

Essenes

S. sectarian controversies over calculation of calendar

## THE MANUAL OF DISCIPLINE

### \* Of the Commitment (i, 1-15)

Everyone who wishes to join the community must pledge himself to respect God and man; to live according to the communal rule; to seek God [ ]; to do what is good and upright in His sight, in accordance with what He has commanded through Moses and through His servants the prophets; to love all that He has chosen and hate all that He has rejected; to keep far from all evil and to cling to all good works; to act truthfully and righteously and justly on earth and to walk no more in the stubbornness of a guilty heart<sup>1</sup> and of lustful eyes,<sup>2</sup> doing all manner of evil; to bring into a bond of mutual love all who have declared their willingness to carry out the statutes of God; to join the formal community of God; to walk blamelessly before Him in conformity with all that has been revealed as relevant to the several periods during which they are to bear witness (to Him); to love all the children of light,<sup>3</sup> each according to his stake in the formal community of God; and to hate all the children of darkness, each according to the measure of his guilt, which God will ultimately requite.

All who declare their willingness to serve God's truth must bring all of their mind, all of their strength, and all of their wealth into the community of God,<sup>4</sup> so that their minds may be purified by the truth of His precepts, their strength controlled by His perfect ways, and their wealth disposed in accordance with His just design. They must not deviate by a single step from carrying out the orders of God at the times appointed for them; they must neither

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## THE SERVICE OF GOD

The levites, on the other hand, are to invoke a curse on all that have cast their lot with Belial, and to say in response: Cursed art thou for all thy wicked guilty works. May God make thee a thing of abhorrence at the hands of all who would wreak vengeance, and visit thine offspring with destruction at the hands of all who would mete out retribution. Cursed art thou, beyond hope of mercy. Even as thy works are wrought in darkness, so mayest thou be damned in the gloom of the fire eternal.<sup>13</sup> May God show thee no favor when thou callest, neither pardon to forgive thine iniquities. May He lift up an angry countenance towards thee, to wreak vengeance upon thee. May no man wish thee peace of all that truly claim their patrimony.<sup>14</sup>

And all that enter the covenant shall say alike after them that bless and after them that curse, Amen, amen.

Thereupon the priests and the levites shall continue and say: Cursed be every one that hath come to enter this covenant<sup>15</sup> with the taint of idolatry in his heart and who hath set his iniquity as a stumblingblock before him<sup>16</sup> so that thereby he may defect, and who, when he hears the terms of this covenant, blesses himself in his heart, saying, May it go well with me, for I shall go on walking in the stubbornness of my heart! Whether he satisfy his passions or whether he still thirst for their fulfillment,<sup>17</sup> his spirit shall be swept away and receive no pardon. The anger of God and the fury of His judgments shall consume him as by fire unto his eternal extinction, and there shall cleave unto him all the curses threatened in this covenant. God shall set him apart for misfortune, and he shall be cut off from the midst of all the children of light in that through the taint of his idolatry<sup>18</sup> and through the stumblingblock of his iniquity he has defected from God. God will set his lot among those that are accursed for ever! And all who have been admitted to the covenant shall say after them in response, Amen, amen.

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advance the statutory times nor postpone the prescribed seasons.<sup>5</sup> They must not turn aside from the ordinances of God's truth<sup>6</sup> either to the right or to the left.

= Torah

### Of initiation (i, 16-ii, 18)

Moreover, all who would join the ranks of the community must enter into a covenant in the presence of God to do according to all that He has commanded and not to turn away from Him through any fear or terror<sup>7</sup> or through any trial to which they may be subjected through the domination of Belial.<sup>8</sup>

When they enter into that covenant, the priests and the levites are to pronounce a blessing upon the God of salvation and upon all that He does to make known His truth; and all that enter the covenant are to say after them, Amen, amen.<sup>9</sup>

Then the priests are to rehearse the bounteous acts of God as revealed in all His deeds of power, and they are to recite all His tender mercies towards Israel; while the levites are to rehearse the iniquities of the children of Israel and all the guilty transgressions and sins that they have committed through the domination of Belial. And all who enter the covenant are to make confession after them, saying, [We have acted perversely, we have transgressed, we have sinned, we have done wickedly, ourselves and our fathers before us, in that we have gone counter to the truth. God has been right to bring His judgment upon us and upon our fathers.<sup>10</sup>] Howbeit, always from ancient times He has also bestowed His mercies upon us, and so will He do for all time to come.

Then the priests are to invoke a blessing on all that have cast their lot with God,<sup>11</sup> that walk blamelessly in all their ways; and they are to say: MAY HE BLESS THEE with all good and KEEP THEE from all evil, and ILLUMINE thy heart with insight into the things of life, and GRACE THEE with knowledge of things eternal, and LIFT UP HIS gracious COUNTENANCE TOWARDS THEE to grant thee peace everlasting.<sup>12</sup>

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### \* Of the annual review (ii, 19-25)

The following procedure is to be followed year by year so long as Belial continues to hold sway.

The priests are first to be reviewed in due order, one after another, in respect of the state of their spirits. After them, the levites shall be similarly reviewed, and in the third place all the laity<sup>19</sup> one after another, in their thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. The object is that every man in Israel may be made aware of his status in the community of God in the sense of the ideal, eternal society,<sup>20</sup> and that none may be abased below his status nor exalted above his allotted place. All of them will thus be members of a community founded at once upon true values and upon a becoming sense of humility, upon charity and mutual fairness—members of a society truly hallowed, partners in an everlasting communion.<sup>21</sup>

### Of those who are to be excluded (ii, 25-iii, 12)

Anyone who refuses to enter the (ideal) society of God and persists in walking in the stubbornness of his heart shall not be admitted to this community of God's truth. For inasmuch as his soul has revolted at the discipline entailed in a knowledge of God's righteous judgments, he has shown no real strength in amending his way of life, and therefore cannot be reckoned with the upright. The mental, physical and material resources of such a man are not to be introduced into the stock of the community, for such a man 'plows in the slime of wickedness'<sup>22</sup> and 'there are stains on his repentance'. He is not honest in resolving the stubbornness of his heart. On paths of light he sees but darkness. Such a man cannot be reckoned as among those essentially blameless. He cannot be cleared by mere ceremonies of atonement, nor cleansed by any waters of ablu-

tion, nor sanctified by immersion in lakes or rivers, nor purified by any bath. Unclean, unclean he remains so long as he rejects the government of God and refuses the discipline of communion with Him. For it is only through the spiritual apprehension of God's truth that man's ways can be properly directed. Only thus can all his iniquities be shriven so that he can gaze upon the true light of life. Only through the holy spirit can he achieve union with God's truth and be purged of all his iniquities.<sup>23</sup> Only by a spirit of uprightness and humility can his sin be atoned. Only by the submission of his soul to all the ordinances of God can his flesh be made clean. Only thus can it really be sprinkled with waters of ablution. Only thus can it really be sanctified by waters of purification. And only thus can he really direct his steps to walk blamelessly through all the vicissitudes of his destiny in all the ways of God in the manner which He has commanded, without turning either to the right or to the left and without overstepping any of God's words. Then indeed will he be acceptable before God like an atonement-offering which meets with His pleasure, and then indeed will he be admitted to the covenant of the community for ever. +

*Of the two spirits in man (iii, 13-iv, 26)*

This is for the man who would bring others to the inner vision,<sup>24</sup> so that he may understand and teach to all the children of light the real nature of men, touching the different varieties of their temperaments with the distinguishing traits thereof, touching their actions throughout their generations, and touching the reason why they are now visited with afflictions and now enjoy periods of well-being.

All that is and ever was comes from a God of knowledge.<sup>25</sup> Before things came into existence He determined the plan of them; and when they fill their appointed roles, it is in accordance with His glorious design that they dis-

will determine the fate of every living being in accordance with which of the [two spirits he has chosen to follow].

\* *Of social relations (v, 1-7)*

This is the rule for all the members of the community—that is, for such as have declared their readiness to turn away from all evil and to adhere to all that God in His good pleasure has commanded.

They are to keep apart from the company of the froward.

They are to belong to the community in both a doctrinal and an economic sense.

They are to abide by the decisions of the sons of Zadok,<sup>41</sup> the same being priests that still keep the Covenant, and of the majority of the community that stand firm in it. It is by the vote of such that all matters doctrinal, economic and judicial are to be determined.

They are concertedly and in all their pursuits to practise truth, humility, righteousness, justice, charity and decency, with no one walking in the stubbornness of his own heart or going astray after his heart or his eyes or his fallible human mind.

Furthermore, they are concertedly to remove the impurity of their human mold, and likewise all stiffneckedness.

They are to establish in Israel a solid basis of truth.

They are to unite in a bond indissoluble for ever.

They are to extend forgiveness to all among the priesthood that have freely enlisted in the cause of holiness, and to all among the laity that have done so in the cause of truth, and likewise to all that have associated themselves with them.<sup>42</sup>

They are to make common cause both in the struggle and in the upshot of it.

They are to regard as felons all that transgress the law.

charge their functions. Nothing can be changed. In His hand lies the government of all things. God it is that sustains them in their needs.

Now, this God created man to rule the world, and appointed for him two spirits after whose direction he was to walk until the final Inquisition.<sup>26</sup> They are the spirits of truth and of perversity.

The origin of truth lies in the Fountain of Light, and that of perversity in the Wellspring of Darkness. All who practice righteousness are under the domination of the Prince of Lights,<sup>27</sup> and walk in ways of light; whereas all who practice perversity are under the domination of the Angel of Darkness and walk in ways of darkness. Through the Angel of Darkness,<sup>28</sup> however, even those who practice righteousness are made liable to error. All their sin and their iniquities, all their guilt and their deeds of transgression are the result of his domination, and this, by God's inscrutable design, will continue until the time appointed by Him. Moreover, all men's afflictions and all their moments of tribulation are due to this being's malevolent sway.<sup>29</sup> All of the spirits that attend upon him are bent on causing the sons of light to stumble. Howbeit, the God of Israel and the Angel of His truth<sup>30</sup> are always there to help the sons of light. It is God that created these spirits of light and darkness and made them the basis of every act, the [instigators] of every deed and the directors of every thought. The one He loves to all eternity, and is ever pleased with its deeds; but any association with the other He abhors, and He hates all its ways to the end of time.

This is the way those spirits operate in the world. The enlightenment of man's heart, the making straight before him all the ways of righteousness and truth, the implanting in his heart of fear for the judgments of God, of a spirit of humility, of patience, of abundant compassion, of perpetual goodness, of insight, of perception, of that sense of the Divine Power that is based at once on an apprehension

*Of the obligation of holiness (v, 7-20)*

And this is the way in which all those ordinances are to be applied on a collective basis.

Everyone who is admitted to the formal organization\* of the community is to enter into a covenant of God in the presence of all fellow-volunteers in the cause and to commit himself by a binding oath<sup>43</sup> to return with all his heart and soul to the commandments of the Law of Moses, as that Law is revealed to the sons of Zadok—that is, to the priests who still keep the Covenant and seek God's will—and to a majority of their co-covenanters who have volunteered together to adhere to the truth of God and to walk according to His pleasure.

He that so commits himself is to keep apart from all froward men that walk in the path of wickedness; for such men are not to be reckoned in the Covenant inasmuch as they have never sought nor studied God's ordinances in order to find out on what more arcane points they may guiltily have gone astray, while in regard to the things which stand patently revealed they have acted high-handedly. They have thus incurred God's angry judgment and caused Him to take vengeance upon them with all the curses threatened in the Covenant<sup>44</sup> and to wreak great judgments upon them that they be finally destroyed without remnant.

No one is to go into water in order to attain the purity of holy men.<sup>45</sup> For men cannot be purified except they repent their evil. God regards as impure all that transgress His word. No one is to have any association with such a man either in work or in goods, lest he incur the penalty of prosecution. Rather is he to keep away from such a man in every respect, for the Scripture says: 'Keep away from every false thing' [Ex. 23.7].<sup>46</sup> No member of the community is to abide by the decision of such men in

\* Heb. 'council'.

45 Act of immersion cannot by itself absolve sin



any matter of doctrine or law. He is not to eat or drink of anything that belongs to them nor to receive anything from them except for cash, even as it is written: 'Desist from man whose breath is in his nostrils, for as what is he reckoned?' [Isa. 2.22].<sup>47</sup> All that are not reckoned in the Covenant must be put aside, and likewise all that they possess. A holy man must not rely on works of vanity, and vanity is what all of them are that have not recognized God's Covenant. All that spurn His word will God blast out of the world. All their actions are as filth before Him, and He regards all their possessions as unclean.

*Of the examination of initiants* (v, 20-24)

When a man enters the covenant, minded to act in accordance with all the foregoing ordinances and formally to ally himself to the holy congregation, inquiry is to be made concerning his temper in human relations and his understanding and performance in matters of doctrine. This inquiry is to be conducted jointly by the priests who have undertaken concertedly to uphold God's Covenant and to supervise the execution of all the ordinances which He has commanded, and by a majority of the laity who have likewise undertaken concertedly to return to that Covenant. Every man is then to be registered in a particular rank, one after the other, by the standard of his understanding and performance. The object is that each person will be rendered subject to his superior. Their spiritual attitudes and their performance are to be reviewed, however, year by year, some being then promoted by virtue of their (improved) understanding and the integrity of their conduct, and others demoted for their waywardness.

*Of accusations and grudges* (v, 24-vi, 1)

When anyone has a charge against his neighbor, he is to prosecute it truthfully, humbly and humanely. He is not

*Of the General Council* (vi, 8-13)

This is the rule covering public sessions.

The priests are to occupy the first place. The elders are to come second; and the rest of the people are to take their places according to their respective ranks. This order is to obtain alike when they seek a judicial ruling, when they meet for common counsel, or when any matter arises of general concern.

Everyone is to have an opportunity of rendering his opinion in the common council. No one, however, is to interrupt while his neighbor is speaking, or to speak until the latter has finished.<sup>55</sup> Furthermore, no one is to speak in advance of his prescribed rank. Everyone is to speak in turn, as he is called upon.

In public sessions, no one is to speak on any subject that is not of concern to the company as a whole.<sup>56</sup> If the superintendent<sup>57</sup> of the general membership or anyone who is not of the same rank as the person who happens to be raising a question for the consideration of the community, has something to say to the company, he is to stand up and declare: I have something to say to the company; and only if they so bid him, is he to speak.

*Of postulants and novices* (vi, 13-23)

If any man in Israel wish to be affiliated to the formal congregation of the community, the superintendent of the general membership is to examine him as to his intelligence and his actions and, if he then embark on a course of training, he is to have him enter into a covenant to return to the truth and turn away from all perversity. Then he is to apprise him of all the rules of the community.

Subsequently, when that man comes to present himself to the general membership, everyone is to be asked his

§ Or, 'to the liking of'.

to speak to him angrily or querulously or arrogantly or in any wicked mood.<sup>48</sup> He is not to bear hatred [towards him in the inner recesses] of his heart. When he has a charge against him, he is to proffer it then and there† and not to render himself liable to penalty by nursing a grudge. Furthermore, no man is to bring a charge publicly against his neighbor except he prove it by witnesses.

*Of communal duties* (vi, 1-8)

This is the procedure which all members of the community are to follow in all dealings with one another, wherever they dwell.

Everyone is to obey his superior in rank<sup>49</sup> in all matters of work or money. But all are to dine together, worship together and take counsel together.<sup>50</sup>

Wherever there be ten men<sup>51</sup> who have been formally enrolled in the community, one who is a priest is not to depart from them. When they sit in his presence, they are to take their places according to their respective ranks; and the same order is to obtain when they meet for common counsel.

When they set the table for a meal or prepare wine to drink, the priest is first to put forth his hand to invoke a blessing on the first portion of the bread or wine.<sup>52</sup>

In any place where there happen to be ten such men, there is not to be absent from them one who will be available at all times, day and night, to interpret the Law (Torah),<sup>53</sup> each of them doing so in turn.

The general members of the community are to keep awake for a third of all the nights of the year reading book(s),† studying the Law and worshipping together.<sup>54</sup>

† Heb. 'on the selfsame day'.

† Or, 'the Book (of the Law)'.

opinion about him, and his admission to or rejection from the formal congregation of the community is to be determined by general vote.

No candidate, however, is to be admitted to the formal state of purity enjoyed by the general membership of the community<sup>58</sup> until, at the completion of a full year, his spiritual attitude and his performance have been duly reviewed. Meanwhile he is to have no stake in the common funds.<sup>59</sup>

After he has spent a full year in the midst of the community, the members are jointly to review his case, as to his understanding and performance in matters of doctrine. If it then be voted by the opinion of the priests and of a majority of their co-covenanters to admit him to the sodality, they are to have him bring with him all his property and the tools of his profession. These are to be committed to the custody of the community's 'minister of works'. They are to be entered by that officer into an account, but he is not to disburse them for the general benefit.

Not until the completion of a second year among the members of the community is the candidate to be admitted to the common board.<sup>60</sup> When, however, that second year has been completed, he is to be subjected to a further review by the general membership,<sup>61</sup> and if then it be voted to admit him to the community, he is to be registered in the due order of rank which he is to occupy among his brethren in all matters pertaining to doctrine, judicial procedure, degree of purity and share in the common funds. Thenceforth his counsel and his judgment are to be at the disposal of the community.

*Of the authority of the priests* (ix, 7)

The priests alone are to have authority in all judicial and economic matters, and it is by their vote that the ranks of the various members of the community are to be determined.

## B. CODE FOR CAMP-COMMUNITIES

*Prologue* (xii, 22-xiii, 7)

Here, however, is the rule for such camp-communities as may come into existence throughout the Era of Wickedness—that is, until the priestly and the lay 'messiah' again assume office.<sup>59</sup> The people who follow these rules must consist in any given instance of a minimum of ten,<sup>60</sup> and beyond that must be grouped by thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens.

In any place where there are ten, a priest versed in the Book of Study is not to be absent; 'by his word shall they all be ruled' [Gen. 41.40]. If, however, he is not experienced in all these matters, the members of the camp may elect by vote one of the levites, 'by whose orders they may come and go'.<sup>61</sup> Nevertheless, whenever a decision has to be rendered involving the law of bodily blemishes, the priest is to come and officiate in the camp, the overseer instructing him in the detailed interpretation of the Law. Moreover, if the priest be feeble-minded, that official must simply keep him under lock and key at all other times; for it is nonetheless by the priests that the decision in such matters must be rendered.<sup>62</sup>

*Of the overseer*<sup>63</sup> (xiii, 7-19)

This is the rule for the overseer of the camp.

It is his duty to enlighten the masses about the works of God, and to make them understand His wondrous powers. He is to tell them in detail the story of things that happened in the past. He is to show them the same compassion as a father shows for his children. He is to bring back all of them that stray, as does a shepherd his flock.<sup>64</sup> He is to loose all the bonds that constrain them, so

levites; third, the laymen; and fourth, the proselytes. It is in this order that they are to be seated at public sessions, and in this order that their opinions are to be invited on all matters.

The priest who holds office over the masses is to be from thirty to sixty years old, versed in the Book of Study and in all the regulations of the Torah, so as to be able to declare them on each appropriate occasion.

As for the overseer of all the camps, he is to be from thirty to fifty years old, adept in human relations and in all the varied languages of men.<sup>65</sup> It is as he determines that those who enter the community are to be admitted, each in his assigned order. Anything that any one has to say in a matter of dispute or litigation, he is to say to the overseer.

*Of the communal economy* (xiv, 12-18)

This is the rule for regulating public needs.

Their wages for at least two days per month are to be handed over to the overseer. The judges are then to take thereof and give it away for the benefit of orphans. They are also to support therefrom the poor and needy, the aged who are dying, the [ ] persons captured by foreign peoples, unprotected girls, unmarriedable virgins, general communal officials [ ].

This, in specific form, is the way [ ] is to be disposed [ ] [com]munally.

*Of personal morality* (xiv, 18-22)

And these, in specific form, are the regulations which they are to follow throughout the Era of Wickedness, until the priestly and lay 'messiahs' enter upon their office and expiate their iniquities.

No one is to practice conscious falsehood in matters of money [ ]; he is to be mulcted [of his rations] for six days.

that there be no one in his community who is oppressed or crushed.

He is also to examine every new adherent to his community regarding his conduct, intelligence, strength, valor and wealth, and to register him in his due status, according to his stake in the portion of Truth. No member of the camp is to have authority to introduce anyone into the community in defiance of the camp's overseer.

No one who has entered the Covenant is to have any traffic with the 'men of corruption' [i.e., outsiders] except in spot cash transactions. No one is to enter into any sort of commercial partnership without informing the camp's overseer. Moreover, if he has made an agreement, but does not. . . . [Four fragmentary lines.]

*Epilogue* (xiii, 20-xiv, 2)

Such, then, is to be the disposition of the camps throughout the Era of Wickedness. Those who do not adhere to these things shall not succeed in reoccupying their native soil [ ]. These, in fact, are the regulations for the social conduct of the 'enlightened' until God eventually visits the earth, even as He has said: 'There shall come upon thee and upon thy people and upon thy kinsfolk days the like of which have not been since Ephraim departed from Judah' [Isa. 7.17]. With those that follow them God's covenant will be confirmed; they will be delivered from all the snares of corruption. The foolish, however, will [ ] and be punished.

*Of rank and precedence* (xiv, 3-12)

This is the rule for the disposition of all camp-settlements.

Everyone is to be registered by name in a census; first, the priests; second, the levites; third, the laymen; and fourth, the proselytes. Each individual is to be registered by name, one after another; first, the priests; second, the

If a man utter [ ], [or harbor an] unjustified [grudge against his neighbor, he is to be mulcted for one] year [ ].

III [IV] [ ]