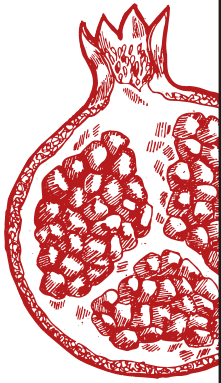
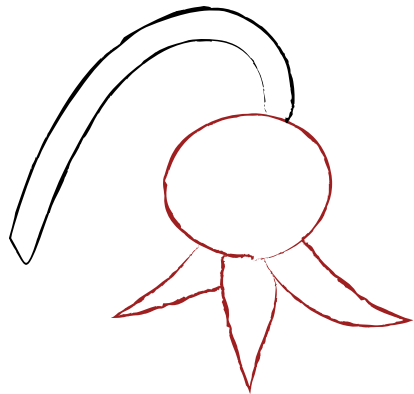


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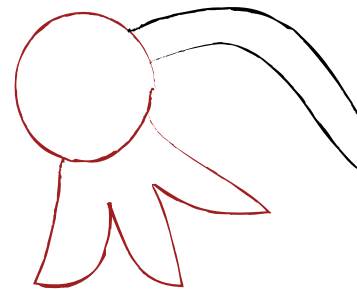


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ADVANCES IN ANCIENT BIBLICAL  
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**THE RHETORICAL USE OF ISRAEL, EPHRAIM,  
AND JUDAH IN THE DAMASCUS DOCUMENT**

*Hanne Kirchheiner*

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remnant, returnees, national division

## Abstract

The rhetorical use of the terms Israel, Ephraim, and Judah in the Damascus Document has been the focus of much debate, but some key issues have still not been resolved. This study revisits the discussions regarding the usage of these terms. In some passages Israel and Judah are used with qualifiers, which can for instance be seen in the intriguing phrase, “the penitents of Israel, who left the land of Judah” (CD 6:5, also attested in 4Q266 3 ii 12 and 4Q267 2 11–12). This inquiry offers a survey of the passages in which qualifiers are used. Ephraim is only mentioned explicitly in two sections of the Damascus Document (CD 7:12–13 and 14:1, also attested in 4Q267 9 v 2–3) in which Isa 7:17 is quoted featuring the discourse of Ephraim departing from Judah. One of these passages is analyzed to uncover the usage of Ephraim versus Judah in this discourse. It is concluded that “the Princes of Judah” are compared to Ephraim and depicted as those who depart, because they have adopted a foreign way of life, the way of the kings of Greece. They are accused of causing national division similar to the schism when Ephraim departed from Judah. In this discourse Judah signifies the movement reflected in the Damascus Document. The qualifiers are seen to be key to understanding the usage of Israel and Judah. Israel is the party with whom God made a covenant, “all Israel” has strayed, but “the penitents of Israel” have repented of their sins. Whenever Judah is used with a qualifier, it is seen to concern the political leadership of Judah and its rule of the land.



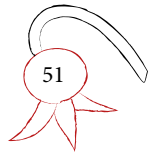
La façon dont les termes Israël, Éphraïm et Juda sont utilisés rhétoriquement dans le Document de Damas a fait l'objet de nombreux débats, mais certains problèmes restent irrésolus. Cette étude reprend les discussions concernant ces termes. Dans certains passages, Israël et Juda sont accompagnés de qualificatifs, comme par exemple dans la phrase curieuse, « les pénitents d'Israël, qui ont quitté le pays de Juda » (CD 6:5, également attestée en 4Q266 3 ii 12 et 4Q267 2 11-12). Cette analyse propose un aperçu des passages dans lesquels on trouve des qualificatifs. Éphraïm n'est mentionné explicitement que dans deux sections du Document de Damas (CD 7:12-13 et 14:1, également attestées dans 4Q267 9 v 2-3) lesquelles citent És 7:17, où figure le discours d'Éphraïm quittant Juda. L'analyse d'un de ces passages permet de repérer l'emploi d'Éphraïm versus celui de Juda dans ce discours. On peut conclure que “les Princes de Juda « sont comparés à Éphraïm et présentés comme ceux qui partent, car ils ont adopté un mode de vie étranger, celui des rois de Grèce. Ils sont accusés de provoquer une division nationale similaire au schisme créé par le départ d'Éphraïm. Dans ce discours, Juda représente le mouvement reflété dans le Document de Damas. Les qualificatifs sont essentiels pour comprendre les emplois d'Israël et de Juda. Israël est le groupe avec lequel Dieu a fait alliance ; “tout Israël « s'est égaré, mais “les pénitents d'Israël” se sont repentis de leurs péchés. Lorsque Juda est accompagné d'un qualificatif, on peut affirmer que cela concerne la domination politique de Juda et sa souveraineté sur le pays.



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## THE RHETORICAL USE OF ISRAEL, EPHRAIM, AND JUDAH IN THE DAMASCUS DOCUMENT

*Hanne Kirchheiner*



### Introduction

The rhetorical use of the terms “Israel,” “Ephraim,” and “Judah” in the Damascus Document has been the focus of much debate, but some key issues have still not been resolved. The subject has not been made less complex by the attempts that have been made to identify the movement reflected in the text with one of the groups known from the classical sources, namely Essenes, Sadducees, or Pharisees or to interpret the Damascus Document as an integrated part of the Qumran scrolls. This approach poses methodological problems, and I have decided to consider the movement reflected in the Damascus Document separately using exegetical methods. I will endeavour to offer an overview of the use of the terms, and then include exegesis of certain important passages.

The Damascus Document is part of the corpus of texts found at Qumran. However, two medieval copies of the Damascus Document had already been found at the end of the nineteenth century in a storeroom of a synagogue, a *genizah*, in Cairo by Solomon Schechter

(Hempel 2000, 15). The dating of the Qumran fragments suggests the earliest copy to be 4Q266, written in semi-cursive Hasmonean script (Baumgarten 1996, 1–2). Thus, the Damascus Document must have been in existence before its earliest copy 4Q266 was then produced in the first half of the first century BCE (Hempel 2000, 21–24). The well-preserved Cairo Damascus Document, henceforth CD, is shorter than the texts found in the caves, but where they overlap the texts correspond closely to each other (Hempel 2000, 24). The two CD manuscripts are generally referred to as Manuscript A and Manuscript B. Manuscript B consists of only two columns, partly overlapping with Manuscript A (Schechter 1910). The Damascus Document has traditionally been divided into what is referred to as the Admonition (cols. 1–8; 19–20) and the Laws (cols. 9–16). Baumgarten argues that the Admonition continually calls for obedience to the Torah and its proper interpretation and views the Admonition as a hortatory preface to a corpus of Torah interpretations (Baumgarten 1992, 55). Wacholder similarly criticises the division between Admonition and Law used ever since Schechter and argues that “the two themes are constantly interwoven” (Wacholder 2007, 12).



The Damascus Document is underpinned by a framework of revered scriptures, and it is necessary to be cautious in relation to concepts of time and geography as metaphorical use of these concepts is presented in a complex relationship to scripture. While some of these allusions and actual quotations can be recognised easily, others are more subtle. A careful analysis of the terminology is often needed to disclose those that are more hidden.

Israel and Judah are sometimes accompanied with attributing phrases, and I contend that these qualifiers are key to understanding the usage of Israel and Judah. Ephraim is only mentioned explicitly in two passages of the Damascus Document, quoting Isa 7:17. However, several implicit allusions to Ephraim exist.

This inquiry commences with a short review of the main theories proposed by the existing scholarship, concerning the meaning of these terms in the Damascus Document.

## Short Review of Existing Scholarship

Since the early days of Qumran research, scholars have taken an interest in the typological language in the scrolls. A particular fascination has centred around possible terms of self-identification of the members of the community and their opponents. The studies of these terms have often been based on integration of the interpretation of the Damascus Document with that of other texts from Qumran. As we noted above, this poses methodological problems. We cannot assume that all or several of the texts use the same typology.

Attempts have been made to identify the movement reflected in the text with one of the groups known from the classical sources, namely Essenes, Sadducees, or Pharisees. Similarly, speculation regarding the terms “Ephraim” and “Judah” has developed out of an attempt to relate these names to groups known from the classical sources. As these theories are derived from studies of the *Pesharim*, we shall not concern ourselves with these.<sup>1</sup>

The term “Israel” is mentioned over 40 times in CD often with attributing phrases. It has often been claimed that the movement considered itself to be “the true Israel.” This terminology is not found anywhere in the Damascus Document and Harvey has convincingly demonstrated that this is not the way the movement members identified themselves (Harvey 1996, 189–218). Nonetheless, this choice of words is still used by some scholars (e.g., Davies 2007, 33; Sheinfeld 2016, 37). Davies uses this terminology in an article in which he wrestles with the fact that he sees three “Israels” in play in the Damascus Document: (1) the movement, (2) Israel of the past, punished by exile, (3) the contemporary society outside the movement. He considers the use of the term “Israel” to be ambiguous, and he aptly observes the importance of qualified usage. Davies lists various qualifiers, which he considers to be referring to the members of the movement: שְׁבִי יִשְׂרָאֵל (CD 4:2; 6:5; 8:16), “Aaron and Israel” (CD 1:7; 6:2; 10:5; 14:9; 20:1; cf. CD 12:23–13:1), “all Israel” (CD 15:5), “children of Israel” (CD 14:5), “cities



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<sup>1</sup> A review of the origins of this hypothesis can be found in Bengtsson 2000, 136, 153–55.

of Israel” (CD: 12:19), but also asserts that the term “remnant” signifies the movement (Davies 2007, 33).

In two passages of the Damascus Document, we encounter this concept of “remnant” (CD 1:1–8; 2:11–12). This concept was already advanced by the biblical prophets (Jeremias 1949, 191), who developed it into “a key motif in eschatology and a guarantee that God would not fail his people” (Glasser 1991, 13). In Isaiah it becomes associated with exile from which only a few will return. Furthermore, return and repentance are linked in Isaiah, due to the dual meaning of the verb, שׁוּב (Blenkinsopp 2006, 225–27). Thus, the translation of שְׁבִי יִשְׂרָאֵל, generally thought to denote the movement, has been a matter of debate, as to whether the expression concerns return from exile or repentance from sin (Hempel 2000, 57). Murphy-O’Connor, a proponent for the idea that the movement originated in Babylon, argued that the phrase should be translated geographically as those who returned to Judah from Babylon, the returnees of Israel (Murphy-O’Connor 1970 and 1974). This idea was taken up by Davies in his study of the Damascus Document (Davies 1983, 122–23). Contrary to this view, Fabry maintains that the verb שׁוּב in CD 6:5 is used in a religious and ethical sense of turning around from sin (Fabry 1975, 310). Brooke contends that this viewpoint has subsequently won general support (Brooke 2005, 73–74).



A common assumption that “Ephraim” is an epithet of the opposition of the movement and that “Ephraim” is associated with a group called “the Seekers of Smooth Things,” stems from studies of the *Peshirim*. However, Collins suggests that this assumption “builds upon *implicit* scriptural allusions present in the Damascus Document” (Collins 2017, 210). He concurs that the ambiguity of the terms “Ephraim” and “Judah” “enables multiple layers of meaning and interpretation” because the terms “conjure up a diverse range of biblical imagery” (Collins 2017, 213). Collins maintains that although “Ephraim” only occurs in two passages (CD 7:11–14; 13:23–14.1), quoting Isa 7:17, “the day Ephraim departed from Judah,” there is a web of subtle allusions to “Ephraim” and its association with the “the Seekers of Smooth Things” throughout the first column, with underlying references to Isa 30:9–13 and Hos 10:11–12. Likewise, in CD 4:19–20, an implicit



association between Ephraim and the opponents of the movement can be found due to the underlying scripture, in this case Hos 5:10 (Collins 2017, 221–24, see also Campbell 1995, 56 and 128). He concludes that “Ephraim” appears to be associated with “the Seekers of Smooth Things.” However, he argues that a direct correspondence between the movement and “Judah” is not plausible, as “Judah” is sometimes cast as good and sometimes bad in the Damascus Document (Collins 2017, 218 and 225).

Bergsma has written an article based on several of the Qumran scrolls (1QS, 1QSa, CD, 11QT, 1QM, 1QpHab). Following Talmon, he assumes these are written by the same movement (Talmon 1994, 3–24). He argues that the term “Israel,” often used with qualifiers, is used as self-identification for the movement while “Judah” is not (Bergsma 2008, 172–73). Bergsma reckons that שבי ישראל is an important self-identification for the community (Bergsma 2008, 180), but disagrees strongly with scholars who have understood “Judah” as a self-identification of the movement. He contends that the word “Judah” is only mentioned “nine times in CD, of which four are simply quotations to scripture” (Bergsma 2008, 180). The statement “simply quotations to scripture” is intriguing, as nothing is *simply* quotations of scripture in the Damascus Document. It has been established by Campbell that the Admonition belongs to a broader exegetical tradition, which has connected a number of biblical passages in a framework uniting the Admonition (Campbell 1995, 205–206). In a recent work, Goldman has shown that the Admonition consists of “explicit quotations from scriptures and implicit allusions” entwined and interpreted in a creative manner, including *Pesher* interpretation. Furthermore, she contends that the Admonition offers a polemical introduction to the rules, connecting the two parts of the Damascus Document (Goldman 2018, 385–411).

Leaving out the quotations of scripture, Bergsma is left with five occurrences of “Judah,” of which three are chosen for analysis, as he contends that these are understood by some scholars as a self-identification for the movement. The first two occurrences concern “the land of Judah” (CD 3:21; 6:2), the third the reference to “the House of Judah” (CD 4:10). His compelling analysis of these passages will be





dealt with as part of the exegetical sections below. Finally, he explains that the passage in CD 7:11–21 has been interpreted by Abegg (1997, 11–25) and some other scholars as an allegory of the Babylonian exile in which “the community identifies itself with the returned Judean exiles of Babylon” (Bergsma 2008, 182). He carries out a convincing analysis of why the notion of exile to Damascus has nothing to do with the Babylonian exile, as it is exegetically referring to Amos 5:27 (Bergsma 2008, 182–84). Sadly, in this analysis he completely leaves out the two notions of “Judah” (and “Ephraim”) in CD 7:12a, a quotation of Isa 7:17, and in CD 7:12b–13 the interpretation of Isa 7:17. He concludes that the community avoids identification as Judeans and proposes the following reasons: the leadership was Levitical/Zadokite, thus they resist suppressing their own tribal heritage under that of Judah. Based on eschatological references in the other scrolls, he maintains that the movement sees itself as a vanguard awaiting “the eschatological, pan-Israelite restoration of the twelve tribes” (Bergsma 2008, 187). Furthermore, he assumes that the movement does not see the Judean state or the return from Babylon as fulfilment of the prophecies concerning the restoration of Israel, as only one or at best three tribes returned (Bergsma 2008, 187–88). His conclusions demonstrate that he understands the notion of “Judah” in the Damascus Document to concern the tribe of Judah. Bergsma’s study includes no analysis of or explanation for the discourses involving Ephraim and Judah in the Damascus Document, only an analysis of three of the places in which Judah is used with a qualifier.



Staples notes that the movement members generally refrain from calling themselves “Israel,” but instead “identify themselves as a faithful subset within Israel” (Staples 2021, 263), particularly with the שבִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל, who established the covenant in Damascus, which in CD 20:12 is described as the new covenant, referring to Jer 31:31. Staples, who concurs with Bergsma that the community anticipates the eschatological pan-Israelite restoration of the twelve tribes (Staples 2021, 259), maintains that the notion of the new covenant in CD 20:12 as well as the notion of a root in CD 1:7 demonstrates that the movement “presents its own origin as the true beginning of Israel’s restoration” (Staples 2021, 266). Unlike Bergsma, Staples includes a short analysis

of the discourse in the Admonition involving Ephraim and Judah CD 7:9–15, because he notes that this passage has also been interpreted as referring to the separation of the movement (Judah) from its opponents (Ephraim). However, he asserts that it does not appear that the movement identifies itself with either party. Rather, the movement acknowledges “a time of strife (the present day of CD) so great as to recall the original split between the northern and southern kingdoms” (Staples 2021, 261). He reckons it is remarkable that other scholars routinely have missed that CD 7:12–13 (citing Isa 7:17) recalls the separation between the two houses of Israel and the Assyrian invasion. Staples maintains that the recollection underscores the movement’s vision of exile and restoration (Staples 2021, 266).

## Israel

According to CD 3:13, “God established his covenant with Israel for ever.” Covenant is a central concept in the Damascus Document. Hempel states that the term “covenant” “occurs 44 times in the mediæval and ancient manuscripts not including references that occur in overlapping sections” (Hempel 2000, 79). The concept is so central that Davies, for example, entitled his monograph about the Damascus Document, *The Damascus Covenant* (Davies 1983). Some scholars have even suggested that the Damascus Document was written for use as a liturgical text used at covenant renewal ceremonies (e.g., Knibb 1987, 14; Vermes 1998, 127). Blanton maintains that the concept of covenant in the Damascus Document relies profoundly on scriptural prototypes from what is now known as the Hebrew Bible (Blanton 2007, 38). Christiansen likewise asserts the dependence of the use of the term in the Damascus Document on the Hebrew Bible. She emphasizes that the use of the term “covenant” in the Damascus Document conveys a perception of continuity, especially with the covenant at Sinai, even when the covenant is sometimes referred to as new (Christiansen 1995, 109).

Campbell has identified an underlying framework of biblical allusions informing the text in CD 1:1–2:1, which reveals a storyline of rebellion and punishment and the restoration of a righteous remnant.



A pattern repeats itself throughout the document (Campbell 1995, 59). In CD 1:4 and 2:11 we encounter the expression a “remnant” for Israel or a “remnant for the land.” These two sections introduce the concept of a “remnant.” Both passages refer to judgment, military defeat, exile, and an indication that the group reflected in the text belonged to a people who had been faced with the possibility of extinction.

The first use of the expression appears in CD 1:3–8a,<sup>2</sup> as part of a passage attested to in CD 1:1–11a (corresponding to variants in 4Q266 2 i 6b–15a and 4Q268 1 9–18):

<p>3 כי במועלם אשר עזבוהו הסתיר פניו מישראל וממקדשו</p>	<p><sup>3</sup> For when they were unfaithful in that they forsook him, he hid his face from Israel and from his sanctuary</p>
<p>4 ויתנם לחרב ובזכרו ברית ראשונים השאיר שארית</p>	<p><sup>4</sup> and delivered them up to the sword. But when he remembered the covenant with the forefathers, he saved a remnant</p>
<p>5 לישראל ולא נתנם לכלה ובקץ חרון שנים שלוש מאות</p>	<p><sup>5</sup> for Israel and did not deliver them up to destruction; and in the era of wrath three hundred and</p>
<p>6 ותשעים לתיתו אותם ביד נבוכדנאצר מלך בבל</p>	<p><sup>6</sup> ninety years after having delivered them up into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon,</p>
<p>7 פקדם ויצמח מישראל ומאהרן שורש מטעת לירוש</p>	<p><sup>7</sup> he visited them and caused a root of the planting to sprout from Israel and from Aaron, in order to possess</p>
<p>8 את ארצו ולדשן בטוב אדמתו</p>	<p><sup>8</sup> his land and to become fat with the good things of his soil.</p>



As can be seen from this part of the text, the relationship with God is described in covenantal terms. Israel is described as having been unfaithful. Due to this breach of the covenant, God “delivered them up to the sword” (CD 1:4). The concept of “the sword” is particularly linked to Lev 26 and Deut 28–32. In Lev 26 various punishments are described which will occur if the covenant with God is broken and, in v. 25, the sword is described as carrying out “the vengeance of the covenant” (Campbell 1995, 57). However, in CD 1:4 it is also argued

<sup>2</sup> Hebrew text from García Martínez and Tigchelaar 1997; translation mine.

that because of this covenant God did not let Israel be destroyed, but notably saved a “remnant for Israel.”

Israel is then scolded for having forsaken God, and this is taken as the explanation of why he hid his face and let them be delivered up to the sword. The expression that God “hid his face” is also used in the book of Jubilees as a metaphor for the Babylonian exile (Blenkinsopp 2006, 235). This is the first section of the Damascus Document in which a foreign power is mentioned. This narrative introducing the exile and Nebuchadnezzar has received much scholarly attention. This is partly because it is woven into the fabric of what has been interpreted as a narrative of the origins of the movement reflected in the text. Many of the early scholars have taken the “remnant” that was saved from destruction at the time of the exile to denote the beginning of the movement. A minority of scholars have tried to solve this riddle by arguing that the movement originated in Babylon, as they take the allusions to “exile” in the documents as literal expressions of the Babylonian exile. This argument was first voiced by Murphy-O’Connor (Murphy-O’Connor 1974, 215–44) and taken up by Davies (Davies 1983, 122–23). However, Davies argues that the “remnant” (CD 1:4) mentioned in relation to the time of delivering Israel up to the sword is distinct from the “root” (CD 1:7) coming into existence at a considerably later time (Davies 1983, 65). This observation was also made by Campbell, who talks of two points of reference, “one exilic and the other considerably later” (Campbell 1995, 194). At the most basic level the reference to a remnant left after the exile only denotes that their ethnic group had not been destroyed at that point in history and this is what I take it to mean. I therefore do not believe there is any mention here of a relation between the time of Nebuchadnezzar and the beginning of the movement.

We shall now turn our attention to the second passage in which remnant appears. The text starts in CD 2:2 with an exhortation to listen, addressed to those who enter the covenant, so it is plausible to see this as a new section. CD 2:3b–12a, corresponding to 4Q266 2 ii 3b–12a, reads:<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Hebrew text from García Martínez and Tigchelaar 1997; translation mine.



אל אהב דעת חכמה ותושייה הציב לפניו <sup>3b</sup>	<sup>3b</sup> God loves knowledge; wisdom and counsel are before him
ערמה ודעת הם ישרתוהו ארך אפים עמו <sup>4</sup> ורוב סליחות	<sup>4</sup> prudence and knowledge are at his service; patience is his and abundance of pardon
לכפר בעד שבי פשע וכוח וגבורה וחמה <sup>5</sup> גדולה בלהבי אש	<sup>5</sup> to atone for those repenting from sin, but strength and power and hot flames of fire
בי(ד) כל מלאכי חבל על סררי דרך ומתעבי <sup>6</sup> חק לאין שאירית	<sup>6</sup> by the hand of the angels of destruction upon those turning away from the way and abhorring the precepts, leaving them without a remnant
ופליטה למו כי לא בחר אל בהם מקדם עולם <sup>7</sup> ובטרם נוסדו ידע	<sup>7</sup> or survivor, because God did not choose them at the beginning of the world and before they came into being, he knew
את מעשיהם ויתעב את דורות מדם ויסתר <sup>8</sup> את פניו מן הארץ	<sup>8</sup> their deeds and abhorred the generations of blood and hid his face from the land
מי(שראל) עד תומם וידע את שני מעמד <sup>9</sup> ומספר ופרוש קציהם לכל	<sup>9</sup> from <Israel> until their annihilation. And he knew the years of their existence and the number and detail of their times for all
הוי עולמים ונהיית (ונהיות) עד מה יבוא <sup>10</sup> בקציהם לכל שני עולם	<sup>10</sup> those who exist at all times and <and to those who will exist>, until it occurs in their ages throughout the everlasting years
ובכולם הקים לו קריאי שם למען התיר <sup>11</sup> פליטה לארץ ולמלא	<sup>11</sup> and in all of them he raised men up, renown for himself, to leave a remnant for the land and in order to fill
פני תבל מזרעם <sup>12</sup>	<sup>12</sup> the face of the earth with their seed

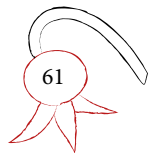


In this passage the judgment by sword becomes more pronounced in the context of a warning against judgment. Now, it is stated that those who disobey will not even be left a “remnant” of survivors (CD 2:6). It is maintained that, if a person repents of his sin, he will receive pardon, but judgment awaits those who despise the commands of God (Campbell 1995, 106). The text seems to indicate that a “remnant” existed in all the years of history. As mentioned earlier, many scholars

have taken the “remnant” to denote the movement reflected in the Damascus Document. If the “remnant” was a self-designation for the movement this passage would not make much sense. Although the members of the movement most likely saw themselves as the “remnant” of this generation, I do not consider the term a self-designation of the movement. This would also seem logical as, to survive, an ethnic group needs to be represented in each generation. If there is not even a remnant left in a particular generation, then it means this ethnic group has ceased to exist or has been annihilated. Thus CD 2:11 contrasts with CD 2:9, which speaks of annihilation.

Yet again, covenant is central. God made a covenant with their forefathers, they belong to God, and the calamities are seen as a result of breaking the covenant. Because of the covenant with their forefathers, God will save a “remnant” and bring them back to the land and let them be fruitful. I believe this gives us the key to understanding why the concept of “remnant” in the Damascus Document, as developed by the prophets before them, had the possibility to signify more than just an ethnic group who survived annihilation. The idea was raised to another level as Israel had a covenant with God. They needed to keep the covenant to be blessed and live in the land. Ophir and Rosen-Zvi explains that the concept of “remnant,” often used in prophecies from the exilic period and onwards, became associated with the notion of a “holy seed” in Isa 6:13 (Ophir and Rosen-Zvi 2018, 65). The expectation of salvation of a “remnant” is now thought to have been an important concept, shared by many of the Jewish believers at the time (Elliott 2000, 50; Blenkinsopp 2006, 222–50).

The covenant is described as ברית לכל ישראל, “the covenant for all Israel” (CD 15:5a). However, in the Damascus Document it is stated several times that Israel has gone astray or strayed from the covenant (CD 1:14; 3:14; 4:1; 5:20), and that Israel has been deceived (CD 4:13, 16; 6:1). On the other hand, there are references to those who return to the covenant (CD 4:2; 6:5; and 8:16 repeated in 19:28–29). Certain verbs of action are used to express the dynamics of straying, returning, and departing in relation to the covenant:



סור, תעה	Straying
שוב	Returning
יצא	Departing

The recurring theme in the Damascus Document is that of sin and repentance from sin, which forms the background for renewed blessing, as the covenant relationship is restored. According to CD 3:13b, the designation “Israel” is used for the party with whom God made a covenant. However, according to CD 3:14a “all Israel had gone astray”:<sup>4</sup>

הקים אל את בריתו לישראל עד עולם	<sup>13</sup>	<sup>13</sup> God established his covenant with Israel forever, revealing
לגלות		
להם נסתרות אשר תעו בהם כל ישראל	<sup>14</sup>	<sup>14</sup> to them hidden matters in which all Israel had gone astray



CD 3.14a could possibly be an allusion to Isa 53:6a, in which “all Israel” is likened to sheep, who have gone astray:<sup>5</sup>

כלנו כצאן תעינו · All we like sheep have gone astray

Grossman argues that “Israel” is a term that can “take on multiple meanings,” sometimes positive sometimes negative. Grossman exemplifies this by referring to the expressions “the penitents of Israel” (CD 4:2) which refers to “the righteous,” and “the straying of Israel” (CD 3:14), which refers to “the wicked” (Grossman 2002, 196). I would contend that the term “Israel” stays neutral in these examples as the party with whom God made a covenant, and that the other terms are the qualifiers. Thus “the penitents” are “the righteous” and “the straying” are “the wicked,” using Grossman’s terms. The members of the movement are those who return to the covenant, the returnees of Israel (CD 4:2; 6:5; and 8:16 repeated in 19:28–29):

שבי ישראל Penitents of Israel or Returnees of Israel

<sup>4</sup> Hebrew text from García Martínez and Tigchelaar 1997; translation mine.

<sup>5</sup> Westminster Leningrad Codex, translation mine



This analysis shows that the text presents the movement as part of “all Israel” that strayed, and that the members of this group pose themselves to be different only in that they repented of sin and returned to the Torah of Moses (CD 15:8–10), while the rest of Israel kept straying from the covenant without repentance.

Another slightly different use of the term “Israel” is also presented in certain passages in the Damascus Document, which refer to the members of the movement as being organized in camps. This terminology presents an allusion to the camps in the wilderness and the Exodus story. The rank and file of members enlisted in the camps in CD 14:3–6a (also preserved in 4Q267 9 v) are as follows:<sup>6</sup>

3 וסרך מושב כל המחנה יפקדו כלם בשמותיהם הכהנים לראשונה	3 And the rule for the assembly of all the camps. All of them shall be mustered by their names the priests first,
4 והלויים שנים ובני ישראל שלשתם והגר רביע ויכתבו בשמויהם	4 the Levites second, and the children of Israel third, and the proselytes fourth; and they shall be inscribed by their names
5 איש אחר אחיהו הכהנים לראשונה והלויים שנים ובני ישראל	5 each one after his brother; the priests first, the Levites second, the children of Israel
6 שלושתם והגר רביע וכן ישבו וכן ישאלו לכל	6 third, and the proselytes fourth. And thus, shall they sit and thus shall they be questioned about everything.




Similarly, in a passage entitled the Rule of Judges of the congregation (CD 10:5), we learn that ten judges were required, four from the tribe of Levi and Aaron and six from Israel. In these instances, Israel appears to reflect laity as opposed to priesthood and Levites. This also seems to be the case in the four mentions of the eschatological expectation of the coming of the Messiah (CD 13:1; 14:19; 19:11; 20:1), as all four times the expression used is:

עד עמוד משיח מאהרן ומישראל the Messiah of Aaron and of Israel

<sup>6</sup> Hebrew text from García Martínez and Tigchelaar 1997; translation mine.

## Qualifiers in Relation to Judah

We now turn to the passages in which the term “Judah” appears with a qualifier. Two passages concern “the land of Judah,” and both contain the intriguing phrase, “the Returnees of Israel, who left the land of Judah” (CD 4:2–3; 6:2). The first is part of a lengthy *Pesher* unit CD 3:12b–4:12a<sup>7</sup> (Goldman 2018, 390), which would be too complex to deal with in this short article, while the second notion of “the Returnees of Israel leaving the land of Judah” is found in CD 6:5. CD 6:2b–7a (also attested in 4Q266 3 ii 11–13 and 4Q267 2 11–13):<sup>8</sup>

 <p>וַיִּקַּם מֵאַהֲרֹן נְבוֹנִים וּמִיִּשְׂרָאֵל      חֲכָמִים וַיִּשְׁמָעֵם וַיַּחְפוּרוּ אֶת הַבְּאֵר בְּאֵר      הַחֲפָרוֹה שְׂרִים כְּרוּה      נְדִיבֵי הָעָם בְּמַחֲזֹקֶק הַבְּאֵר הִיא הַתּוֹרָה      וְהוֹפְרִיהָ <i>vacat</i> הֵם      שְׁבֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הַיּוֹצְאִים מֵאַרְצֵי יְהוּדָה וַיִּגְוּרוּ      בְּאַרְצֵי דַמְשֶׁק      אֲשֶׁר קָרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת כּוֹלָם שְׂרִים כִּי דָרְשׁוּהוּ      וְלֹא הוֹשְׁבָה      פָּאַרְתָּם בְּפִי אֶחָד</p>	<p><sup>2</sup> And he raised from Aaron men of knowledge and from Israel  <sup>3</sup> wise men and made them listen.      And they dug a well: <i>Num 21:18</i>, A well which the princes dug, which  <sup>4</sup> the nobles of the people delved with the staff. The well is the law and those who dug it <i>vacat</i> they are  <sup>5</sup> the Returnees of Israel, who left the land of Judah and lived in the land of Damascus  <sup>6</sup> all of whom God called princes, for they sought him and their renown has not been  <sup>7</sup> repudiated in anyone’s mouth.</p>
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Bergsma rightly acknowledges that in this passage the “wise men from Israel” as well as the “Returnees of Israel” could be seen as self-appellations for the members of the movement (Bergsma 2008, 180). It is noteworthy that “the Returnees of Israel” are called “princes,” and that it is insisted that their renown has not been repudiated. Whether this means that they had been actual princes in Judah whom others may have repudiated, or whether it means that they had gained the

<sup>7</sup> Some fragments of the passage are preserved in 4Q266 5 i 9–19 with reference to “the Returnees of Israel” and in 4Q267 5 ii. For a comparison of the content of these fragments to CD 3:20b–4:12a, see Hempel 2013, 217–18.

<sup>8</sup> Hebrew text from García Martínez and Tigchelaar 1997; translation mine.

right to the title by seeking God and interpreting the Torah correctly, is ambiguous. Possibly, it is their interpretation of the Torah which cannot be disputed, as Wacholder suggests (Wacholder 2007, 216). In CD 6:5 it is not just stated that they left “the land of Judah,” but also that they went to Damascus. “Damascus” is used seven times in the Damascus Document, but not in any other of the documents found at Qumran (CD 6:5, 19; 7:15, 19; 8:21 = 19:34 and 20:12) (Knibb 1983, 107).<sup>9</sup> “Damascus” is an exegetical term derived from Amos 5:26–27 (Hempel 2000, 60; Bergsma 2008, 184). Lied notes that there seems to have been a scholarly consensus that Damascus was a place of exile, and she states that she wants to challenge that notion, particularly the implied negative notion of exile as punishment (Lied 2005, 105). She argues that, according to the text, the purpose of departing from Judah and dwelling in Damascus is to give the sojourners the opportunity to live according to the Law and their interpretation of the Law, and it seems an indication that this was not possible in “the land of Judah” (Lied 2005, 111). Lied maintains that the descriptions of the spaces are highly informed by the biblical paradigms and connotations relating to Judah and Damascus and notes that these connotations have been turned around in the Damascus Document. “The land of Judah” has become a place of punishment, displaying the conventional “exilic conditions” during the time of evil. “The land of Damascus” on the other hand is a place where the Law is kept, and the blessing of the land is enjoyed during the time of evil (Lied 2005, 121). Grossman argues along the same lines as Lied, stating that the text presents “an inversion of images” in that living in Damascus is preferable to living in Judah, as Judah is a defiled land (Grossman 2002, 200).

A compelling support for the argument that leaving “the land of Judah” is not comparable to any negative notions of exile is seen in the terminology. The terminology presents an allusion to the camps in the wilderness and the Exodus story. Bergsma notes that, “in Exodus alone there are around thirty variants of the expression “to go/bring out from the land of Egypt,” using the same verb–preposition–noun combination found here (CD 6:5): *יֵצֵא-מִן-אֶרֶץ* (Bergsma 2008, 181). This



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<sup>9</sup> It is furthermore attested in 4Q266 3 iii 20.

comparison with the exodus from Egypt shows that “the Returnees of Israel” felt a strong need to detach themselves from “the land of Judah.” In CD 4:2–3 and 6:5 “the Returnees of Israel” are said to have left “the land of Judah,” while in CD 8:16, which is repeated in CD 19:28–29, they are those, “who turn away from the way of the people.” I concur with Bergsma, who suggests that both phrases could illustrate the same action, as leaving “the land of Judah” implies disapproval with the ways of the people in Judah (Bergsma 2008, 181).

The expression “the House of Judah” in CD 4:11 also occurs in 1QpHab 8:1–3. Staples explains that many scholars have believed that the movement members identified themselves as “Judah” primarily due to the language of 1QpHab 8:1–3 (Staples 2021, 260). I maintain that each text needs to be analyzed exegetically, as there is no guarantee an expression will be used in the same way in different texts. We shall turn to CD 4:10–13a, which reads:<sup>10</sup>



<p>ובשלום הקץ למספר השנים<sup>10</sup></p> <p>האלה אין עוד להשתפח לבית יהודה כי אם לעמוד איש על<sup>11</sup></p> <p>מצודו ובנתה הגדר רחוק החיק<sup>12</sup></p> <p>בליעל משולה בישראל כאשר דבר אל ביד ישעיה הנביא בן<sup>13</sup></p>	<p><sup>10</sup> when the era corresponding to all those years is complete</p> <p><sup>11</sup> there will no longer be any joining with the house of Judah, but rather each one standing up on</p> <p><sup>12</sup> his watchtower. The wall is built, the boundary far away.</p> <p><sup>13</sup> Belial will be set loose in Israel, as God has said by the prophet Isaiah, son of</p>
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Scholars have been puzzled as to the meaning of CD 4:10b–12a, as well as to whether the lines should be read as a continuation of CD 3:18b–4:10a, as suggested by Schwartz (Schwartz 1981), or as the opening lines of the section CD 4:12b–21, as suggested by Tromp (Tromp 2007). Schwartz explains that the usual understanding had been that Judah “refers to the sinful majority” (Schwartz 1981, 440). However, he contends that “Judah” and “the House of Judah” should be understood as codewords for the movement, because the terms are used in that way in other scrolls (Schwartz 1981, 440). Tromp agrees

<sup>10</sup> Hebrew text from García Martínez and Tigchelaar 1997; translation mine.

with Schwartz that “the House of Judah” refers to the movement (Tromp 2007, 229).

I reckon that CD 4:10–12b ties the two passages together. It seems to me that the text introduces “standing upon his watchtower” (an allusion to Hab 2:1) as a contrast to “joining the House of Judah.” In other words, rather than “joining the House of Judah” one should stand up upon his watchtower and be alert. I therefore take “the House of Judah” to mean what Schwartz termed “the sinful majority” of Judah. This would mean that a time is expected to come in which it is necessary to separate completely from “the House of Judah.” As the passage that immediately follows (CD 4:12b–21) refers to the nets of Belial and a deception coming upon Israel, it is conceivable that a total separation from “the House of Judah” is what is expected to be necessary at that time.

Bergsma also arrives at the conclusion that “the House of Judah” does not signify the movement, but not based on exegesis of this text. Rather, he uses his interpretation gained from studying other scrolls. He asserts that CD 4:10–12 could not mean “that in the last days” it would not be possible to join the movement, as he believes that the movement sees itself as “the vanguard of the eschatological restoration of Israel” and that “in the eschaton the *Yahad* and Israel will be one” (Bergsma 2008, 182). However, the text that follows does not speak of the eschaton, but of the nets of Belial and deception coming upon Israel.

Before we turn to the discourse about “Judah,” “Ephraim,” and “the Princes of Judah,” we shall quickly note one more passage in which Judah is used with a qualifier. At the end of Manuscript B (in which additional material not found in Manuscript A is represented), we encounter an expression of eschatological hope of judgment of “all the wicked of Judah” (CD 20:26–27):<sup>11</sup>

כל מרשיעי<sup>26</sup>      <sup>26</sup> all the wicked of  
יהודה<sup>27</sup>      <sup>27</sup> Judah



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<sup>11</sup> Hebrew text from García Martínez and Tigchelaar 1997; translation mine.

The passage forms a conclusion to the polemic discourse featuring “the Princes of Judah” as the object of God’s vengeance (CD 19:15–24a), because they despised the covenant and walked in the path of the wicked (CD 19:25–20:25). We shall now turn our attention to “the Princes of Judah,” and the discourse of Ephraim and Judah.

## Ephraim, Judah, and the Princes of Judah

“Ephraim” is only mentioned explicitly in two passages of the Damascus Document: CD 7:12–13 and CD 14:1. In both passages Isa 7:17 is quoted, “There shall come upon your people days such as have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah.” In CD 13:23–14:1, the quote is part of an admonition to follow the ordinances and keep the covenant, and it acts as a warning at the end of what is known as *the Rule of the Overseer* (Hempel 1998, 126). As noted above, there are implicit references to “Ephraim” in other passages, due to allusions to biblical passages that involve Ephraim (Collins 2017, 222–23). These implicit references to Ephraim suggest the same message as the explicit references, whose meaning we are about to explore. The warning comprising the Isa 7:17 quotation appears in CD 13:22–14:2a:<sup>12</sup>



<p>22 [...]אלה המ[שפט]ים למשכיל [להתהלך [בם]</p> <p>23 [במועד פקוד אל את הארץ בבוא הדבר אשר דבר יבואו על עמך ימים]</p> <p>1 אשר לא באו מיום סור אפרים מעל יהודה וכל המתהלכים באלה</p> <p>2 ברית אל נאמנות להם להנצילם</p>	<p>22 [...an]d these are the ordi[nan]ces for the <i>overseer</i>, [to walk in them]</p> <p>23 [in the appointed time when God visits the earth, the word was fulfilled which said, there shall come upon your people days]</p> <p>1 such as have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah. But for all those who walk in these</p> <p>2 the covenant of God shall be faithful to them to save them</p>
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The Isaiah quotation poses a warning that if the ordinances are not followed, then judgment will come. The devastating effect is likened to what happened in the past when “Ephraim departed from Judah.” As

<sup>12</sup> Hebrew text from García Martínez and Tigchelaar 1997; translation mine.

this part of the text does not explain the meaning of this any further, we shall move on to the other section in which it is quoted to consider the implication of the quote.

The use of the quote in CD 7:11–12 is central to the polemic discourses in CD 7:9b–8:21 (with a parallel passage in Manuscript B: CD 19:1–34a, and most of the remaining part of Manuscript B: CD 19:33b–20:34). The Isaiah quotation is wrapped in a warning of future judgment in CD 7:9b–14a (CD 7:9b–10a runs parallel to 19:5b–7a):<sup>13</sup>

<p>9 וכל המואסים בפקד אל את הארץ להשיב גמול רשעים</p>	<p>9 but for all those who despise, when God visits the earth to repay their wickedness</p>
<p>10 עליהם בבוא הדבר אשר כתוב בדברי ישעיה בן אמוץ הנביא</p>	<p>10 when the word comes which is written in the words of Isaiah, son of Amos, the prophet</p>
<p>11 אשר אמר יבוא עליך ועל עמך ועל בית אביך ימים אשר</p>	<p>11 who said, <i>Isa 7:17</i>, “There will come upon you and your people and your father’s house days such as</p>
<p>12 (לא) באו מיום סור אפרים מעל יהודה בהפרד שני בתי ישראל</p>	<p>12 have (not) come since the day Ephraim departed from Judah.” When the two houses of Israel separated</p>
<p>13 שר אפרים מעל יהודה וכל הנסוגים הוסגרו לחרב והמחזיקים</p>	<p>13 Ephraim detached himself from Judah, and all the renegades were delivered up to the sword; but those who held fast</p>
<p>14 נמלטו לארץ צפון</p>	<p>14 escaped to the land of the north</p>



The historical context in Isa 7:17 was the Syro-Ephraimite war of 733 BCE when the Judean king Ahaz failed to heed Isaiah’s warning not to rely on the Assyrian king for protection. Isaiah warned King Ahaz that the king of Assyria would therefore be used as a tool of judgment (Isa 7:17–8:18). By the time the Damascus Document was written, the quotation would carry with it the memory that in the years following the encounter between Ahaz and Isaiah, the Assyrians first destroyed Syria and the Northern Kingdom, Israel, and then ravaged Judah and placed Jerusalem under siege. Furthermore, the quote in Isaiah refers

<sup>13</sup> Hebrew text from García Martínez and Tigchelaar 1997; translation mine.



to the separation of Ephraim from Judah after the death of Solomon, when his kingdom was divided with the defection of the northern tribes ca. 925 BCE.

Collins explains that after the death of Solomon the kingdom was divided and Jeroboam, an Ephraimite, became the first king of the Northern Kingdom. In the Qumran scrolls, “Ephraim” is often used for the Northern Kingdom, pairing with “Judah,” the Southern Kingdom (Collins 2017, 211).

To understand what is meant by “since the day Ephraim departed from Judah” we need to recollect what happened, when the kingdom was divided. In 1 Kgs 12:20–33, it is recorded that Jeroboam was made king of all of Israel, except the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, whose king was Rehoboam son of Solomon. Jeroboam feared that if the people would go up to Jerusalem to offer sacrifices, they would once more give their allegiance to Rehoboam. Therefore, he made two golden calves and built shrines on high places and appointed priests from all sorts of people, even though they were not Levites, and he instituted a festival on a day he had devised from his own heart. Contrary to this, 1 Chron 11:12–17 reports that the priests and the Levites from all over Israel presented themselves to Rehoboam for service, because Jeroboam cast them out from serving as priests of the Lord. Likewise, those who had set their hearts to seek the God of Israel came from all the tribes of Israel to Jerusalem to sacrifice to the LORD, the God of their fathers. The concern in the Damascus Document is staying in, or returning to, the covenant God made with Israel. Thus, we observe that “Ephraim” consists of those who left the covenant when they departed from “Judah,” while the kingdom of “Judah” was inhabited by those who decided to keep the covenant.

Several passages from the Damascus Document place an emphasis on departure from the way of God. CD 7:11–13 is tied together with CD 8:3b–12 by this theme of departure and the discourse of Ephraim’s departure from Judah taken from Isa 7:17. Therefore, we shall now turn to CD 8:2c–12a:<sup>14</sup>



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<sup>14</sup> The text is paralleled in CD 19:15–24a and 4Q266 3 iii 25 corresponds to CD 8:2c–3. Hebrew text from García Martínez and Tigchelaar 1997; translation mine.

הוא היום <sup>2</sup>	<sup>2</sup> This is the day
אשר יפקד אל היו שרי יהודה אשר תשפוך עליהם העברה	<sup>3</sup> when God will make a visitation, the Princes of Judah are those upon whom the wrath shall be poured out
כי יחלו למרפא וידקמום כל מורדים מאשר לא סרו מדרך	<sup>4</sup> for they hope to be healed, but the defect shall stick. All are rebels for they have not left the way
בוגדים ויתגוללו בדרכי זונות ובהון רשעה ונקום וניטור	<sup>5</sup> of traitors, and have defiled themselves in the ways of whores and wicked wealth and revenge and bitterness
איש לאחיו ושנוא איש את רעהו ויתעלמו איש בשאר בשרו	<sup>6</sup> against his brother, and they hate men. They despised one another
ויגשו לזמה ויתגברו להון ולבצע ויעשו איש הישר בעיניו	<sup>7</sup> and indulged in unchastity and bragged about wealth and gain. Everyone, did right in his own eyes
ויבחרו איש בשרירות לבו ולא נזרו מעם ויפרעו ביד רמה	<sup>8</sup> and chose according to the stubbornness of his heart and did not keep apart from the people and have rebelled with a high hand
ללכת בדרך רשעים אשר אמר אל עליהם חמת תנינים יינם	<sup>9</sup> and walking in the way of the wicked, about whom God says <i>Deut</i> 32:33, "Serpents' venom is their wine
וראש פתנים אכזר	<sup>10</sup> and cruel poison of asps." <i>Vacat</i>
התנינים הם מלכי העמים <i>vacat</i> וייהם הוא <i>vacat</i>	The serpents are the kings of the peoples, <i>vacat</i> and their wine is
דרכיהם וראש הפתניהם הוא ראש מלכי יון הבא לעשות	<sup>11</sup> their ways, and the asps' poison is the head of the kings of Greece, who come to carry out
בהם נקמה <sup>12</sup>	<sup>12</sup> vengeance on them



In CD 8:3, “the Princes of Judah” are being accused of being “rebels” and pointed out as the object of God’s wrath. The theme of “the Princes of Judah” is clearly exegetical and taken from Hos 5:10. However, the group’s designation as “the Princes of Judah” has raised some discussion concerning the identity of the group. The introduction to the passage has led Murphy-O’Connor to conclude that the movement was at odds with the ruling class of Judah at the time (Murphy-O’Connor 1972).

The text under consideration represents one of the places in the Damascus Document in which fear of a foreign power is mentioned: an explicit mention of the kings of Greece carrying out the “vengeance

of the covenant,” an expression taken from Lev 26 in which various punishments are described which will occur if the covenant with God is broken. If we turn to Hos 5, from where the theme of “the Princes of Judah” is taken (Hos 5:10), we note that Ephraim went to Assyria and sent for the great king, hoping to be healed. However, the prophet Hosea warns that Ephraim will not find a cure (Hos 5:13). In the same way “the Princes of Judah” are said to hope for healing, but the defect sticks to them (CD 8:4). In CD 8:4, “the Princes of Judah” are being equated with Ephraim mentioned in Hos 5:13, and Hultgren rightly maintains that “the exegete equated ‘the Princes of Judah’ with ‘Ephraim’” (Hultgren 2004, 559). Furthermore, Hultgren claims that CD 8:3 should not be translated “Princes of Judah,” as is usually done, but rather “those who depart from Judah” (Hultgren 2004, 555).



I think it is reasonable to consider that CD 8:3 conveys the meaning “those who depart.” However, I maintain that the use of Hos 5:10 conveys a message of God’s wrath directed at the current rulers of Judah. The sins of “the Princes of Judah” are presented as causing judgment and calamity on a national level in CD 8:11–13. Stegemann has likewise argued that the direct reference to the head of the kings of Greece CD 8:11 points to a political interpretation of “the Princes of Judah” (Stegemann 1971, 168). I am therefore convinced that CD 8:3 represents a word play in which both meanings are represented.

The statement in CD 8:9 concerning “the Princes of Judah,” who are “walking in the way of the wicked” is connected by the citation of Deut 32:33 to the following description of the kings of Greece as poisonous serpents and asps. Therefore, Knibb concludes that “the Princes of Judah” are walking in the ways of the kings of Greece (Knibb 1987, 68). The passage ends with an explicit mention of the kings of Greece carrying out the vengeance of the covenant.

In CD 7:12 Isa 7:17 is quoted, and thus this theme of departure is linked to a discourse of national division, the discourse of “Ephraim” departing from “Judah.” In this discourse, the community reflected in the Damascus Document is likened to the Southern Kingdom, “Judah,” who decided to keep the covenant, while “the Princes of Judah” are likened to the Northern Kingdom, “Ephraim,” who departed from “Judah” and “strayed” from the covenant.

## Conclusion

As the foregoing has hopefully shown, the qualifiers are to be seen as the key to understanding the usage of “Israel” and “Judah.” “Israel” is the party with whom God made a covenant. It was noted that “all Israel” has strayed, but “the Returnees of Israel” have repented of their sins, while the rest of Israel strayed. I therefore concluded that Israel without qualifiers is not a self-identification for the movement; instead, the members of the movement are those who return to the covenant, “the Returnees of Israel” or “the wise men from Israel,” who are wise because they are seeking God and interpreting the Torah correctly.

The expressions “the land of Judah,” “the Princes of Judah,” “the House of Judah,” and “the wicked of Judah” refer to the current political leadership of Judah and its rule of the land. It was shown that the terminology presents an allusion to the Exodus story. The comparison with the exodus from Egypt discloses that “the Returnees of Israel” felt a strong need to leave “the land of Judah” and dissociate from the political leadership of the land: “the Princes of Judah,” “the House of Judah,” and “the wicked of Judah.” We may therefore conclude that, whenever Judah is used with a qualifier, it is seen to concern the political leadership of Judah and its rule of the land.

“The Princes of Judah,” most likely the current political leaders of Judah, are likened to “Ephraim” (the Northern Kingdom), and depicted as those who depart from the covenant, as they have adopted a foreign way of life, the way of the kings of Greece. Because of this they are accused of causing national division comparable to the schism when “Ephraim departed from Judah” and “strayed” from the covenant in the past. In this discourse, the movement reflected in the Damascus Document is comparable to “Judah” (the Southern Kingdom), as they are the ones keeping the covenant. The movement wanted to keep the covenant in the same way as the people in “Judah” did when “Ephraim departed” and “strayed” from the covenant. Thus, it is the claim of the Damascus Document that the movement has not cut itself off from Israel; rather, they are “the returnees of Israel” although they have had to leave the defiled “land of Judah,” where the Torah could not



be kept according to the right interpretation, because “the Princes of Judah” walked in the ways of the kings of Greece and “strayed” from the covenant.

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