THE BOOKS OF THE MACCABEES
AND SECTARIANISM IN SECOND TEMPLE JUDAISM

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The development of an explicit sectarianism within Second Temple Judaism continues to be ascribed to the Hasmonaean era by the majority of scholars of the period. The evidence of Josephus, archeology and certain compositions represented in the Qumran scrolls combine to make this an attractive hypothesis. Recent work propelled by the enhanced access and attention to the Cave 4 manuscripts from the Qumran finds have for some scholars pointed to earlier precedents for these divisive tendencies within Second Temple Judaism. The hypotheses of Florentino García Martínez and Gabriele Boccaccini on Qumran and Enoch come most readily to mind.1 The earlier observations of Michael Stone concerning Enoch also deserve mention.2 The substantial work of George Nickelsburg on 1 Enoch supports this direction.3 The pre-Maccabean origins of the Temple Scroll and Jubilees have been argued by Ben Zion Wacholder.4 Hartmut Stegemann’s theories on the deve-


3 G.W.E. Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch, Chapters 1-36; 81-108 (Hermeneia, Minneapolis: Fortress 2001) 64-67, 118-22. These pages summarize the substantial research he has published on this question and provide references.

lopment of Qumran literature merit consideration. Philip Davies has also proposed some possibilities concerning the prehistory of Qumran. Within this discussion it is necessary to determine the extent to which 1 and 2 Maccabees betray any knowledge of these issues.

1. The Hasideans

Within the books of the Maccabees the body that receives the most mention and consideration is that of the Hasideans. As established in my earlier research the references in 1 Macc 2:42, 7:13 and 2 Macc 14:6 do not provide evidence for the identification of this group with the Essenes. Their significance as the forerunners of either the Pharisees or the Essenes cannot be established, nor as the founders of the apocalyptic movement in Second Temple Judaism. This conclusion makes the hypothesis advanced by Stegemann of the Essenes as a grand union at the time of the Hasideans untenable and without foundation in the texts. There is no direct evidence to indicate that those "seeking righteousness and justice" in 1 Macc 2:29-38 who went out to live in the desert are related to some portion of the Essene movement. Note that in 1 Macc 1:53 the inspectors appointed by Antiochus "drove Israel into hiding in every place of refuge they had." Robert Doran points to the cave complexes in the Judean foothills southwest of Jerusalem as an example of the possibilities available. The account does suggest a recognition of the divisions within the Jewish populace evoked prior to or during the Hasmo-