Headed by Dr. Solomon Schechter to Tell of the Beliefs of a Band of Jews Who Broke Away from the Older Body About 290 B.C. -- Dr. G. Margoliouth Dates It About 70 C. D.

The discovery of a document of great importance to the study of the religion of the Jews is announced. This document, which is said to be older than any other Jewish manuscript known, was found in the city of Jerusalem. It is believed to be the work of a group of Jews who broke away from the main body of Judaism about 290 B.C. and who were known as the Sadducees. The document was dated by Dr. G. Margoliouth to about 70 C. D., thus placing it in the time of the Roman Empire.

Dr. Solomon Schechter, who led the research, said that the document contained evidence of the beliefs of the Sadducees, a sect that was influential in the period of the Hasmonean dynasty. The document also revealed new information about the history of Judaism and the development of Jewish thought.

The discovery of this document is significant because it provides a glimpse into the beliefs and practices of a group of Jews who were heretical in their views. This group, which was known as the Sadducees, was opposed to the teachings of the Pharisees and the Talmud, and was eventually suppressed by the Roman authorities.

The document contains evidence of the beliefs of the Sadducees, who were known for their strict adherence to the laws of the Torah and their rejection of the concept of resurrection. The document also provides insight into the political and social conditions of the time, including the influence of the Hasmonean dynasty and the Roman Empire.

Dr. Schechter said that the discovery of this document is a major contribution to the study of Jewish history and will help scholars better understand the development of Jewish thought. The document is currently housed in the Israel Museum in Jerusalem.
Identification of the Davidic Messiah with the founder of the dynasty of David.

The other ground for regarding the Messiah and the original Zadok as one and the same person appears much stronger. According to the text as it stands, 390 years passed between the destruction of the Temple by Nebuchadnezzar and the appearance of the Zadokite Messiah, if this date could be relied on Prof. Scherer's position is positively untenable. It is impossible that the amount of time calculated from the few words and the condition of the people of the time to be described by such an idler as the Zadokites) to suppose that one section of them or a part would much rather favor a priestly Messiah and claim for him the divine name which the people of the time themselves would, in fact, postulate such an attitude.

"There seems, therefore, nothing strange in the supposition here put forward that John, the Baptist, whose high mission was fixed by a large numbers of people, was acclaimed by the people as in some sense a Messiah or anointed leader of the nation.

"But a more important identification is to follow. If John the Baptist was the Messiah Messiah referred to at the beginning of the law of the Teacher of Righteousness' who is stated to have followed him must be Jesus himself. John must at once be taken as the fact he twenty years are said to have elapsed between the beginning of the two ministries, and it is right to say that this interval of time should come as a relief to those who have found it difficult to crowd all the activity, successes and trials of the Baptist within the space of one year or not much more than that. It is surely not necessary to defend the Lucan tradition on this point at all hazards, and it is quite likely that the newly discovered document here just given us the right perspective of events.

"A remarkable truly surprising confirmation of the identity of Jesus with the 'Teacher of Righteousness' appears to be provided for us on p. 2 of the document. It is there said that 'in the explanation of his name (i.e., the Messiah's name) are also their names.' What does this mean? Prof. Schechter is not able to say. He therefore proposes an emendation which, however, cannot attach any meaning.

"Now, the Boethians, who are commonly believed to have been a variety of Sadducees, (see e.g. Jewish Encyclopedia vol. 3, p. 255), derived their name from a priest named Boethos, (Boethos, helper), a name, let it be remarked, which was by no means common among the Jews, and those of the time in question.

"But the meaning of Boethos is the same as that of the Hebrew 'name represented by Jesus. The inference would therefore be that the section of the Zadokites or Sadducees who adopted an attitude of belief toward the Baptist and Jesus were none other than the Boethians or people identical with the great company of believing priests of Acts 6:7, who not unnaturally liked to dwell on the identity of meaning between their name and that of the 'Teacher.' Unless, however, a better explanation of the phrase is forthcoming, it is not too much to say that we have here come upon the true key to every part of the riddle and the entire situation.

"But who is the 'man of scoffing' who is sent throughout Israel to pervert the nation and turn them away from the Law? It is clear that if the two preceding identifications are correct this third personage must be none other than Paul the Apostle, who would, from the Judaizing point of view, be regarded as one of the worst enemies of the faith.

"It is remarkable that the period here assigned to his activity and that of his immediate following is about forty years, a sequence of time which accords with the result of recent critical computation (see e.g. Hastings' Bible Dictionary, vol. 3, p. 715)

"As St. Paul was in his day (and indeed much later, if the Pseudo-Clementine writings really mean St. Paul when they speak of Simon Magus) one of the most misunderstood and most bitterly slandered of all the great men who have ever lived, it need not surprise us that he is accused in the present document of fostering the sect the Temple, which is clearly stated to have taken place at the end of the destruction of the land, which can hardly be anything else than the completion of the Roman conquest in A.D. 70."

"Prof. Schechter thinks that the designation of the Messiah the 'noble,' already referred to, must point to Greek times, but surely the Roman Emperor as overlord of the Greek principalities in Asia might as suitably be styled 'head of the Greek kings' as King George V. can bear the title 'Emperor of India' in another part of Asia of to-day."

"Another apparently inevitable conclusion of the whole matter, therefore, is that we have here to do with a primitive Judeo-Christian body of people who, consisted of priests and Levites belonging to the Boethian section of the Sadducean party, fortified as the document shows--by a considerable Israelitish lay element, besides a real and contemptuous admixture of proselytes."

"Orientalists do not at present allow themselves to say more than that the interpretation of Dr. Margoliouth is 'plausible.' Dr. Schechter himself in his introduction to the whole matter says that he offers his theory with indifference, at any rate, it is certain that the past has given up a document of vast importance to the history of Christianity."

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