

spectacular find the archaeological hierarchy otherwise took over. Near eastern warfare has hampered this operation very greatly but the earlier work was extensive enough to tell us of the existence of the community in Maccabean times and the dates of the scrolls and texts went back to that period and beyond with some later works also. It was a very unique and diversified body of material.

How there came to be so many fragments is a mystery. Originally only the major scrolls came to the attention of scholars but there soon were found caves with thousands of sherds and fragments...an incalculably large amount of stuff. That this was a community of sectarian righteousness is no longer doubted. That there was a tremendous interest in biblical literature as well as other literary finds is also apparent. The community is generally identified with the Essenes and the Manual of Discipline found in it is very similar to the Zadokite document found in the Cairo Geniza. Not all particulars of the community agree with previous knowledge of the Essenes but there are enough similarities to make the identification realistic.

The value of the material is obvious. This represented the largest pre-masoretic Hebrew cache ever. It gave biblical texts which, in some cases, are nearly 1,000 years older than the texts now known. It also supplied Greek texts (other than the LXX) and some early commentary material. In short, it opened a whole new chapter in the study of the Hebrew text...being very hard on some theories and very agreeable with others.

b. The Basic Texts

(1) The Isaiah Text of St. Mark's Monastery. It is a beautifully prepared and preserved scroll text, a complete text older than Maccabean times. It has been photocopied and may be purchased in photocopy from the American School of Oriental Research (the photocopy is, of course, in codex form). It is an amazing document and the textual variants with the Masoretic text are footnoted in the 7th edition of BH in a third paragraph of footnotes where practicable. The textual notes are unpointed but you will have no trouble reading them in comparison with the pointed Hebrew of the MT.

(2) The Habakkuk Text and Commentary. Although only two chapters of the minor prophet are