

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE *COMMUNITY RULE*: STATUTES FOR THE COUNCIL OF THE *YAḤAD* (1QS || 4QS<sup>a-j</sup> [4Q255–264], 4Q275, 4Q279)

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION: THE CULTIC CIVIC IDEOLOGY OF THE *YAḤAD*

S regulates the segment of the Covenanters' sect entrusted with its cult. This segment is called the *Yaḥad* or, as seems to have been its more technical designation, the "Council of the *Yaḥad*."<sup>1</sup> While it is clear that S shares the civic ideology articulated in D, the ideology and laws of S focus more on cultic matters—atonement in particular. Thus in S we find cultic civic ideology. Numerous passages in S describe the *Yaḥad*'s mission in terms that are also associated with the temple cult of Jerusalem: its work establishes a "house of holiness in Aaron" and a "house of truth in Israel" (1QS 8:9–10; 9:6). Its primary task is to procure atonement (1QS 5:5–6; 8:1–10; 9:3–6), but not in the usual way: in place of burnt sacrifices, God accepts the *Yaḥad*'s "offerings of the lips for judgment" and "perfection of the way" (1QS 9:4–6). This substitution of legal study, worship, and discipline for burnt offerings is a halakic necessity during the Dominion of Belial (1QS 1:16–18; 2:19–20; cp. 4:15–26), since deviant practices rendered the temple cult ineffective.

The *Yaḥad*'s function as a cult of atonement explains certain features. Atonement was normally procured in the temple through sacrifice and

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<sup>1</sup> The noun *Yaḥad* is used in various ways in S. In 1QS it occurs in absolute form twenty times (1QS 1:1, 12, 16; 2:22, 24; 5:5–6, 15; 6:15, 18, 22–23; 7:6, 8, 17, 18, 23, 25; 8:19; 9:15, 19). 1QS has 16 occurrences of "Council (עצה) of the *Yaḥad*" or the equivalent (3:2, 6; 5:7; 6:3, 10, 13, 14, 16, 23; 7:2, 18, 22, 24; 8:1, 11, 22; 11:8). A similar phrase, סוד היחד (י), occurs four times in 1QS: 6:19; 7:17, 18; 8:10. עצת היחד occurs in 4QFlor fr. 1–2 i 17; 1QpHab 12:4; 1QpMic 10:6; 4QpPsa<sup>a</sup> 1–2 ii 14. SE contains similar phrases: see 1QSa at 1:26, 27; 2:2, 11; cp. 2:9, עצת הקודש. In 1QSa 1:1–3 אנשי עצתו designates the leadership of the Congregation of Israel and seems to be identified with the *Yaḥad*. As mentioned in Chapter 1, CD-B contains one reference to the אנשי היחד, which most scholars emend to אנשי יחד (CD 20:32), and a law in 4QD<sup>e</sup> fr. 3 ii 19 may refer to the [יחד] משפטי היחד.

In CD there are several occurrences of עצה and סוד; most clearly mean "counsel" or "principle" (5:17; 12:8; 13:16, 17; 14:10). Two refer to a group (עם סוד, 19:35, 20:24–25; עצת הקדש).

other rites in its most holy place, with its most holy implements. These places and implements had to be kept pure—thus the biblical laws forbidding impure priests and worshippers from approaching the holy grounds and consecrated items (e.g., Lev 22:1–6). In order for their cult to work, the *Yahad* had to keep their members, meetings, property, and activities as pure as the temple's cultic space. Since some of the commonest forms of impurity came from sexual activity and cycles, i.e., menstruation and childbirth (Lev 12:1–8), and seminal emission (Lev 22:4; cp. 15:1–33), celibacy was the most certain guard against bringing these impurities into the cultic space.<sup>2</sup> Other practices also safeguarded purity: wherever members of the *Yahad* gathered, they centralized living arrangements, restricted the property that members could use to that collected into a communal treasury, and appointed officials to supervise its use.

Unlike D, which mentions an official called the *Maskil* but seems to merge his duties with those of the Examiner, S as a whole is addressed to an official with this title.<sup>3</sup> The address לְמַשְׁכִּיל appears at the beginning of S (1QS 1:1, reconstructed); at the beginning of the Treatise on the Two Spirits (1QS 3:13); at the beginning of the rules for communal life in 4QS<sup>b,d</sup> (|| 1QS 5:1), and in rules for the *Maskil* at the end of 1QS on the Day of Vengeance, life in the pre-eschatological era, and, most extensively, communal liturgy (9:12, 21b). The *Maskil* curates the doctrines of the *Yahad*, especially those concerning history, eschatology, and the relationship between insiders and outsiders. He judges members' character and prepares for the Day of Vengeance (9:12–23a). Several other sectarian texts confirm that the pedagogical and liturgical nature of the *Maskil's* primary duties.<sup>4</sup> It is not clear who

<sup>2</sup> Pace C. Wassen, *Women in the Damascus Document*, 126–27, the statement distinguishing the “men of perfect holiness” from those who marry wives and have children (CD 7:4–7) was probably not a late interpolation denigrating women's status, but a practical expression of the purity concerns of the *Yahad*.

<sup>3</sup> The *Maskil* is mentioned at CD 12:21; 13:22, in passages that primarily discuss the duties of the Examiner. The *Maskil* is also mentioned at 4QD<sup>a</sup> fr. 5 i 17, a text without parallel in CD. For a persuasive argument that the role of the *Maskil* was merged with that of the Examiner in D see Hempel, *Laws*, 114–21.

<sup>4</sup> The *Maskil* led liturgies preserved in the Hymn that concludes S in several mss.; Blessings (1QSb), preserved in the same scroll as 1QS; Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice (4Q400–407; 11Q17), Songs of the Maskil (4Q510–511); and the fragmentary prayer in 4Q444. I speculate below that he also led the Daily Prayers preserved in 4Q503. The didactic role of the *Maskil* appears in the Words of the Maskil to All the Sons of Dawn (4Q298).