, the Pharisees were affectionate to one another and cultivated harmonious relations with the community (*Ant*. 13.10.6). As part of social behaviour, this harmonious relationship with the community contributed towards the class posture of the Pharisees.

[91] This has to do with how the people of the groups were publicly identified in terms of their behavior. Such could be also through relating to other people in different ways. Such behavior or actions could be established or concluded based on the consistency of their appearance when done by people identified with a particular group.

4.4 ECONOMIC FACTORS

Drane (1987) asserts that the Second Temple period begins with the Israelite population being released from their Babylonian exile by King Cyrus of Persia, who defeated the Babylonians in 550 BCE. In this release from the Babylon Empire to the Persian Empire, economic dynamics begin to take shape through the restoration of the Jewish elites, and the religious, social and political were also taking shape (Horsely 2007). Bickermann shows that this new era allowed the Israelites to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple, heralding the new era in Jewish history. LaPean (2003) shows that in this process of political, social and economic changes due to the exiles returning home, a minor but significant result of the return from exile is the transition of the people of Moses from being called Israelites to being called Hebrews, to being called Jews, as a general reference to the people coming from Judah. Neusner (1988), however, argues that though the Jews were allowed to return and worship as they chose, the Judaism that emerged after the temple's destruction in 586 was one of many Judaisms that could have come out of late antiquity. It is these seeds of many Judaisms which blossomed into groups such as the Sadducees, Pharisees and Essenes.

This emergence of many Judaisms affected not only the religious perspective but also many spheres including the social and economic dimensions of Second Temple Judaism and the groups within it. At a socio-political-economic level operating within the religious sphere of a new era, Sheshbazzar was appointed governor of Jerusalem and began the process of rebuilding the temple (LaPean 2003). This was also part of the beginning of the path of the economic life of the religious institution at its physical emergence. At the centre of this socio-political-economic emergence of the governor, there was a high priest associated with the Zadokites (Ezra 7:1–6). This also had an important role in the interactive chain of the broader life of the Jewish people's religiosity.

Moreover, as Bickerman (1976) asserts, at the core of this priesthood, which is the human physicality of the representation of Judaism, the Torah was a public document, and it was also a spiritual resource which birthed the ethical economic life of the religion. Therefore, through the lens of monotheism, the high priest, the Torah and the temple were at the centre of the history of the economic dynamics of Second Temple Judaism. The Sadducees, Pharisees and Essenes did not escape this economic

dimension as they navigated their groups' interests. Their economic factors were intertwined with their social, religious and political factors, and their interests had the possibility of serving in one direction.

The Damascus Document and the Community Rule were the principal texts for the Essene community at Qumran. These documents concerned admission to membership of the sect, doctrine, discipline, purity and impurity, marriage and divorce, and of particular importance, property and commerce (Kapfer 2007). An official called the Examiner carried out various accounting and regulatory functions in commercial matters within Essene communities. Moreover, the Examiner operated in a society where spiritual and economic regulation coexisted. The Examiner's recordkeeping and disciplinary responsibilities show that he functioned somewhat similar to a commodity regulator, auditor, and tax agent within the religious community.

Table 1, from Herda, Reed and Bowlin (2013:121), demonstrates the relationship between religious beliefs and the accounting and economic practices of society.

Table 1. Summary of Essene Economic Practices and Underpinning Socio-religious values

Essene economic practice	Accounting/ economic area	Principal source text(s)	Underpinning socio-religious value(s)	Dead Sea Scrolls citations
Communal property	Asset management	Community Rule	Essenes interpretation of Deuteronomic commands and Levitical law.	1QS 11–15; CD XIII 11–12
Commerce within and outside of the community				
Ban on intra sect commerce for profit	Commerce			Damascus Document
	Qumran-sect concept of justice			4QD 10 ii 1–2; CD MS A XIII: 14–15
Requirements to use currency in transaction with	Commerce with outsiders	Community Rule: Damascus Document	Aversion to defilement (as conceptualised by an interpretation of Levitical Law) through transacting with sinful economy.	1QS V 16–17
The Examiner Maintaining a record of rebukes	Accountability	Rebukes of the overseer: Community Rule	Essenes interpretation of Levitical Law	4Q477, 1QS V 24-V1 11;CD MS A IX 16–20

Requirement that any commerce with the outsiders be sanctioned by the Examiner	Regulation	Damascus Document	Aversion to dealing with groups and institutions Rejected by community handling ta funds conceptualised by an interpretation of Levitical Law) of with and the or intended (as	CD XIII 15–17; 4QD4 X ii 1–2
Examiner's audit of newcomers to the community	Auditing	Community Rule	Mosaic Law and eschatological vision; societal importance placed on voluntary nature of asset transfer	CD XIIIU 11- 12; CD XIII 13; 1QS VI 13–14; 1QS VI 20–24
Monthly tax on earnings	Taxation	Damascus Document	Levitical Law.	CD VI 20–21; CD XIV 12–19

Cook (1998) demonstrates the economic values of the Essenes being more anchored in communal property, in which structural hierarchical rigidity shows the systematic pattern that enabled the Essenes to have a self-sustaining economic system entrenched in its members' production.

Table 1 shows how the accounting and economics features embedded in the strictness of the religious, social, and economic realities of the Essenes at Qumran are intertwined.

Josephus claims that the Essenes' self-distancing from the temple was not complete:

> They send votive offerings to the temple, but perform[92] their sacrifices employing a different ritual of purification. For this reason, they are barred from those precincts of the temple that are frequented by all the people and perform their sacrifices[93] by themselves. Otherwise, they are of the highest character, devoting themselves solely to agricultural labour. (*Ant*. 18.1.5)

This issue of sending offerings to the temple while performing their sacrifices employing a different ritual purification, like the two views of communal property and right of ownership of property emanating from Damascus Document and Community Rule, shows that the broader view of who the Essenes were even towards relating with the temple has a deeper perspective than to say they cut ties with the temple. The cutting of ties with the temple was based on the presence of the Hasmonean high priest, the Wicked Priest. Josephus is showing that the Essenes cutting ties with the temple was not a general but a specific position. It should have been on specific matters because there is evidence of the Essenes being found in the temple. Judas the Essene is shown to have been teaching several disciples in the temple (*War* 1.3.5.78). This indicates that Essenes were present in the temple, though it does not mean that Essenes were on good terms with everything in the temple. It is also not clear whether the Essenes found in the temple were there because the Essenes unanimously accepted such presence or if

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[92] Baumgarten (1993) agrees with Feldman (1965), *Jewish Antiquities* 16–17, and others that the negation to be found in the Epitome and the Latin translation is to be rejected in favour of the reading of the Greek manuscripts. This conclusion was endorsed by Hölscher (1916; 1992). See also the usage of verb in Rengstorf (1973–1983 2.34–35). See, e.g., *J.W.* 1.9.3.187, 3.7.9.169, 4.7.5.433, 4.9.12.577; *Ant*. 18.6.3.155, 19.4.5.267. In all these instances some action is prohibited by a direct external force. Similarly, in *Ant*. 4.8.12.209, women, slaves and children are not prevented from being present at the septennial reading of the Torah, but this is in accord with an explicit verse, Deut 31;10. In none of these cases is there is subtle, indirect, route by which a person is forbidden from doing something by his or her conscience (responding in turn to some prohibition).

[93] Bickerman (1980:329) notes that *thysias* can never have the abstract sense of purificatory rites; hence it must be translated as "sacrifices". As Feldman (1965) comments on *Jewish Antiquities* 17n.a, the use of *thysias* at the beginning of the passage in an actual sense eliminates all possibilities of understanding it as referring to some communal activity such as the common meal (*J.W*. 2.8.5.129–133), understood as spiritual sacrifices at the end of the passage. Feldman's objection is therefore telling against the interpretation of other scholars, renewed by Wallace (1987:338). Baumgarten (1993) sees this interpretation as continuing to prove attractive. See also Vermes-Goodman (1989:54).

an individual was defying Essene custom. Furthermore, there is clear common understanding of neither if the Essenes were expelled or if they voluntarily cut their ties nor if they cut their ties to the whole temple or to specific parts of it or to certain services performed there. Moreover, there is evidence that John the Essene was appointed at a public meeting held in the temple (*War* 2.20.3.311). This also shows that the Essenes were a broader group which cannot be defined monolithically in terms of radicalism against the temple. It shows that within Essenism were found both radicals and moderates. Therefore, texts such as the Damascus Document, the Community Rule and Josephus may seem to contradict each other yet actually reveal what the other sources have not focussed on. Some Essenes still recognised some of the temple activities. However, whether this is the position of the Essenes in general or only of some individuals is not clear. The reality of what the Essenes thought about the Wicked Priest identified with the Jerusalem temple is also not clear.

As discussed in the previous section, the Pharisees were originally an urban and the Sadducees a rural group; the Pharisees gradually won to themselves, through their peculiar eschatological teachings and their democratic ideas, the mass of Judean farmers, so that by the time of Josephus there were left to the Sadducees only the wealthiest families in the nation. Cook (1998) places the Sadducees as higher class and the Pharisees as middle class. These socio-economic classifications seem to rise as a pattern between the two groups. For this, scholars tend to rely on Josephus's evidence.

Finkelstein (1962b: 628–32) asserts that Josephus indicates the urban origin of the Pharisees and the rural association of the Sadducees, saying that in his day the Sadducean doctrine was accepted only by a few, "yet by those of greatest dignity" (*Ant.* 18.1.3). By the expression "those of the greatest dignity" he certainly means, as all his interpreters have understood, the nobility of Jerusalem, which consisted primarily of the wealthy, aristocratic, highly-priestly families. These families formed aristocracy not only of wealth but of land ownership.

Centuries after Josephus, wealth in Palestine still meant ownership of land. Those were not days of large industrial establishments, and while trade flourished in Hasmonean Jerusalem, the great fortunes were still measured in terms of land.

The word *nekasim,* meaning literally "wealth", is always used in the sense of real property. The wealthy men of rabbinic tradition were all possessors of large estates (Schechter 1910:30), though they did not necessarily live on those estates. As in all countries at certain points of their development, they were drawn to the capital. This appears from many references in Jewish literature to absentee land ownership (Lurje 1927:16).

The Sadducees possessed the land as a form of private property and so were above average in economic power. They were the extraordinary few who controlled the society's wealth. The upper-class Sadducees had incomparably greater wealth than the middle-class Pharisees. Their ideological stand on the right to private property may have been driven by their wealth, since they were known as the nobility of Jerusalem, the wealthy aristocrats, the high-priestly families. The network of high-priestly families built a durable economic power base that transcended their priestly status. It is from this perspective that Baumgarten (1983:411–428) says this about the high priest in response to the temple authorities:

> High priests were apparently proud of their prerogatives in matters concerning the Red Heifer. Thus, according to one opinion in rabbinic sources, while all other public sacrifices and their attendant expenses were paid for out of the public purse, the cost of building the causeway on which the Red Heifer was led to Mt. Olives was covered by the high priest personally (*m. Sheq.4:2*).
>
> According to *t. Sheq. 2.6* (Lieb. 207), as much as sixty talents of gold were spent on a new causeway. In *y. Sheq*. 4.3.48a, one opinion considers this expense a sign of exceptional arrogance on the part of the high priests.
>
> Another opinion recognises the tradition that Simon the Righteous offered two Red Heifers and built a new causeway for each one; he could not possibly have been afflicted with arrogance because a new Causeway was needed for each Red Heifer to fulfil the commandment in an appropriately majestic manner. Whichever interpretation is accepted, the pride felt by the high priest who had privilege of offering the Red Heifer is evident.

Baumgarten's perspective about the high priest's role both financially also shows the very aristocratic layer which is embedded in the priestly families Josephus spoke about (*Ant*. 18.1.3), in line with the saying only the wealthiest belong to the Jews (*Ant*. 13.10.6). It also shows that though the public purse, born out of the masses identified with the Pharisees, was there for the financial responsibilities of the sacrifices, the high priest still had a distinct layer of responsibility to contribute personally. This shows that

the high priestly aristocracy was not totally dependent on the ordinary masses for everything, and it demonstrates their economic worth within the mission of the religiosity of the nation in temple practices. It is from this perspective that Kalimi (2011:83) asserts that there were unlearned and even illiterate high priests who did not earn their position because of their spiritual leadership or high education but rather simply bought the position or inherited it; there were some high priests who were not even able to read from Scripture, not to mention interpret, analyse or understand it.

This individualistic dimension of demonstrating wealth was not just by accident but a demonstration of the economic aristocratic power of the Sadducees in each and every sphere of their influence. This buying of even the office of high priest was also a demonstration of the high capitalistic bourgeois culture which was already established in the high-priestly families. Instead of competing through spiritual excellence and intellectual quality of applicability of Scriptures, they used the economic wealth they had to further their spiritual calling of their priestly order. It was the Sadducee priestly families' elite which were not entrenched in the majority of the society. No wonder they were always in contestation with the Pharisees. The economic class struggle was also at play.

The middle class and higher class were in contestation within the capitalistic conflict. Hence the Pharisees always launched their counter-attacks from and through alignment with the interests of the ordinary majority of the people. They were aware of the entrenched wealthy aristocratic, high-priestly families which were impossible to shake except through the human capital of the ordinary masses on the ground. No wonder Regev (2006 :131) asserts that while the Sadducees argued that the daily sacrifices should be financed by individuals (perhaps the serving priests), the Pharisees insisted that all the Jewish people should sponsor them. It is this insistence of the Pharisees that won the day Regev (2006): they ended up determining the half-shekel payment through which every Jew had an equal share in financing the sacrificial cult.[94]

It is becoming clearer that the middle-class Pharisees' economic interests were in using their power to be the vanguard of the interests of the majority of the people who were not aligned to the high priestly aristocracy. It is in this conscious pattern that they

[94] For the half-shekel payment as a polemical act, see *M. Sheq.* 3:3.

showed themselves consistent as they waged socio-economic struggle against the wealthy Sadducee aristocracy. Unlike the Essenes, who were tightly socialistic through the denial of the right to personal property, the Pharisees also seem to have been socialistic, though they did not uphold the principle of denying people the right to personal property. Their economic aims were socialistic and liberally empowered the ordinary masses against the aristocratic few who benefited at the expense of the majority.

It is from this perspective that Wilson (1996) asserts that even in the transition of the synagogue from the mainly secular to the mainly religious, it was the Pharisees who converted the continual daily sacrifice from the sacrifice made by the wealthy to a sacrifice offered by and for all Israel. Theirs was an economic system which encountered the wealthy on behalf of the ordinary masses of Second Temple Judaism. Their economic view was that wealth has to be of the people, by the people and with the people at large and not only for a specific few. They were the true vanguard of religious freedom through oral law against the rigidity of the written law alone, and they were the vanguard in the ethical fight of the masses of Second Temple Judaism against the socio-economic imbalances advanced by the aristocracy of the Sadducees' priestly families.

4.5 CONCLUSION

These comparative standings reveal the socio-economic and religious convictions of the three groups. They did not contradict the religious standing through the social sphere. Their actions were not surprising, since their religious views were evolving around oral law versus written law. Therefore, the social factors were not independent of the religious perspectives of the groups.

These patterns laid the foundations for each group's defence of the oral law or written law through its manifestation within socio-economic operations. In this perspective, the social comparison shows the fundamental ground of the social strengths or weaknesses of the groups within their choices.

For example, there could not be a situation wherein the Essenes or the Sadducees pushed a view that worked for the benefit of the greater society. Such would

fundamentally not serve their religious views within the social perspective. Their social perspectives could not at any point contradict their religious view socially.

The Essenes as an isolationist group could not be a social voice for the greater society. Their goal was for the greater society to convert to their own path, which was contrary to the socio-religious and economic norm which had already been established in the greater society. The Sadducees were also working from a perspective which aimed to control the greater society through socio-religious and economic aristocracy; the greater society was not the Sadducees' highest priority. These two groups' priorities were to further the religious standing of their groups in the socio-economic dimension of Second Temple Judaism.

The Pharisees' religious view was more concerned with the greater society, and it manifested in their socio-economic perspective. This was not by chance; it is traceable to their religious perspective, the twofold view that recognised both the written law and the oral traditions which were entrenched in the greater society. Their social dynamics were absolutely bound to reflect a social view which is more conscious of the greater society.

The social class dimension, through the middle-class perspective of the Pharisees, ultimately advances the greater society. This advance was incompatible with both the communal and isolationist perspective of the Essenes and the priestly upper-class perspective of the Sadducees.

CHAPTER 5: POLITICAL DYNAMICS: SECOND TEMPLE GROUPS UNDER THE SHADOW OF EMPIRES

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Schwartz (2001:1) rightly argues that no account of Jewish history between 200 BCE and 640 CE can rightly ignore the shifting imperial domination as such political dynamics impacted Judaism and Jewish society at large; Jewish society prior to the second century BCE was loosely centralized, and it was only in the wake of the destruction of the temple in 70 CE that Judaism was reformed and became centred on synagogues and the local religious communities. While we agree with Schwartz's point, our focus falls on the Second Temple period (515 BCE to 70 CE). In this chapter, the focus is particularly on the way that the various groups related to the shifting empires during the Second Temple period. The extent of the relationship between the groups and the shifting empires, as will become evident, was not static; it depended on the factors that influenced the relationship between the empires and the Jewish society (Baumgarten 1997:14). This chapter will also focus on the impact of the strategic uniqueness that each group had as it operated within the religious and social atmosphere of the changing empires and their influences and advanced its agenda against those of the other groups as well as against the foreign political domination.

5.2 EMPIRES AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON SECOND TEMPLE JUDAISM: PERSIA, GREECE, AND ROME

The contexts of the Persian, Greek and Roman Empires within the Second Temple period affected the religious, social, and political life of the Jewish people both in Palestine and in the Diaspora. The ambitious drivers of the political power of these three empires are must be given place in any perspective which speaks about the Jews and Judaisms. Their roles in different ways have shaped the religious, socio-political and even economic operations of the Jewish people and Judaism at large. The aim of the narration below is to create a historical base within this political context so that the religious, social, and political contestations of the Jewish groups can be found within the correct space of their times.

5.2.1 The Persian Empire and the Judean Temple State

5.2.1.1 Persian Policy

The return from exile and the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem all happened under the shadow of the Persian Empire. In the biblical tradition, the Persian Cyrus is referred to in messianic terms (Isaiah 44–45; Ezra 1–6; 2 Chron 36; Dan 1:21; 6:28; 10:1). In Isaiah 45:1, Cyrus is referred to as "[YHWH's] anointed one" or "my anointed one", which points to his role as a restorer and temple builder (Fried 2002; Heskett 2011). The Edict of Cyrus states,

> I returned to (these) cities on the other side of the Tigris, the sanctuaries of which have been in ruins for a long time, the images which (used) to live therein and established for them permanent sanctuaries. I (also) gathered all their (former) inhabitants and returned (to them) their habitations. (ANET, 316)

The Persian Empire, unlike the previous empires of the Assyrians and the Babylonians, which opted to displace the people in their conquered territories, opted for the advancement of the empire with the conquered people remaining in or returning to their historical localities. However, when the Babylonians conquered Judah, not all the people of the Judean community were deported to Babylon. It was primarily the urban elites who were deported, with most of the ordinary people left as the peasant labour to benefit the empire through tributes and taxes (2 Kgs 24:14; 25:12). Furthermore, the Babylonian Empire also appointed leaders in the remaining community (2 Kgs 25:22; Jer 40:50–6). In so doing, the Babylonian empire infused those who remained within the broader administration of the empire. Several scholars (Berquist 1995; Carter 1999; Lipschits 2005; Horsely 2007) propose that some of these peasants, having been displaced from the land, may have taken over new fields, on which they could struggle for a livelihood.

On the religious front, with the destruction of the temple, some form of worship continued among those who remained. Blenkinsopp (1998:25–43) considers it possible that Mizpah or Bethel became a sacred or cultic centre following the Babylonian destruction of the temple. Concerning Mizpah, Blenkinsopp (1998:29) states,

> If Mizpah took over from Jerusalem the role of Judah's administrative center, in effect the capital of the province under Babylonian rule, it is not implausible to suggest that a sanctuary of however modest dimensions in

> or near the town would have been part of the provincial government's complex of buildings—this especially if Mizpah was initially a royal residence. It is well known that local cults and their officiants were part of the apparatus of imperial control throughout the Near East and Levant.

For Blenkinsopp (1998), another possible location was Bethel; the reference to Bethel in Zechariah 7:1–7 may serve as an indication that this place served as a cultic centre under the Babylonians, though Blenkinsopp favours Mizpah. While the other centres may have gained some prominence, it is highly unlikely that Jerusalem as a cultic centre would have fallen into disuse as such. Those who remained in Jerusalem would likely have worshipped there in one form or another, and some pilgrimages were likely to have been made there (see Stern 1982; Noth 1959; Janssen 1956; Gottwald 1985; Bedford 2001). Kraus (1956:10–11) suggests that the book of Lamentations was likely rehearsed in the annual cultic ceremonies in Jerusalem at the site of the destroyed temple.

Horsley (2007) asserts that when Persian imperial rule came into effect, the previously deported Judean elite was restored to prominence and power in Jerusalem, and the building of the temple was the beginning of the Second Temple era in the history of Judea. This act by the Persian rulership was a significant move of policy which recognised that for the empire to stand strong, it must entrench its political power far and wide by identifying a people to advance its imperial agenda in each locality. With this policy, the Persian Empire was not advancing its interests alone but recognising that its interests were intertwined with those of the people it had conquered. This policy of indirect rule reflects a desire for mutual benefit, with the political intentions of sustaining the longevity and economic sustainability of the Empire.

Unlike the Babylon Empire, which drained the skilled elite from the Judean society to Babylon, the Persian Empire restored the skilled elite to the place of their historical indigeneity to use them as an anchoring human resource. Like the Babylonian Empire, the Persian Empire needed a continuous cohesion link that would sustain economic activity because the empire depended on the peasantry as a labour force to be the source of tributes and taxes. This shows that the political atmosphere of Second Temple Judaism enveloped not only the Jewish people in their geographical area but also peoples dominated elsewhere in the empire. This charged and drove the political atmosphere with both internal and external influences. Both cooperation and conflict

were possible. The Sadducees, Pharisees and Essenes were operating in this kind of atmosphere religiously, socially, economically and politically. The politics of the empire also affected the politics of the Jewish people both as a nation and as groups. As such, the perspectives of the Sadducees, Pharisees and Essenes could in no way escape the effect of the imperial force even if their intentions were not primarily to focus on cooperation and conflict with the imperial political system.

5.2.1.2 The Rise of the Temple State

The rise of the temple state in the land of Judah during the Persian Empire is more central to the political direction than to the religious direction of the Jewish people during either the Babylonian Empire or the Persian Empire. Without the Persian Empire at the centre the temple state in Jerusalem would not have arisen, as Judah depended on the contingencies and policies of the Persian regime (Hoglund 1992; Fried 2004; Blenkinssop & Lipschits 2003; Lipschits & Oemig 2006; Grabbe 2004). Some of the key features of the relationship between the empire and temple state are the following.

First, it was the Persian Empire that permitted the *golah* community to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. The royal decrees in Ezra 1:2–4, 6:2b–12, and 7:12–26, the imperial blessings on the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem, are indicative of this.

Second, the empire also set Jewish leaders to oversee Judea and the rebuilding of the temple. “The Persian governors of Yehud operated as representatives of the empire, to impose order on the province, even to forcibly require the restored but recalcitrant elite to implement imperial instructions. The emperor sent him [Nehemiah] and equipped him appropriately to oversee the (re)building of the temple citadel’s gates and the wall of the city (Neh 2:8)” Horsley (2007:19).

Third, the empire not only granted permission to rebuild the temple but also sponsored the rebuilding project. The support of the rebuilding project came from Cyrus and Darius I (see Ezra 1:2–4; 6:2b–12; 7:12–26).

Fourth, the empire offered protection for the rebuilding of the temple devoting the political strength of the Persian empire to the rebuilding project.

The rebuilding of the Jerusalem temple served the propaganda that the Persian king was the liberator of people and the temples (see Dandamaev & Lukonin 1989; Briant 2002).

However, the empire, by authorizing and providing support for the temple, was guaranteeing itself loyalty from the religious fraternity, which would thus be at the forefront of fostering and advancing the imperial agenda. The relationship between the empire and the religious leaders was also intended to benefit the empire economically. The offerings and the tithes which were presented at the temple would not only serve to support the religious leaders and the priesthood in the Jerusalem temple but would also support the empire (Horsley 2007; Schaper 1995). In Ezra 4:13, three types of taxes are mentioned—tribute (מִנְדָּה), poll tax (בְּלוֹ), and land tax (הֶלֶךְ). As Schaper (1995:535) argues,

> Treasury and foundry were at the core of the temple administration in its function as a fiscal instrument. The temple administration, or more specifically: the royal commissioner, collected the middā as a tribute tax which belonged to the king personally. The collection of taxes was organized on satrapy level, and, as we know, the king closely controlled the political and financial conduct of his satraps, with whom the royal commissioners seem to have collaborated.

The Jerusalem temple functioned not simply to serve the interests of the local community but also those of the empire. As Schaper (1995:539) notes, the taxes collected at the temple were passed to the empire, so the Jerusalem temple functioned as an outlet of the empire. This practice should be seen as part of the historical background which the religious, social and the political operation of the Sadducees, Pharisees and Essenes even in their times could not easily rise above. Second Temple Judaism's political sphere was never free from imperial domination politically or otherwise, and it is within this context that the groups' contestations should be understood. When conflict emerged between any two of them, it was affected by the context of the political destruction by the imperial political powers. This gave advantages and disadvantages to each group vis-à-vis the greater society before the destruction of the temple in 70 CE. We will show that entrenching in priestly aristocratic institutions (Sadducees) and exclusive Qumranic institutions (Essenes) was no match for entrenching in the greater society (Pharisees). For when destruction comes to entrenched institutions, it is usually far worse than the destruction which comes to the greater society.

5.2.1.3 Conflicts among Groups in Judea under the Persian Empire

The Persian Empire era was the ground in which the seed of the group life of Second Temple Judaism was planted. This period, which is rarely associated with the groups of Second Temple Judaism, when looked at closely, reveals that the groups of Second Temple Judaism did not just emanate from an isolated historical time in the religious, social and political past of the Jewish people. It shows that the exile period of the Jewish people, which was during the Persian Empire, created a political atmosphere which birthed conditions that inexorably produced the life found within the patterns of the groups.

This perspective is more visible in the early life of Second Temple Judaism, when the temple state was at its formative stage and the Judean Jews were living their post-exile lives.

5.2.1.4 The Golah *Community (Elite Returnees) versus the Peoples of the Land: Foundation for the Emergence of Groups in Judaism*

The term *golah* is used to refer either to the condition of those Judaeans who were deported from their homeland by the Babylonian Empire and resettled back in the land under the Persian Empire or simply as a reference to the deportees as a collective. As we have already noted, when the Babylonians deported some of the Judaeans to Babylon, it was mainly the elites who were deported; other people were left in the land. The term "people of the land" is used here to refer to those who had remained in the land and did not experience Diaspora life (Jeremiah 28:4; 29:1, 20, 31; Ezekiel 1:1; 3:11, 15; Zech 6:10–11; Ezra 1:11; 9:4; 10:6). The return of the *golah* community to the land was not merely the process of resettling in the land; it was a process that was sure to spark tensions. As Berquist (1995) notes, the *golah* community was in some way an immigrant elite who identified their God-given purpose as intertwined within the Persian imperial purpose. The empire, by entrusting the imperial order and revenues in Yehud to the *golah* community, placed the returnees in a position of privilege (Davies 1992). The imperially privileged likely identified more with the empire than with the people of the land, and the resistance of the people of the land to the rebuilding project was likely because they viewed it as an institution being restored to benefit the elitist returnees (David 1994:64–87). This tension fuelled the passivity of the people of the land towards full participation in temple building as they saw it as an advancement of the benefits of the restored Jerusalem elite. The returnees, thus, saw themselves as

representing the true people of God, the holy seed, while the indigenous "people of the land" were viewed as a mixed generation, an unholy seed (Ezra 10:1–17).

Carroll (1992) shows that the returnees also justified their claim to the land with a self-serving construction of the Babylonian conquest, representing the land as destroyed and emptied of people. Horsely (2007) asserts that their justification was that the only survivors, the only significant people, had been taken into exile. Hence the land was vacant, just waiting for them to return (2 Chron 36:17–21; Lev 26:27–39). Bastard (1996) asserts that significant sections of much Judean literature that later became part of the Hebrew Bible reflect their ideology and articulate their claim to the land. Hoglund (2004:234–40) shows that Ezra and Nehemiah, who insisted on this ban, were acting as agents of the Persian regime and there was an imperial agenda in this mechanism to maintain the land in the control of the "exile" assembly.

For many scholars, the foundation for the development of groups later in Jewish society was laid under the shadow of the Persian Empire (Blenkinsopp 2007; 1981; 1990; Cohen 198l; Smith 1961). At the centre of this proposal are texts such as Ezra 9–10 and Nehemiah 10. Cohen describes Nehemiah 10 as "the point at which we can first see the formation of a distinct, formally constituted sect." The text of Nehemiah 10 is central in this view for the following reasons: firstly, it is covenantal; secondly, the participants are enlisted on the sealed covenantal document; thirdly, the participants take an oath and bind themselves to YHWH and his rules, and they commit themselves not to intermarry with the "peoples of the land"; fourthly, they commit not to trade with the "peoples of the land" on the Sabbath. Blenkinsopp (2007:395) argues that it was during the time of Ezra-Nehemiah that the roots of a group such as the Qumran (or Essenes) are to be found. As Blenkinsopp (2007:395) notes, the community of the Damascus Document adopted titles such as "holy seed" or "those from the captivity of the Golah" to refer to themselves (see Ezra 2:1; Neh 1:2–3, cf. CD II 5, VI 5; VII 16 = XIX 29; XX 17). The Qumran community was opposed to intermarriage with Gentiles, referring to descendants from such unions as "half-breeds" and ~yrzmm (see the Apocryphon of Jeremiah, 4QTestament of Qahat, and 4QVisions of Amran, cf. Lev. 19:19; Deut 22:9).

Some scholars (e.g., Siedlecki 2008; Heckl 2016) place the background of Ezra-Nehemiah in the early Hellenistic period. Against this background, as some argue, the Ezra-Nehemiah movement was participating in redefining Jewish identity (Exkenazi &

Judd 1994). The Ezra-Nehemiah movement was in effect setting boundaries by enforcing "social boundaries through exclusionary measures (sacrificing wives and children, ejecting those labelled as foreign)" (Laird 2016:359).

5.2.1.5 Priestly Conflicts: Returning Elitist Priests versus the Priests in the Land

Blenkinsopp (1998) asserts that it is very difficult to correlate the various lists and representations of the priests and Levites in the Judean sources. This difficulty also extends to the correlation between the textual representation of the priests and the historical situation together with political-religious relations. As Horsely (2007) notes, there was likely conflict between priests who remained in the land (some from the Aaronides, Levites and sons of Abiathar) versus elitist priests (Zadokites) who returned with Persian imperial authorization. The returning elitist priests, when they returned to the land, took over the temple functions with the authority vested in them by the empire. Horsely (2007) considers Zechariah 3:1–10 likely a response from the priests who had remained in the land as they claimed the restoration of the high priest Joshua. However, conflicts over the priesthood and Levitical functions between the returnees and those who had remained in the land likely took place at various levels. The returning priests, with the backing of the empire, would have been more empowered to gain authority in the rebuilding of the temple, which was going to function as a vehicle for imperial revenue.

5.2.2 Hellenistic Empire and the Judean Temple State

The Hellenistic period refers to the period from the conquests of Alexander the Great to the Roman conquest under Pompey (335–65 BCE). It is within this period that the three groups which are the focus of this study emerged. However, as noted in the previous section, the Persian period was a foundational period in which the seeds, not the reality, of the various groups were planted as the interests of those who had remained in the land conflicted with those of the elitist returnees, who had the backing of the empire.

Hengel (1974), basically made the following main propositions: firstly, Judaism in Palestine was Hellenized by the middle of the third century BCE, before the time of the infamous Antiochus Epiphanes; and secondly, there is no real distinction between Diaspora and Palestine Judaism. However, the term "Hellenization" is used with

various nuances in scholarship. In a broader sense, the term is used to indicate the influence of the Greeks or Greek culture on other cultures. Goldenstein (1981:64–87, 318–326) highlights six characteristics of Hellenization: 1) "Hellenism", even in a non-Greek environment, implies that some Greeks are present and that the non-Greeks have some contacts with them. 2) In a Hellenized culture, there must be some knowledge and use of the Greek language. 3) For intellectuals, the Hellenistic age was characterized by the development and spread of rational philosophies which often were sceptical of traditional religion. 4) In literature, Hellenistic culture typically produced high emotional epic, dramatic, and lyric poetry. 5) Very important in Hellenistic culture were the athletic and educational pursuits of the Greek gymnasium. 6) In architectural remains, these cultural traits of Hellenism left an enduring legacy in the surviving traces of ancient gymnasiums, stadiums and theatres. Greek stone theatres are especially durable and conspicuous among archaeological remains.

However, Feldman's approach to the issue has not been to ask how Hellenized the Jews and Judaism were but rather how the Jews and Judaism managed to resist Hellenization (Feldman1986; 2006). Thus, Feldman focuses on the strengths of Judaism which enabled it to resist the influence of Hellenism. We believe that the two go together; influence and resistance are two sides of the same coin. Empires, no matter how powerful they may be in as much as they may penetrate through force and subtly through influence, have also had to deal with resistance.

5.2.2.1 The Hellenistic Empire and the Meddling with the Temple State

The distinction between Palestinian Judaism as the unadulterated form of Judaism and Hellenistic Judaism as a compromised form of Judaism does not hold water as Hellenism also existed in Palestine (Hengel 1974; Gruen 2016). With the Hellenistic influence penetrating society both inside and outside of Palestine, the Jews both inside and outside the land had become Greek speakers and lived in communities that were infiltrated with Greek culture. The Jewish literature composed in Greek is extensive. Examples include the works of authors such as Josephus and Philo, the Epistle of Aristeas (likely composed by a Jew), the Septuagint (translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek), the Wisdom of Solomon, the Jewish Sibyl and 3 Maccabees. Jewish literature composed in Aramaic and Hebrew translated into Greek includes Judith, 1 Maccabees and Tobit. However, as Gruene (1998) argues, "the embrace of Hellenistic

culture ... served to reinforce rather than to dilute a sense of Jewish identity," this as the Jewish thinkers adopted Hellenistic genres (epic, tragedy, philosophy, romance and historiography) to produce Jewish literature to boost their own image as a people. The degree to which Hellenization intensified over time is understandable (Levine 1998).

Horsely (2007) shows that for control over Palestine, the Greeks used different strategies: in the initial phase, they directly set up governors in conquered territories, but in later phases, they subsumed Judea under a broader jurisdiction and then appointed military governors. Gera (1998:28–31) asserts that the Ptolemies and later the Seleucids appointed military governors who supervised affairs over Syria and Phoenicia. According to Briant (1990:59), the Ptolemies and the Seleucids stopped the Persian practice of appointing governors specifically to oversee affairs in Judea with military garrisons at their disposal because the former practice had strengthened the position of the high priest (or priesthood) at the head of the temple state in Jerusalem and enabled him to operate without the immediate oversight of an imperial governor. Bagnall (1976:14–15, 219) argues that the absence of an imperial governor left more room for power struggles within the mainly priestly aristocracy in Judea, as it opened the way for powerful and ambitious figures to seek influence in the imperial regime parallel to that of the high priest; for example, each priest used the issue of taxation to advance his own influence.

Horsely (2007:35) notes that the temple state continued into the Hellenistic period with a priestly aristocracy headed by the high priest, which consolidated its control over the temple, with the Levites and other priests and temple servants in subordinate roles.

Hecataeus (recorded by Diodorus Siculus, *Biblioteca historica* 40.3.3–6, qtd. in [Horsely 2007:35]) writes,

> "[Having] established the Temple that they hold in chief veneration …, [Moses] drew up their laws and ordered their political institutions. … He picked out the men of the most refinement and with the greatest ability to head the entire people, and appointed them priests …[and] judges in all major disputes, and entrusted to them the guardianship of the laws and customs. For this reason the Judeans never have a king, and representation [*prostasia*] of the people is regularly vested in whichever priest is regarded as superior to his colleagues in wisdom and virtue. … The high priest, who in their assemblies and other gatherings announces what is ordained."

It is clear from this that the high priesthood was not happy with the new changes of operation in Judea as it does not recognise the traditional ways which embrace the priestly aristocracy as being at the centre of the operational dynamics of the society.

Goodblatt (1994:29–35) asserts that while Hecataeus's description of Judea as a priestly monarchy cannot be taken at face value, Diamond (1980:7795) and Mendels (1983:96–110) view the sketch of the Judean "constitution" (*politeia*) as probably reflecting how the Judean priestly elite viewed their own position as an aristocracy headed by a high priest in charge of Judean society.

The need for revenue greatly challenged the regime to take a position of clarity and firmness. However the Persians had let things flow, later empires did not support or directly recognise the temple state and its leadership the way the Persians had recognised it as an effective vehicle for extracting all the things the Persian Empire needed from Judea. The Seleucids, in desperate need of revenue, followed the Persian practice, though not in every detail: they did not place the priestly leadership under the high priesthood. The Seleucids were not totally in favour of everything the Persians had done concerning the high priesthood in the temple state, and this qualified the imperial support of the high priesthood by the Seleucid regime compared to how things had been done under Persian rule.

On the one hand, Schaefer (1995:13–18), relying on older reconstructions of the Ptolemaic political economy as a rigidly centralized system closely managed down to the village level in which the regime treated Judea as just one more subdivision of Egypt, agrees that the Ptolemaic administration made what appear to be mutually contradictory statements. Grabbe (1992:189–92) adds that they did not explain how a supposedly "expanding trade" was possible outside of such a centrally administered state economy. On the other hand, Horsely (2007:36), examining Syria because of the limited evidence available for Judea, notes that the Ptolemaic regime was often de facto dealing with and through local magnates. Bagnall (1976:3–24) agrees, saying that other studies of Ptolemaic Egypt have recognised that centralized control of the economy was an ideal never realized in Egypt itself, much less in other subjected areas. Horsely (2007:36) adds that although the Ptolemies set up an elaborate system of military and economic administration in Egypt, they adapted it to local circumstances. According to Bagnall (1976:19–20), they worked through many of the age-old temples in parts of

Egypt, which were allowed a degree of self-determination, rather than replacing them with other bureaucratic structures (see also Tcherikover 1937:9–90). Horsely (2007:37) shows that the Ptolemies adapted to local circumstances in Syria-Palestine: the well-known Zenon Papyri give clear evidence of large estates managed with considerable attention to local details by officers of the king, though generalizations cannot be drawn from the management of these estates about the administration of the Ptolemies generally. Tcherikover and Fulk (1957:64) agree that some of the Zenon papyri indicate that the Ptolemies depended on local sheiks and their armed men such as the Tobiads in Transjordan, to maintain the imperial order at least along the frontier.

Horsely (2007:37) shows that these changing relations between the imperial regime and the temple state, while increasing conflict within the Judean aristocracy, occurred during the succession of three ever-more-intense crises in the temple state in the late third and early second centuries BCE—the time during which the early Enoch texts, Sirach and Daniel were produced. These crises are the aristocratic factions under the Ptolemaic Empire, the change of the imperial regime and the Seleucid regime.

Schaefer (1995:19) and Tcherikover (1959:129) show that to replace the ridiculous reasons offered in the Tobiad romance for why the high priest Onias withheld tribute from the Ptolemies—his meanness and greediness—historians have suggested that Onias was pro Seleucid; it was simple political and economic realism for local rulers and other magnates to gauge the winds of imperial political fortune and be prepared to shift loyalties with changes in imperial regimes. Goldstein (1995:94–98) supports the view that the most likely time at which the Jerusalem aristocracy would have been prepared to shift allegiance, as well as the most likely time for the Tobiad chronology, was in the late 220s BCE, in connection with the Seleucid Antiochus III's advances into Syria-Palestine. Horsley (2007:40), conscious of the writings of Josephus (*Ant*. 12.168–169, 177–178, 181–183), asserts that the most historically credible part of the whole Tobiad narrative is the description of how farming was set up. Rostovtzeff (1953:335, 338) agrees and shows that taxes were auctioned every year in Alexandria by the emperor himself (see also Preaux 1939:451). Josephus shows that those who bought the tax contracts were indeed required to supply guarantors (*Ant*. 12.177–178), while the property of those who failed to render the taxes was indeed confiscated, although the tax-farmers themselves did not have the power to execute such

confiscations (*Ant*. 12.181.183). Bagnall (1976:3–24) shows that recent studies of Ptolemaic administration recognise that the regime relied on local power holders to control the populace and specially to gather revenues in Syria much more than in Egypt itself.

In trying to balance the one-sided view of the Tobiad romances, Horsley (2007:41) shows that the rivalry for power in Judea was new only in its degree; it did not involve a "new class" of "country landlords." This shows that this power struggle of the contestation between the priestly aristocrats, the magnates and the rulers was old and that looking at it from the perspective of class dynamics would yield no useful information: it was just a higher level of the same old struggle. According to Horsely (2007), it was rather a development of the internal conflict that had continued from the Persian period, as for generations the Tobiads had had independent power bases inland across the Jordan, and they had intermarried with the high-priestly aristocracy and played an influential role in Judea's affairs. Hence, Horsley asserts conclusively that Joseph's expansion of Tobiad power in Judea and beyond relativised that of the high priest and prepared the way for further manoeuvring by rival factions within the Jerusalem aristocracy, just at a time when the rivalry between the Ptolemaic and Seleucid imperial regimes was coming to a head. Therefore, Joseph's actions were part of the contestations of the aristocratic factions within the Ptolemaic empire within the sphere of Judea.

Horsely (2007:41) asserts that the struggles between the factions within the Jerusalem aristocracy continued during the last decades of Ptolemaic rule in the late third century. Tcherikover (1959:127–42, 153–74) and Hengel (1974:1:267–83) show that much of the scholarly discussion of these events had been conducted in the belief that long before the "Hellenizing" reform launched in 175 BCE, two opposing parties had crystallized among the aristocracy in Jerusalem: a more traditionalist, pro-Ptolemaic party and a pro-Seleucid Hellenizing party, presumably because the latter supposed the Seleucids to be more aggressive advocates of Hellenistic culture. These parties, as Horsely (2007) were already operative in the manoeuvring of Onias and Joseph and especially in the more serious conflict connected with the Seleucid takeover of Palestine around 200, well before the conflict came to a head in the reform under Antiochus IV Epiphanes.

Gera (1998:28–32) asserts that in this scenario—which is not normal among rulers, or if it does happen, it is something which comes to such reality because of rare issues, and this can also still be found in the context of the above surrendering of the leadership at a higher level—the defection of the Seleucids from the Ptolemies could have had the cooperation of the governing elite of the cities, and both could see the likely outcome of the strengthened Seleucid regime and the weakened Ptolemaic regime. Horsely (2007:42) proposes that a combination of hints in several sources confirms that a faction in the Jerusalem aristocracy, in response to the Seleucid advance into Syria, had indeed taken action to join the Seleucids, and they continued on this course through the often-devastating course of the imperial war in 201–200 BCE.

Tracing the perspective of events through Josephus, Horsely shows the following:

> When Antiochus attacked the Ptolemaic forces, those in control of Jerusalem were apparently ready to back the Seleucids. From Josephus perspective, when Ptolemaic regime sent an army under Scopas as he had to attack the Judeans who were resisting, subdue them, and install a garrison in Jerusalem citadel (*Ant*. 12.132–133,135).
>
> Moreover, Josephus' view aligns that after Antiochus decisively defeated the Ptolemaic forces at Panion and came to expel the garrison in Jerusalem, "the Judeans of their own will went over to him and admitted him to their city and made abundant provision for his entire army and his elephants; and they readily joined his forces in besieging the garrison left by the Scopas (*Ant.* 12.133). (Horsley 2007:42).

Horsely (2007:44) also proposes that in Judea Antiochus III appeared to have reverted to the Persian practice of explicit support for the Jerusalem temple state as a principal instrument of imperial rule (*Ant*. 12.138–144).

In the outcome of the defeat of the Ptolemies by the Seleucids, coupled with the response of the Judean aristocracy when Antiochus arrived at Jerusalem, Josephus writes the perspective of Antiochus as follows towards the Judeans:

> In as much as the Judeans…gave us a splendid reception and met us with their council [*gerousia*] and furnished an abundance of provisions … and helped us to expel the Egyptian garrison in the citadel … we requite them for these acts and we restore their city which has been destroyed by the ravages of war … We have decided, on their piety, to furnish them for their sacrifices and allowance of sacrificial animals, wine, oil and frank-incense to the value of twenty thousand pieces of silver, etc. … It is my will that … work on the Temple be completed. … The timber shall be brought from Lebanon… and other materials needed for restoration. …

> And all members of the people [*ethnos*] shall be governed according to their ancestral laws, and the council [*gerousia*], priests, the scribes of the Temple and the temple singers shall be relieved from the poll tax and crown tax and the salt tax which they pay. And … the inhabitants of the city … we shall also relieve from the third part of their tribute, so that their losses may be made good. (*Ant*. 12.138–144)

This marked a big shift from the operational manner of the Ptolemaic era and an ushering in of a new era through the Seleucids. This era reversed the gains of such figures as Joseph son of Tobias who gained prominence during the Ptolemaic era. This again also confirmed that even the emperor was aware of the dynamics of the aristocrats and magnates as critical figures within the tensions of the well-being of an empire in different regions.

Horsely (2007:45) asserts that the third crisis led directly to the widespread revolt against the Hellenizing priestly aristocracy and Seleucid imperial rule. Gruen (1998) supports the view which shows that this crisis unfolded over nearly ten years in three steps of escalating conflict between shifting aristocratic factions that exploited the Seleucid imperial politics and the need for revenue to further their own agenda. Hengel (1974:279) and Tcherikover (1959:403–4) show that it took place after Onias III had succeeded his father Simon II as high priest and Seleucus III had succeeded his father Antiochus III as emperor. At the same time, Nehemiah (12:5, 18) shows that the "temple captain" (*prostatēs tou heirou*) Simon, of the priestly family of Bilgah, challenged Onias about the administration of public finances (*agoranomia*, 2 Macc 3:4–8). Horsely (2007:46) shows that when such allegations were followed by the Seleucid officer who was sent after the matter and were reported to the Seleucid governor of western Syria and Phoenicia, Onias explained that the deposit belonged to widows and orphans, along with some money of the prominent Hyrcanus son of Tobias, which did not amount to a large sum, as it had been entrusted to the inviolable sanctity of the temple (2 Macc 3:10–12). Horsely (2007) shows that as tension between Onias and Simon rose and the plotting against the high priest went further, Onias appealed to the emperor that his perspective be heard, but unfortunately, the emperor died at that time and Onias was retained indefinitely at the Seleucid court. Hengel (1974), Schaefer (1995) and Grabbe (2004:277) assert that although the Tobiads may have been involved in Simon's plot and the subsequent factions' manoeuvres with the Seleucid regime, it is overly schematic to see these events as a continuing conflict between Oniads and

Tobiads. Josephus is the only text which associates the Tobiads' involvement with the fusing of the faction of Menelaus, the brother of Simon the temple captain, with the Oniad brothers, Oniad III and Jason (*Ant.* 12.237–241).

The conflict between Onias III and Simon the "temple captain" cannot be understood as an opposition between the pro-Seleucid party and the revived pro-Ptolemaic faction, presumably led by Onias and now somehow allied with Hyrcanus. Although the Ptolemaic struggle against the Seleucids continued, the latter were so clearly in control of Palestine that Onias hardly dared subvert their rule in any serious way. The Seleucids may not have been so thoroughly in control as to have brought Hyrcanus and the frontier territory he dominated under their control. He had come into some sort of symbiotic relationship with those who controlled the Temple, such that Onias mentioning his deposits there would not have been tantamount to a declaration of disloyalty to the Seleucids. Both imperial and Judean affairs were more complicated than the simple opposition of two parties (Horsely 2007:46).

The change of high priest from Onias III to Jason his brother also opened a new door of unethical tendencies even towards the buying of the position, which was clearly not to be contested that way since its traditions had been established in ancient times. As Horsely (2007) shows, Jason obtained the high priesthood from Antiochus in return for raising the tribute from 300 to 360 talents, plus another 80 talents from another source. In an ominous shift, the high priest became a Seleucid imperial official by negotiating the amount of tribute. This opened the door for Jason to become the symbol of the high-speed infusion of Hellenism into Judean society, so 2 Maccabees 4:9–12 asserts it:

> In addition to this he promised to pay one hundred fifty more if permission were given to establish by his authority a gymnasium and a body of youth [ephēbeion] for it, and to enrol the Jerusalemites as citizens of Antioch. When the emperor assented and Jason came to office, he at once shifted his compatriots over to the Greek way of life [pros ton Hellēnikoncharaktēra]. He set aside the existing royal concessions to the Judeans… and he dissolved the laws of the constitution [tasnominmous politeias] and set up new customs contrary to the laws. He took delight in establishing a gymnasium right under the citadel, and he had the noblest of the young men [tōnephēbōn] exercise with the broadbrimmed felt [Greek] hat.

The Seleucid Empire now totally controlled the highest office of the temple state; this was equally a sign of a total contradiction of their promise at the beginning, when they

took over from the Ptolemaic Empire, to allow the ancestral traditions of the temple to be practiced.

Menelaus, like Jason, defiled the ethical manner of acquiring the position of the office of high priest. Even the reactionary tendency of bribing those in power to cover his tracks was an extension of evidence that showed he was part of the aristocratic source of crises in Judea. Horsely (2007) shows it was this kind of leadership in the temple and in the society at large which led Antiochus to think that the only way to secure control over Judea was to establish a military colony in Jerusalem. In response to this and other continuous negatives affecting the Judean society, Horsely concludes that this led to a wider insurrection and guerrilla war known as the Maccabean revolt, the revolt that fought the Seleucid armies to a standoff and toppled the reformist priestly aristocracy.

5.2.2.2 The Rise of the Hasmonaean Dynasty

During the Hasmonean period, power and relations were such that the high priest's religious influence determined the order of political influence irrespective of the scriptural or religious principles based in the historical grounds of the Torah (Stermberger 1995:105). Josephus states,

> Thereafter follows the narrative of the banquet that Hyrcanus gave the Pharisees, which was full of harmony, until one single Pharisee of poor character mentioned the rumor that Hyrcanus's mother had once been a prisoner. Thus, his heritage was suspect, and he was unfit to be the high priest. Another person who was present, a Sadducee who was on the best terms with Hyrcanus, convinced him that this was the opinion of all the Pharisees. Hyrcanus became so angry about it that he transferred his loyalty to the Sadducees and forbade all of the rules of the Pharisees. Because of this, he made himself hated all the more by the people. The entire affair was then a tragic chain of anger, intrigue and misunderstanding. (*Ant.* 13. 288–296)

This quotation reveals three dynamics of power which were independent from each other yet were interdependent in the greater matter of national identity within the political life of Second Temple Judaism. The first dynamic of power is that of the high priest, symbolized by Hyrcanus, followed by the power of the group, symbolized by the Pharisees, and the power of the people, the political power base, which was driven by their hatred for Hyrcanus's actions. Organizing a banquet is a sign by the high priest that affirms his power as the highest authority within the political and religious life of

Second Temple Judaism; it also shows that whomever he chooses or recognizes as an individual or a group within the groups has his blessing and access to him (Simon 1967:14). This means that the high priest's authority and influence were key to boasting the influence of a group, so the high priest was able to create opportunities of influence for any group, irrespective of its doctrinal power. Therefore, power relations become one of the important factors which determine the order of the day (1 Macc 1:15–16). The high priest of the moment throwing a banquet for a group in good relations with him shows that that group has power over the high priest (Bruce 1971:72). It does not make sense for a high priest to throw a banquet for a specific group; instead, such an act should be done at an upper level which is beyond groups. However, the high priest chose to relate to specific groups rather than to the society at large. Therefore, his being specific towards certain groups may also be a sign that he recognized the groups with greater power (*Ant.* 14.74). Humans by nature reward, recognize and appreciate those who stand out among their peers or contemporaries. Higher powers cannot recognize, reward or appreciate even the least of their opponents or detractors. From the perspective of power relations, higher powers will always be attracted to the uniqueness of other higher powers (Stermberger 1995:105–106). From this perspective, the high priest has to reward, recognize and appreciate the higher power of the Pharisees within the choices of the powers of the groups including the Sadducees (*Ant.* 13.372). The Pharisees had the strongest or highest power of any of the groups. Because of their higher power, one can assume that they deserved a banquet from the high priest (Otzen 1990:39). This situation was a win-win situation: the Pharisees won because they had higher power than the other groups, and the high priest won because he had good relations with the highest-powered group. This means that within the groups, the Pharisees during Hyrcanus's time had higher religious power than the other groups. However, when Hyrcanus was angered by the utterance of Eleazar, who is portrayed as a person of poor character, he decided to use his high priestly power against all the Pharisees (Stermberger 1995:105–106), thus destroying the win-win situation, and the Pharisees lost their power relation with the high priest (*Ant.* 13.408).

When the high priest's power overcame the power of the Pharisees, a third power emerged as a silent source of the Pharisees' power. Because he had cut his ties with the Pharisees, Hyrcanus made himself hated even more by the people.[128] From this perspective, the source of the Pharisees' power had been the people; the Pharisees were

the voice of the political power of Second Temple Judaism in critical times such as this, and their doctrines seem to have been accepted and highly upheld within the masses of the Jewish people of the Hasmonean period (*Ant.* 13.288–298).

It makes sense to assume that Hyrcanus threw the banquet for the Pharisees to get access to the group's power and thus the people's power (Stermberger 1995:106). Therefore, it makes sense for Hyrcanus to appreciate, recognize and reward the Pharisees so that his power as high priest not be destabilized by the high power of a political group (*Ant.* 13.408). However, when his anger led him to transfer his loyalty, the political power of the Pharisees became more visible when the dimension of the people's power manifested. It is through the people's power that even during the time of Alexander Jannaeus, the people manifested the spirit of revolt, showing dissatisfaction with his descent from a prisoner (Otzen 1990:39). This power of the people seems to have been a breeding ground of the Pharisees' political power (Neusner 1979:9). No wonder that before Alexander Jannaeus died, he advised Salome Alexandra after her return to Jerusalem to cede certain powers to the Pharisees, who had much influence among the people. If this statement is worth following, it shows that the people's power, as political power, through the influence of the Pharisees, created intertwined bonds which made it difficult for the high priest of the day to use his power to serve himself (*Ant.* 13.16). From this perspective, it is arguable that the high priest's power and the centrality of the temple have not always been in full control of the national political and religious identity of the Jewish people at large. Within the process of the times, it seems as if the centrality of the temple in the political life of Second Temple Judaism failed to hold. When this came to the surface, it seems as if a new dimension which contradicted the centrality of the temple began to erupt: the Pharisees' political power through the people's power (Wise 1999:69).

This power that the people gave the Pharisees is an indication that the greater social consciousness of the Pharisees did not come from nowhere: they upheld the traditions of the fathers of oral law as equal to the written law, entrenching them as a group as the voice of the voiceless of the greater society. The religious tenets which were entrenched in the oral traditions of the customs of the society were built up even in situations of political tension. Had theirs been the upper-class stature of the Sadducees or the isolationism from the greater society of the Essenes, the people's power in defence of

the Pharisees would not have emerged. The Pharisees' resilience came through their entrenchment in the greater society, so it is no surprise that this spirit is what other scholars (Epstein 1986) asserts that the Pharisees survived the destruction of the temple in 70 CE.

5.2.2.3 Groups in Relation to the Empire and the Hasmonean Dynasty

Hellenism also contributed much in bringing to the surface the unique identities of the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes. Therefore, it is important to recognize that Hellenization affected the political, social and religious dimensions of the historical groups of Second Temple Judaism. Cook asserts,

> The early Judaic inter-testamental period was a time of major changes in all walks of Jewish life in Palestine. These changes were directly or indirectly the results of Hellenism. Individual and groups of people reacted in various ways to this phenomenon. Some were anti-Hellenistically inclined, others accommodated to it totally, whereas still others adapted to some extent. (1998:235)

This perspective shows that the three historical groups of Second Temple Judaism became divided regarding Hellenism. Some were totally accommodative, some totally rejecting and some slightly accommodative where necessary. In other words, the three saw Hellenism through different eyes. As the position of the Pharisees was different from that of Essenes, which will be unfolded below, so was that of the Sadducees. Radicalism, conservatism and liberalism seem to have been the fundamental driving forces due to the groups' interest (Otzen 1990:151). Even though the three groups were all monotheistic, Hellenism was able to cause the parties to injure each other over their doctrinal difference, as the Hasmonean priestly order had also done (*Ant.* 18.18–22). Moreover, the narration of the unique positions of the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes regarding Hellenism goes as follows: By means of a cultural anthropological model … the Sadducees were primarily politically minded, while the Pharisees adapted and survived the Jewish wars. The Essenes adopted an invasion "theology" in which heaven—not earth—was all important (Cook 1998: 243).

The isolationist perspective of the Essenes, from the centrality of the temple and greater society, affected all of their other features. Because they were not politically conscious and committed in their "invasion" approach of choosing heaven and not earth in their perspective, they left the political space to those groups which were left in the internal

centre of the temple and greater society. Moreover, it is clear that their cutting ties with greater society and temple was a sign that they had totally done away with anything which was not giving total commitment to their radicalism, which had no diplomatic approach to Hellenism. The Essenes had no room for recognising Hellenism, since it was a foreign thing, within their view of their state of well-being and hope for the future. Theirs was an isolationistic approach which was not aligned to the people power which the Pharisees had the advantage of. Theirs was an approach which did not recognise that the greater society is important and not worth discarding in the journey of the holistic approach even when one is religiously inclined and not politically inclined. For there are spaces wherein religious power is safeguarded by the good relations with the power of the people of the greater society. This could be a glimpse of the perspectives fitting some scholars in articulating why the Pharisees' survived the 70 CE temple destruction: the pre–70 CE Essenes were isolated from the greater society, while the Pharisees were intertwined with the people's power.

The Sadducees are said to have been politically minded. Their perspective placed them at an angle not entirely in conflict with the dynamics of Hellenization.

Hellenization was not a force endangering the Sadducees' political perspective, which was positive towards Hellenization. Thus their cultural liberalism was a sign of accommodation of the cultural and political influences of the Greeks. By contrast, the Pharisees demonstrated a perspective totally different from that of the Essenes and Sadducees. While the Essenes were physically isolated from greater society and looking to heaven rather than to the earth and the Sadducees were accommodative of Hellenism, the Pharisees showed a totally anti-Hellenistic perspective. The Pharisees were antagonistic not only to the inward rigidity of the aristocratic priestly class that stood against oral law but also to external entrenchment aiming to assimilate the identity of the traditions of the fathers through political means.

To the Pharisees, Hellenism was a threat to the purity of the Jewish identity; liberalism towards external perspectives like Hellenism was a total shift from defending or protecting the identity of Judaism even politically. This perspective of the Pharisees shows that they were still conscious of aligning with the protection of greater society against any external penetration. It is thus no surprise that the destruction of 70 CE

could not totally destroy their oral law perspective, which was entrenched in the ordinary masses of the greater society.

5.2.3 The Roman Empire and Herod's Rule Over Judea

The Hellenistic Empire was in control of Judea for over two centuries. However, its impact on the region would outlive it. The demise of the Hellenistic empire came about as the Romans replaced the Seleucids' empire; it was not until 63 BCE that Judea became subsumed under the Roman empire through direct control of the area through a Roman governor over the Syrian region. Under the Roman Empire, new groups also emerged which shaped the political landscape in Judea: the Herodians, Zealots, Sicarii and Christians. However, other groups' emergence did not necessarily obliterate the earlier groups such as the Sadducees, Pharisees, and Essenes.

5.2.3.1 Herod the King and the Demise of the Temple State

When the Romans took over Judea, they initially did not disrupt the local leadership in the area—governance was left in the hands of the people, particularly the aristocrats, however overseen by the empire. As Hall (1996:321) notes, the Roman Empire often left the control of the subordinated territories in the hands of the wealthy and powerful to make the aristocrats' interests coincide with those of the empire. However, the political instability in Judea due to rivalries within the Jewish society resulted in the Romans intervening in the succession struggles between the sons of Alexander Annaeus, Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II. Pompeius settled the dispute by giving Hyrcanus II the authority to be high priest but no royal title. However, tensions continued between the brothers Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II, as Aristobulus II sought to overthrow his brother. However, the political conflicts within the empire, and Judea being drawn into and taking sides in the imperial conflicts, led to further leadership developments in Judea. As clashes in the empire continued, Herod sided with Caesar Octavianus, a move which saw him rise to power, and he would later be conferred the position of vassal king of Judea.

Herod's emergence in the history of Second Temple Judaism signifies the total opposite of the aspirations of the Jewish identity at its fullness. Herod symbolized a shift away from the new normal of high priesthood leadership over religious and political affairs. Kokkinos (1998:86–139, 342–62) portrays Herod as a Hellenized Phoenician whose

Jewishness was superficial. Gafni (1984:19) asserts that the venerable practice of "priestly monarchy" changed with the ascension of Herod the Great, who ushered in one of the most disruptive periods in the Second Temple era for the high priesthood. This historical legacy shows that the Jewish society was no longer led by the priestly office only but also by a king—a return to the old biblical system of kings and priesthood. However, in this case, the royal line was not Davidic.

Wardle (2008:62) asserts that Herod was personally ineligible for the office of high priest office due to his Idumean background, and he was wary of the potential power of a strong high priest, particularly one from the Hasmonean lineage. Josephus notes that his first appointment was Annel, an obscure Babylonian priest with proper lineage but lacking a political following or agenda (*Ant.* 15.22, 39–41). This type of leadership signals insecurity towards the potential candidates; it does not want to promote the candidates who will threaten the status quo. Josephus also highlights that his Jewishness was understated by his ambiguous or flexible ethnic identity (*Ant.* 14.403) and the fact that he became a king of the Jews merely as a result of unique political circumstances designed by Anthony and Octavian to cope with the invasion of Judea by Antigonus and the Parthians; furthermore, his departure from the Jewish ethos is manifested by his own deeds contrary to Jewish laws and customs as well as a strong cultural inclination towards Rome (Richardson 1999:30–32, 62–68, 195).

The religiosity of the temple state's politics post the Babylon deportations placed the priestly aristocracy at the centre of the socio-economic and political affairs driven from a religious perspective. The space of a king had not been in place when the empire was the link in recognising the leadership of the high priesthood; the high priest's political interest at all levels, including economic, was served. Despite the political tension between the religious operation of the time and the relational operational of the imperial perspective towards Herod as king, the Jewish masses had a problem with Herod: he was not a Davidic descendant. Therefore, besides the fact that the king's personality was unlikeable, the temple state's demise was due to imperial power over the region and the political tensions within the Jewish society. The Roman empire dictated who the client king in Judea was and influenced the appointment of the high priest. Therefore, through its governor or client king, the empire removed one high priest from

office and set another. However, the priority was to maintain stability in the area (see Horsely 1998).

5.2.3.2 Herod and the Temple Renovation

Herod's rebuilding and renovating of the temple is the established legacy that cuts across more than the accusations that paint him as a king by default. In his speech about the temple project, reported by Josephus (*Ant.* 380–387), Herod elaborates on issues which are best placed as follows:

> So far as the other things achieved during my reign are concerned, my countrymen, I consider it unnecessary to speak of them, although they were of such kind that the prestige which comes from them to me is less than the security which they have brought to you. For in the most difficult situation, I have not been unmindful of the things that might benefit you in your need, nor have I in my building been more intent upon my own invulnerability than upon that of all of you, and I think I have, by the will of God, brought the Jewish nation to such a state of prosperity as it has never known before.
>
> Now as for the various buildings which we have erected in our country and in the cities of our land and in those of acquired territories, with which, as the most beautiful adornment, we have embellished our nation, it seems to me quite needless to speak of them to you, knowing them as you do
>
> But that the enterprise which I now propose to undertake is the most pious and beautiful one of our time I will now make clear. For this was the temple which our fathers built to the Most Great God after their return from Babylon, but it lacks sixty cubits in height, the amount by which the first temple, built by Solomon, exercised it. And yet no one should condemn our fathers for neglecting their pious duty, for it was not their fault that this temple is smaller. Rather, it was Cyrus and Darius, the son of Hystaspes, who prescribed these dimensions for building, and since our father were subject to them and their descendants and after them to the Macedonians, they had no opportunity to restore this archetype of piety to its former size.
>
> But since, by the will of God, I am now ruler and there continues to be a long period of peace and an abundance of wealth and great revenues, and —what is of most importance—the Romans, who are so to speak, the masters of the world, are (my) loyal friends, I will try to remedy the oversight of earlier times, and by this act of piety make full return to God for the gift of this Kingdom.

The perspective which is brought forth by Herod's letter is different from the attitude of those who opposed his leadership as a king. It is a perspective that is conscious of the people he leads as a nation. It is a perspective that reports issues that are of utmost

importance so as not to leave people hanging and caught by surprise. This type of visionary leadership can lead and pave paths for its people, though others may see its being ahead as being aloof from the people it is leading. Critics of this type of leadership usually attach personal issues that are not necessarily relevant to the official purpose by which a visionary leader like Herod is defined and confined. Such weaknesses as "Jews are traditionally not supposed to have a king" and "the historicity of his family origins" seem to cloud the thinking of opponents of a visionary leader like Herod so they do not acknowledge the great works he has done, such as the renovation of the temple of the Jewish people in Jerusalem. This tendency to "play the man and not the ball" is as ancient as hate and jealousy, just as the generosity of appreciating and giving credit where it is due have been qualitative virtues throughout human history. From these two human experiences emerge the two ancient personalities which have contributed highly as primary sources of knowledge of the Second Temple period and perhaps even more. Their approach towards Herod's work of renovating or rebuilding the temple in Jerusalem reveals the characteristics of the two tendencies just mentioned. While Philo utters a positive view and appreciation of the magnificent work done by Herod (Philo, *Leg*. 294–300), Josephus's view is negative and is consistent with so many of his views that one wonders if Josephus does not harbour a personal grudge or have a contrarian personality (*Ant.* 380–387). Regev (2010) sees Josephus as a crusader whose broad-based negative attack on Herod weakens his status as a reliable primary source within the Second Temple period and more broadly. Playing the man and not the ball is what Josephus does in his writings about Herod. While Regev (2010) acknowledges and utilises Josephus as a primary source, he clearly establishes that Josephus is biased against Herod. This can be seen in Josephus's introduction to Herod's speech quoted above. In this negative tendency, Josephus is not alone; some people are also trapped in this tendency of negativity.

Hall (1996–96:325) shows that in 42 BCE, when Antony disposed of eastern problems and reassigned territories in the eastern part of the empire, delegations of Jews approached him, demanding the removal of Antipater's sons Herod and Phasael from power, revealing a deep-seated dislike of the men because of their genealogy. The potential for all to benefit from him is not appreciated; only the negative agenda is advanced to overshadow the good being done. Josephus and the Jews of his thinking entrenched in this manner were not necessarily anti Hellenization; they were even

requesting Hellenization's very powers to remove Herod. If they had been against Hellenization, they would not have even advanced this hate to the Hellenizers. Therefore, like Herod, Hellenism was not their immediate problem but a problem which they had decided to live with rather than die fighting because, in Herod's words, the Romans were the "masters of the world". This shows that the negative tendency of Josephus and the hate of those who wanted Herod removed with his brothers is still that of those jealous of internal factions based on classifications of family, clans, regional and class backgrounds within the traditional context of the place. Herod's speech demonstrates the consciousness of a leader who is well versed in the history of the national identity of their forefathers and what they were supposed to have done and not done. Equally, he sends a reminder that they could not be blamed because the circumstances of being under different empires of those times did not allow them to accomplish what they were supposed to have done. Despite this, Josephus still calls the rebuilding and the renovation of the temple Herod's personal project.

5.2.3.3 Jewish Insurrections against Rome

Within this driving centre of the social, political, economic and religious factors are anchored. Through the supremacy of the Torah, the whole nation was led within the traditional system of family, priests and the high priesthood as the embodiment of the leadership of the collective through heredity, though people like Menelaus[95] do cross the line and negotiate for themselves with those empires that are willing to exercise their power to replace the legitimate high priests and put in illegitimate ones in exchange for increased tribute.

Taxation in various forms has been the backbone of the survival of all forms of government Without taxes no government can survive a day. For this very reason, all territories conquered by an emperor must commit to paying these taxes as part of continued allegiance to that emperor. The heavier the taxes, the more the people feel the burden, predominantly the peasants. Rome's preferred policy for conquered territories was to install local leadership rather than to bring in a person from far places (Hall 1996–97:321). This local leader would always be obliged to remember that the

[95] For more about Menelaus seizing the opportunity to buy the high priesthood office from Emperor Antiochus, see Horsely (2007:49).

emperor's revenues are not a choice but an obligation. Weaker territories gained protection from stronger invaders by paying allegiance to even stronger defenders. Hall (1996–97) shows that Rome's primary concern for the provinces was to maintain a peace in which Roman trade and commerce could be conducted to support the framework of the government, including the army as guardians of internal security and providers of protection from the threats of foreign powers or barbaric enemies outside the empire. It is important to realise that peace is the centre of socio-economic success. Without peace and economic growth, many things are affected. This means that the empire depended totally on its colonies' well-being for revenues to have economic growth.

On the other hand, such revenues are also of concern to the people who are obliged to render the taxes. Colonies like Judea are temple states, which are kept alive by temple sacrifices and other offerings, another heavy burden on the people, who must pay both the temple offering and the imperial taxes. As shown above in the discussion of the demise of the temple state, when tax and sacrifice burdens and tensions over religion are high, so are the possibilities of revolt. Within the dynamics of socio-economic and political religiosity coupled with autonomy, insurrections surface through different angles. This was no new thing in the Herodian-Roman era; it had been there in the Persian, Ptolemaic and Seleucid eras. However, it was in the Roman era that the Jews' temple state was swallowed.

5.2.3.4 The Groups and the Empire

The emergence of the Herodian dynasty within Second Temple Judaism also affected the political standing of the Essenes, Sadducees and Pharisees. This dynasty replaced the Hasmonean-era leadership, which was both the religious and the political head of the people.

The Essenes' Teacher of Righteousness, who stood opposite the Hasmonean leadership which had usurped the high priest's leadership of the temple, made a decision that distanced them from participation in temple activities in Jerusalem and caused them the disadvantage of not being identified with the people of the broader society. They were no longer active or identified with the religious, social and political doings emanating from the temple in Jerusalem and connected with broader society. As this pattern had

been during the Hasmonean period, so it was during the Herodian period. To the Essenes, the Herodian period was worse than the Hasmonean: the Jewish roots of Herodian ancestry were questionable (*Ant.* 14.8; *War* 1, 23). The Essenes could not associate with the Hasmoneans, so much less could they associate with the Herodians. Theirs was a path crafted outside any link with the Herodians. Under the Herodians they were not part of either the temple's religious, social or political space or the greater society.

The change from the Hasmonean era to the Herodian affected the Sadducees differently from how it affected the Essenes. As the Sadducees did not break ties with the temple in Jerusalem, the Herodian ascendency directly affected the operation of their religious life, which had had the political backing of the Hasmonean high priesthood. However, the Herodian ascendency did not just flow easily in the religious and political atmosphere dominated by the Hasmoneans and their supporters, who included the Sadducees (*Ant.* 14.403). Those who were still in political and religious positions, including the Sadducees, had been beneficiaries of the Hasmonean rule, and they had never objected to or challenged the Hasmoneans' religious and political headship in either the kingship or the high priesthood. Their silence during Hasmonean rule indicates that they were not disturbed by such a monarchy usurping the temple high priesthood (*Ant.* 13.288–296). However, the Sadducees were highly affected by the political and religious change from the Hasmoneans to the Herodians. They were associated with the Hasmonean supporters of Antigonus, who was captured by the Herodians and handed over to the Roman leadership of Antony to be assassinated. Following his assassination, forty-five Jewish officials who were pro Antigonus were also killed by Herod (*Ant.* 15.5–6). These killings of Antigonus and the Jewish officials show that Herod was sweeping away all political and religious forces allied with the Hasmoneans. This could not have excluded the Sadducees, who had been riding the political advantage of the Hasmonean authority. The comfortable operation which the Sadducees had been running in the temple during the Hasmonean times was no longer as stable as it was. The internal domination of the temple by the Sadducees was no longer as normal as in the previous dynasty. There was no longer temple power to uphold as "the temple porticoes were burnt and the uncontrolled Roman soldiers desired to look into the inner sanctuary itself" (Atkinson 1996:321). The haven of the

Sadducee upper class was disorganised. The only identity left was that of the broader society.

This last identity of greater society shows that forces opposed to Herodian kingship still existed and were even known to Herod himself. The upper class, the Sadducees' internal temple haven, was no longer there for the group. The shallowness of serving group interest through isolation was no longer possible. All contestations were now bound to be in the public sphere, facing Herod as the common opponent. The Sadducees at some level recognised the value of the broader society, which all along had been consistently represented by the Pharisees. The Pharisees showed consistent foresight, seeing the importance of flowing on the side of society at all times. This made the Pharisees a unique group, with abilities that survive turbulent times, as they anchored not on themselves but on the broader society.

The Herodians, assisted by the Roman soldiers that led the Sadducees, began to see the power of recognising the ordinary people of broader society. Hence, Atkinson uses the word factions to describe the supporters of the Hasmoneans and the anti-Herodians (Atkinson 1996:317). This shows that the time of internal temple upper-class isolation of the Sadducees was over. This was the time when the true defenders of the religious, social and political power of Second Temple Judaism was shown. The Pharisees consistently showed that the true source of the religious, social and political power of Second Temple Judaism was not the temple itself but the greater society. External forces challenging Second Temple Judaism were directly challenging the greater society; therefore, the anti-Herod resistance would not come from the upper-class Sadducees, who were isolated from the masses, but from the masses, who were the direct beneficiaries of the religious, social and political life entrenched in their oral and written law, the pillars of their inheritance from the traditions of their forefathers. This political disorder, born of the Herodian dynasty, proved within the groups of Second Temple Judaism that the inward looking of the Sadducees was short sighted. In contrast, the outward looking of the Pharisees was farsighted. In a situation like this, the Pharisees were not beginning to build grassroots support, as they were already at the centre of advancing the greater society's interest.

They did that during the Hasmonean period not because they opposed the Sadducees but because they understood the rhythm of being always in tune with the broader

society's mind. They demonstrated the principle of being servants of the greater society at all times. So, when they became anti-Herodian in their ways of doing things, it was not a reaction to safeguard personal interests but a continuation of the principle of flowing in the best interests of society.

5.3 CONCLUSION

The Roman Empire, which at its dawn shifted the foundation of Second Temple Judaism, did not choose a local leader of the type many Jewish people would have wanted or expected. Even though Herod rebuilt the temple, the position of kingship held powers insufficient to change the hearts of the people towards Herod. Taxes and the inter-group contestations also added weight to the impatience towards the Roman Empire. As a result, it was the Roman Empire that destroyed the temple in 70 CE. It is within this destruction of the temple that the greater society remained the only ideological ground which had the possibility of survival while the institutionality of the temple was going down. Therefore, the Sadducees were affected more than the Pharisees by the destruction of the temple because they had rejected the oral law, the backbone of the traditions of the fathers. Like the Sadducees, the Essenes were also affected by their isolative tendencies towards greater society. Therefore, the imperial wrath that brought about the physical destruction of Qumran and the Jerusalem temple dealt a stronger blow to the Sadducees and Essenes than to the Pharisees, whose strength lay outside the institutionalized operation.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

The religious, social (socio-economic) and political comparison of groups whose origins precede the Persian, Ptolemaic, Seleucid and Roman Empires in the Second Temple period of Judaism has complex perspectives which at the end of the day bring to the surface dynamics which show whether the principle of firmness or the numbers game has a stronger hand than the other. It is within this context that we have studied the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes of the Second Temple period to find out which of their characteristics had the greatest impact religiously, socially and politically, together with factors or strategies and tactics which caused identification with the greater society characteristics to have a greater impact than the other in the greater society.

We found that the impact of the Essenes within Second Temple Judaism at large is questionable and possibly non-existent. Their choice to completely break away from the centrality of the temple and its practices contributed to their position as a sect which aimed to serve a tiny group outside the greater society of Second Temple Judaism. They positioned themselves as contenders against the institutions which greater society recognised instead of being instruments of the greater society influencing its recognized institutions.

Moreover, their number was small compared to those who were in the greater society of Second Temple Judaism. Therefore, the Essenes had no great impact on Second Temple Judaism at large, not because of its doctrines but because of its isolative strategies and tactics. Their impact remained within their sect, and it failed to stand the test of time due to failure to sink deep into the masses of the greater society.

It is from this perspective that their dream collapsed sometime after the revolt in 66 CE, when the Roman soldiers advanced and destroyed their centre in Qumran, which they had established as part of an organized communal settlement, the epitome of isolation from greater society, due to extremism of their faith, the ethos of which ignored the realities and the importance of the greater society. This led to the destruction of their

organised lifestyle, and that became the end of their identity as a sect. Therefore, they cannot be seen as having had a great impact within the history of Second Temple Judaism at large and beyond, not because their operation was disputed, but because their strategies and tactics disadvantaged their good intentions.

The Essenes fought national religious issues from the standpoint of the personal identity of the Wicked Priest versus the Teacher of Righteousness, not from traditional grounds which do not alienate them from the centrality of the temple in Jerusalem and the greater society. They failed to realize that a personality issue is not bigger than the centrality of the temple, which had been a unifying factor for all the Hebrew people of different groups over the centuries.

The other groups of Second Temple Judaism chosen for this study valued and recognized the importance of the Jerusalem temple. No religious group had publicly distanced itself from the authority of the temple in Jerusalem until the Essenes became the first to cross that important religious and traditional line. Of course, they may have been doctrinally correct to call the incumbent high priest of the day the Wicked Priest, but they chose the wrong way to fight that battle by totally distancing themselves from the traditional centrality of the temple institution, which was the embodiment of the whole nation and all religious practices, even among the Diaspora.

Their social, religious and political analysis or assessment reflects no realization that the temple is important within the social (socio-economic), religious and political life of the Jewish people on the ground. The ordinary majority of Hebrew people seemed to have been traditional, highly upholding the temple of Jerusalem and opposing any religious, social or political doctrine of any group which contradicted the traditional institutions which were the symbol of the common centre of all Jewish people.

Any religious group which thought of itself more highly than the temple or its doctrine was seen as in conflict against the temple, and such a move had no traditional support from the majority of ordinary Hebrews, even if such a group had sound doctrinal teaching which esteemed the Torah from the beginning to the end. Though the high priest of the day may be questionable or of low moral standards or even accused of having bought the office of high priest, the ordinary majority of Hebrew people did not see it as a reason to reject the authority of the temple in Jerusalem; rather, no individual

was bigger than the institution. To them, the high priest came and went and was not bigger than the temple, the traditional religious institution of their forefathers. This among other factors was the major blunder of the Essenes, and it placed them in religious, political and social decline though they had a commitment far beyond that of either of the other two groups focused on in this thesis. Their radicalism (extremism) detached them from the ordinary majority of the greater society of Second Temple Judaism. They expected the people to totally turn away from the established religious, social and political system of the day, and their pace was so fast and radical (extreme) that their religious, political and social correctness went beyond borders which the ordinary majority would cross.

The Sadducees, the aristocratic, priestly, high-class sect that seems to have been politically liberal, became a vessel of Hellenization. They had been highly influenced by the upper class and so were out of touch with the majority of ordinary people on the ground, and their approach to Scripture was literalistic, so, like the Essenes, they had little impact on Judaism at large during the Second Temple period and after. They were not innovative, instead moving with the times more objectively than they should have done, especially as a group which was higher in the internal leadership dynamics of the temple and its cluster of wealthy aristocratic families.

Therefore, the Sadducees' approach of rigidity towards the interpretation of the law had a negative impact on Second Temple Judaism; this seems to have been another factor that caused the sect's decline. Even though they upheld internal power and wealthy aristocratic families, their legacy did not last beyond their time. They are unfortunately associated with the fallen side of history because they were assimilated within the religious, social and political processes of time due to their upper-class institutionalized practices which rejected the traditions of the fathers which were entrenched within the ordinary masses of the greater society.

In reality, the Sadducees were more a political than a religious quantity, so it is no surprise that they disappeared with the Jewish national state in the year 70 CE. Truly, they seem to have been outclassed by the Pharisees as a solidly established social quantity.

The Pharisees played a role within the scope of Second Temple Judaism and beyond that remains outstanding and entrenched. Their perspective seems to have been the only identity to survive the catastrophe. Unlike the Sadducees and the Essenes, who were destroyed by the entrenchment of the Roman system, the Pharisees were able to survive that catastrophe because they were entrenched in the greater society rather than clinging to the institutionalised Qumran settlement and the temple system.

It is in this dimension that Pharisaism's greatness and importance within the Jewish society emerged as a sole voice within the life of the devoted society. Therefore, this group can be seen as a sect which had entrenched its impact within the strategies and tactics of the life of the Jewish people and beyond. Its greatness can also be traced within its perspective of beliefs, which were able to infiltrate the lives of the ordinary Jewish people on the ground and later even into the loins of Christianity at its formative phase.

The Pharisees' interpretations of the oral law were able to create an identity of a life that became the passion of ordinary individuals even during different times, which proves them to have been relevant and the innovators of their times. They tried to find a balance between being extreme or passive towards the greater society of Second Temple Judaism. Where the Essenes were thought to be extreme, they were not. Where the Sadducees were thought to be passive and rigid through an upper-class mentality against the greater society, they were not.

As pioneers of synagogues, they were able to keep their religious, political and social life from being uprooted by the destruction of the Jerusalem temple by the Roman system because they were already upholding a view of worshipping God universally and not in the Jerusalem temple only or isolated in places like Qumran. They were able to overcome the limitations that trapped the Sadducees and the Essenes. By the time the Roman procurators came into power, the position of the Pharisees was so firmly entrenched that the Romans were obliged to respect it.

Even the Romans were able to notice that they were a force that could not be ignored or destroyed by any physical force. As a conservative group, the Pharisees developed into a solidly established social quantity predicated solely on the idea of Israel consisting of the pure and holy. They were able to dominate the social, religious and

even political life of the majority of the Jewish people through their doctrine. Therefore, their twofold view of the written law and the oral law can also be seen as another fundamental factor that contributed to shaping the religious ideals of the Pharisees and the nation at large.

After a thorough investigation, Flavius Josephus—and he should be in a position to select the best among the three groups—considers the Pharisees the best of the three groups of Second Temple Judaism because of their strategies and tactics, which were consistent in flowing with the greater society while recognising the traditional institutions which groups like the Essenes took lightly. Layers that make the Pharisees the best compared with the other groups reveal the power of the numerical principle, which seems to have been the timeless factor that determines the rhythm that separates the powerful from the weak and the winners from the losers.

The economics of the political game occurs through the social and religious entrenchment in the greater society. This numerical principle seems to reveal that the democratic principle of people power has been the fundamental layer that fuelled the power of the Pharisees within Second Temple Judaism. The strength of the Pharisees was not only in their doctrine but also in the reception and relevance of their doctrine through the strategies and tactics they had towards the ordinary masses of the people of Second Temple Judaism.

The Pharisees were able to capture the power of the masses of their time in their contestation with other groups such as the Sadducees and Essenes. It is from this spirit of the numerical principle that the Pharisees generated among people a spirit that proved mightier than the sword and loyalty that has stood the test of centuries better than all parties and sects that existed during the time of destruction.

It is important to realize that individuals, organizations, groups and even nations continue to influence the future because they gain a numerical advantage. Without a numerical advantage, organizations, groups and even nations cannot influence the people on the ground. Of course, they may use other means of enforcing their authority, but such enforcement, if it is not based on the established numerical advantage through entrenched knowledge, will suffer disadvantage when seasons of change come. It is here that the Pharisees are affirmed as the group with the numerical advantage through

their religious, social and political skills, which had been weaved through the power of the combination of written law and oral law. Their doctrine or ideology seems not to have eroded with time like those of the Sadducees and Essenes, which means that they were able to infiltrate deeply to where seasons of change could not reach.

Therefore, as Josephus is the primary source of information on the three major groups or sects, the picture he paints is certainly oversimplified or over-systemized, and truly this correlation was an attempt to help the Gentiles understand the realities of Judaism.

The Pharisees managed to capture the will of the majority for their identity. Therefore, from this perspective, it becomes fitting to articulate the principle of basic mathematical (numbers game) wisdom: religiously, socially (socio-economic) and politically, large numbers is the fundamental guiding layer to the success of any individual, group or organization whether from a political, religious or social perspective or otherwise. Even the Persian, Ptolemaic, Seleucid and Roman Empires were playing the politics of mathematical (numbers game) wisdom as they won or lost in their missions of dominating other territories and kings.

Whoever captures the numerical principle of people power—irrespective of whether such a person is doctrinally or ideologically correct—such person, group or organization will have decisive influence the future. As politics is grounded in people power, religion too has been grounded in people power, irrespective of the correctness or incorrectness of the doctrine. This is a timeless truth which is still relevant even today in the twenty-first century and perhaps even beyond.

If the Pharisees had begun to lose touch with the ordinary majority within Second Temple Judaism society, that would have been the day wherein their religious, social and political impact would have to decline. Therefore, the groups of Second Temple Judaism teach us that the dynamics of people power are the driving force of the success and failure of political, religious or social, groups or organizations.

Therefore, it becomes fitting to acknowledge that doctrines or ideologies are not greater than numerical power (people power). The Essenes and Sadducees may have been supported by the right doctrines or ideologies, but they lost the religious, political and social authority of the greater society of Second Temple Judaism and beyond because they ignored the consciousness and consistent rhythm of the greater society. Those who

capture numerical power (people power) even in this modern time seem to rule the nations. The Pharisees captured it, and they ruled the Second Temple Judaism of their time and anchored in rabbinic Judaism in a different form post 70 CE.

The will of the majority (democratic principles) in any religious, political or social organization carries the impact of such organization irrespective of the correctness or incorrectness of its doctrine or ideology. The Pharisees through the numerical principle were able to emerge as the winners of the pre–70 CE contestation with the Sadducees and Essenes irrespective of the correctness or incorrectness of their doctrine or ideology. Whoever wins the hearts and minds of the ordinary majority even if his agenda is objectively wrong wins the future. This is what made the Pharisees smarter than the Essenes and Sadducees. This is the principle which is also governing the religious, political and social doctrines and ideologies of modern times in the twenty-first century and hopefully even beyond.

For further research in expanding the depth of this space and growing the body of knowledge socially, educationally, politically, religiously (spiritually), economically, culturally and otherwise, the areas of focus in a broader sense needs to cover the economic, educational and cultural dynamics of the different empires (emperors), kingdoms (kings) and regions (chiefs, etc.) within the Second Temple period. Take note: religious, social and political factors are always intertwined with economic, educational, cultural and other factors. Therefore, the areas of focus will one way or the other still evoke the three factors this study has focused on. This will contribute to widening the body of knowledge of society, economy, politics, spirituality (religiosity), education, and culture. These important factors contributed immensely to the broader discourse of Second Temple Judaism then and still do so now.

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