

[See Josephus Flavius.] Further, some biblical manuscripts from Qumran reflect the Samaritan recension (for example, paleo-Exodus^m [4Q22]) though without the explicitly Samaritan sectarian variants. In light of our limited knowledge of the history and scope of the Essenes, it would perhaps be wisest to defer judgment on the existence of a Samaritan branch of Essenes at some point in their history. [See Samaritans.]

As for the Ossaeans, some scholars have suggested that they were the original group of Essenes at Qumran, who then migrated to the Transjordan region after the destruction of Qumran by the Romans in 70 CE. There is, however, little corroborating evidence outside of Epiphanius for this hypothesis.

[See also Essenes.]

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ESCHATOLOGICAL MIDRASHIM. See Catena; Florelegium.

ESCHATOLOGICAL PRIEST. See Messiahs.

ESCHATOLOGICAL PROPHET. See Messiahs.

ESCHATOLOGY, or the doctrine of "last things," embraces several complexes of motifs in the context of biblical studies, many of which deal with the future of Israel and the expectation of divine intervention for judgment and salvation. One strand of tradition emphasizes the cosmic character of this intervention and describes it in mythological language; another allows more room for hu-

man agency and envisages the restoration of Israel in more realistic terms. In the Hellenistic period, and especially in the apocalyptic literature, there arises the expectation of the judgment of individuals after death, resulting in everlasting salvation or damnation. This judgment may or may not entail bodily resurrection. The apocalyptic books (e.g., *Daniel*, *1 Enoch*) frequently contain panoramic overviews of history, dividing it into a set number of periods (seventy weeks of years, four kingdoms, etc.) and culminating in a catastrophic judgment that entails the end of this world. All these motifs and ideas play a part in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

The End of Days in the Bible. It will be useful at the outset to highlight two biblical motifs that establish a context for eschatological expectations. The first is the "End of Days" (*aḥarit ha-yamim*). The second is the "end" (*qets*) as in the day of judgment or the day of the Lord.

The phrase *aḥarit ha-yamim* probably originally meant "in the course of time," or "in future days." A cognate expression with this sense is found in Akkadian. The phrase appears in the Pentateuch in *Genesis* 49.1 (the blessing of Jacob) and *Numbers* 24.14 (Balaam's oracle). Both passages contain archaic prophetic texts, which originally referred to the future in an unspecified but limited sense, but were interpreted in the postexilic period so that they were now understood to refer to a final, definitive phase of history. In the Prophets, the "End of Days" implies a definitive transformation of Israel in the distant future. Usually, the reference is to the time of salvation (e.g., *Is.* 2, *Mi.* 4), but in *Ezekiel* and *Daniel* the concept was broadened to include not only the age of salvation but also the drama that leads up to it. This broader usage is continued in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

The expectation of an end is also found in the Prophets, however, with reference to a more specific, decisive event, the day of judgment. When the prophet Amos proclaims that "the end has come upon my people Israel" (*Am.* 8.2), he speaks of the end of Israel as an independent kingdom, not of the end of the world. He also speaks of this event as "the day of the Lord," which would be darkness and not light (*Am.* 5.18–20). Other prophets expanded this concept into a day of cosmic judgment (*Is.* 2.10–22, 13.9–13; *Zep.* 1.14–16). The motif of the day of the Lord usually places the emphasis on destruction, but it also entailed the exaltation of the Lord and deliverance for the faithful. The double aspect of the day of judgment is clear in *Daniel* 12.1, which promises both a time of anguish and deliverance for "your people." Deliverance in *Daniel* entails resurrection of the dead.

There was another development in the *Book of Daniel* of momentous importance for later tradition. Here, for the first time, we find an attempt to calculate the time of the end, grounded in an elaborate schema that is spelled

out in *Daniel* 9, where Jeremiah's prophecy that Jerusalem would lie desolate for 70 years is reinterpreted as 70 weeks of years, or 490 years. This period could also be interpreted as ten jubilees. (For the notion of jubilee, see *Leviticus* 25.) The last week of years, or seven-year period, was initiated by the murder of the high priest Onias, and the midpoint of the last week was marked by the "installation that makes desolate" in the Temple, an event that is usually dated to December 167 BCE (*Dn.* 9.26–27). The conclusion to be drawn from Daniel's prophecy, then, is that the end would come three and a half years after the profanation of the Temple, some time in the summer of 163 BCE. The same chronology is implied in *Daniel* 7.25, which gives the length of the persecution as "a time and times and half a time." Daniel makes more specific attempts to calculate the precise number of days until the end in *Daniel* 8.14 and 12.11–12.

One other development in apocalyptic eschatology should be noted before turning to the Dead Sea Scrolls. The "Apocalypse of Weeks" (*1 Enoch* 91.11–17, 93.1–10) is a revelation in the name of Enoch, written about the time of the Maccabean Revolt. Here, as in *Daniel*, history is divided into weeks, presumably weeks of years. At the end of the seventh week, "the chosen righteous from the eternal plant of righteousness will be chosen," but history does not come to an end. In the eighth week a sword is given to the righteous, to execute judgment. In the ninth, "the righteous judgment will be revealed to the whole world . . . and the world will be written down for destruction." Finally, in the tenth week, there will be a great judgment, the old heaven will be taken away, and a new heaven revealed. Thereafter, "there will be many weeks without number." Even though this apocalypse envisages the end of this world, the end is not exactly a fixed point. Rather, we have an eschatological scenario in which there is a series of ends as the old order passes away and is replaced by the new.

The End of Days in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Each of the traditions we have considered so far plays an important part in the eschatology of the Dead Sea sect. The expression *aḥarit ha-yamim* occurs more than thirty times in the Dead Sea Scrolls (Steudel, 1993). The *Miqtsat Ma'asei ha-Torah* (MMT; 4Q394–399) declares that "this is the End of Days," and the *Rule of the Congregation* (1Q28a), one of the supplements to the *Rule of the Community* from Qumran Cave 1, is introduced as "the rule for all the congregation of Israel in the End of Days." There are two references in the *Damascus Document*. The great majority of the occurrences, however, are found in exegetical literature, in the *pesharim*, and in midrashic texts such as the *Melchizedek* scroll (11Q13) and especially the so-called eschatological midrash (the *Florilegium*, 4Q174; the *Catena*^a, 4Q177), which contains

approximately one-third of the references. Surprisingly, the phrase does not occur in the *Rule of the Community*, *Hodayot*, or the *War Scroll*, a manuscript of the *War Rule*.

The End of Days in the scrolls has two aspects. It is a time of testing, and it is a time of at least incipient salvation. The time of testing is explicit in the *Florilegium*: "it is a time of refining that co[m]es . . .] . . . as is written in the *Book of Daniel*, the prophet . . ." In the context of *Daniel*, the time of refining is the period immediately before Michael rises in victory, although arguably it may continue into the time of distress that follows Michael's rise in *Daniel* 12.1. Several other passages corroborate the view of the End of Days as a time of testing. *Catena*^a, which may be part of the same document, speaks of testing and refining the men of the community at the End of Days. *Pesher Habakkuk* refers to traitors and ruthless ones at the End of Days (1QpHab ii.5–6; cf. 4Q169 3–4.ii.2). But the *Florilegium* also refers to the temple that the Lord will establish with his hands at the End of Days, in contrast to the "temple of men" (which serves in the interim) and to the Branch of David who will arise with the Interpreter of the Law at the End of Days.

The positive aspects of the End of Days are clearly still in the future from the perspective of the authors of the scrolls. There is no suggestion anywhere that the Messiahs have already come. Many scholars hold, however, that the time of testing was already being experienced by the sect (Brooke, Steudel). The language of the scrolls is often ambiguous; for example, the phrase "a time of refining that co[m]es . . .]" can mean grammatically either that the time has come or that it is coming. Annette Steudel has argued that it must mean that the time has already come. *Pesher Psalms*^{a-b} (4Q171, 4Q173, respectively), speak of attempts to lay hands on the Teacher of Righteousness at the time of refining, and Steudel assumes that the Teacher was already dead when the *pesher* was written. If she is right, we must assume that the End of Days entails two phases, the time of testing and the coming of the Messiahs, and that the first phase had already begun.

Only one text in the Qumran corpus says explicitly that the End of Days has already begun. This is the *Miqtsat Ma'asei ha-Torah* (4Q394–399), but its presentation of the End of Days is exceptional in a number of respects. *Miqtsat Ma'asei ha-Torah* from Qumran Cave 4 C 13–15 cites *Deuteronomy* 30.1–3: "And it is written 'and it shall come to pass, when all these things [be]fall you,' at the End of Days, the blessings and the curses, ['then you will take] it to hea[rt] and you will return unto Him with all your heart and with all your soul,' at the end. . . ." The text goes on to say that "we know that some of the blessings and the curses have [already] been fulfilled as it is written in the book of Moses," but the reference is appar-

ently to the blessings experienced under David and Solomon and the curses experienced from the time of Jeroboam to the Babylonian Exile. The fulfillment of these curses and blessings, then, is not itself part of the End of Days and is hardly proof that the End of Days is at hand. Nonetheless, the *Miqtsat Ma'asei ha-Torah* continues: "And this is the End of Days when they will return to Isra[el]." Thus, the point is not that signs of the End of Days have recently begun to appear, but that the time of decision is now. The *Miqtsat Ma'asei ha-Torah* is exceptional among the Dead Sea Scrolls insofar as it is addressed to someone outside the sectarian community. Consequently, it makes no attempt to argue from the experience of the sect that prophecy is being fulfilled, since the recipient of the document could not be expected to accept such an argument.

The precise limits of the End of Days are never clearly defined in the scrolls. The ambiguity of the situation may be illustrated with reference to the opening column of the Damascus Document. There we are told that at the time of the Babylonian Exile, God saved a remnant from Israel. Then, "in the age of wrath, 390 years after having delivered them up into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, he visited them, and caused a plant root to spring from Israel and from Aaron." It is not clear, however, whether the whole 390 years qualify as "the age of wrath" or whether that age begins only after 390 years. The phrase "age of wrath" (*qets ha'aharon*) involves a word-play on "the last age" (*qets ha-'aharon*), a phrase from the *peshtarim*, which can scarcely be distinguished from the "End of Days" and must also be related to the "last generation" (*dor ha-'aharon*) of the Damascus Document (CD i.12). This is the period when "Belial is loosed against Israel" (CD iii.13). It is hardly possible that the End of Days was thought to have begun as early as the Babylonian Exile, but its beginning could well have coincided with the emergence of the sect. As I have noted already, the period extends to the coming of the Messiahs, which clearly remains in the future according to all the Dead Sea Scrolls. The Rule of the Congregation (1Q28a) assumes that the conditions of human existence are not greatly altered by the coming of the Messiahs (Schiffman, 1989). Provision must still be made for the education of children and for community meals and regulations. One of the tasks of the princely Messiah, however, was to wage war on the *Kittim*, the gentile enemies of Israel (Collins, 1995, pp. 49–73). This war is included in the End of Days in Peshier Isaiah (4Q161). The phrase is never applied, however, to the conditions that ensue after the eschatological war. We should perhaps allow for some variation in the way the motif is used, but in general we may agree with Steudel (1993, p. 231) that the

End of Days is "the last period of time, directly before the time of salvation." [See *Kittim*.]

There are also indications in the scrolls, however, that the Dead Sea sect envisaged a more specific end point (cf. 1QS iv.18–19). This end was not in the vague and distant future but was expected at a particular time in the sect's history. There are primarily two pieces of evidence that point to such a specific expectation, one passage in Peshier Habakkuk and another at the end of the Damascus Document.

Peshier Habakkuk comments on *Habakkuk* 2.3 as follows:

For there is yet a vision concerning the appointed time. It testifies to the end time [*qets*], and it will not deceive. The interpretation of it is that the last end time [*qets ha-'aharon*] will be prolonged, and it will be greater than anything of which the prophets spoke, for the mysteries of God are awesome. If it tarries, wait for it, for it will surely come, and it will not be late. The interpretation of it concerns the men of truth, those who observe the Law, whose hands do not grow slack in the service of the truth, when the last end time is drawn out for them, for all of God's end times will come according to their fixed order. (1QpHab vii.6–13)

(This passage from Habakkuk is also cited several times in *Daniel* [Dn. 8.17, 10.14b, 11.27, 11.35, 12.12] to make the point that the vision will only be fulfilled at its appointed time.)

The prolongation of the end time is not merely a theoretical possibility; it is the experience of the community, for which the author seeks an explanation in the prophetic text. It is reasonable to infer, then, that the end was expected shortly before the *pesher* was written. While we do not know the exact date of the *pesher*, all indicators point to the middle of the first century BCE. The manuscript is dated on paleographic grounds to the Herodian period (F. M. Cross, *The Ancient Library of Qumran and Modern Biblical Studies*, Garden City, N.Y., 1961, p. 120, n.20), but it is not an autograph, and it contains copyist errors. The *Kittim* in this document are clearly the Romans, who "sacrifice to their standards" (1QpHab vi.3–4). The prediction that the wealth and booty of the "last priests of Jerusalem will be given into the hand of the army of the *Kittim*" (ix.6–7) suggests that the conquest of Jerusalem by the Romans (63 BCE) either was imminent or had already taken place. Peshier Nahum (4Q169) refers to events in the early first century BCE, down to the time of Hyrcanus II (63–40 BCE) and Aristobulus II (67–63 BCE). If we assume that these *peshtarim* were written at about the same time, a date around the middle of the century is plausible.

The other witness to the expectation of an end at a specific time, the Damascus Document, also points to a date

toward the middle of the first century BCE. In the Damascus Document (CD xx.14) we are told that "from the day of the ingathering of the Unique Teacher until the destruction of all the men of war who turned back with the Man of Lies there shall be about forty years." This calculation is evidently related to the figures found in column i of the same document. The time from the Babylonian Exile to the emergence of the sect is 390 years. Then the first members wander in blindness for 20 years until the arrival of the Teacher of Righteousness. If we allow the conventional figure of 40 years for the Teacher's career, this brings us to 450 years. Forty years after his death would then bring us to 490 years, the time stipulated in the *Book of Daniel*. That this figure was important for the eschatology of the sect is clear from the Melchizedek scroll (11Q13): "Now the D[ay of Expi]ation i[s the en]d of the tenth [ju]bilee, when expiation (will be made) for all the sons of [light and] for the m[e]n of the lot of Mel[chi]zedek." The end of the tenth jubilee is of course the culmination of 70 weeks of years, or 490 years.

It appears then that the Dead Sea sect expected the fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy about forty years after the death of the Teacher of Righteousness. Unfortunately, we do not know when this took place. A date around the end of the second century BCE seems likely, but we must allow a generous margin of error. If the Teacher died about 100 BCE, this would point to an end about 60 BCE, which would be highly compatible with the evidence of Peshar Habakkuk.

Some scholars believe they can reconstruct the date at which the end was expected with greater specificity (Stuedel, 1993, pp. 233–240). Fundamental to any such attempt is the assumption that the figure of 390 years in the Damascus Document, for the period from the Babylonian Exile to the rise of the sect, is reliable chronological information. Two possible calculations have been proposed. Assuming the modern chronology of the exile and postexilic period, we arrive at the year 197/196 BCE for the emergence of the plant root from Aaron and Israel and 177/176 BCE for the advent of the Teacher of Righteousness. It has been pointed out, however, that some ancient Jewish authors calculated a later date for the exile and a shorter postexilic period. The Jewish chronographer Demetrius, who wrote in Egypt in the late third century BCE, calculated that there were 338 years between the Babylonian Exile of Judah (587/586 BCE) and Ptolemy IV (222 BCE) rather than 364 or 365 years as modern historians reckon (Antti Laato, "The Chronology in the Damascus Document of Qumran," *Revue de Qumrân* 15 [1992], 605–607). This adjustment of twenty-six years, would make possible the emergence of the Teacher of Righteousness at about 150 BCE, shortly after the usurpa-

tion of the high priesthood by Jonathan (Hasmonean), which many scholars have supposed to be the occasion for the secession of the Qumran sect. If we then allow forty years for the career of the Teacher and a further interval of forty years following his death, we conclude that the end was expected about 70 BCE.

These suggestions are intriguing and are not impossible; however, they are unreliable. While there is evidence for speculation on biblical chronology, such as we find in Demetrius, in such document as *Jubilees* and the Aramaic Apocryphon of Levi, there is no actual evidence that the Damascus Document used the chronology of Demetrius. The argument is simply that this chronology would support a popular hypothesis about the origin of the Dead Sea set—a hypothesis far from established fact. Besides, the chronological data attributed to Demetrius are confused and contradictory. The figure of forty years for the career of the Teacher of Righteousness is only a round number. The same must be said for the 390 years of the Damascus Document, which is a symbolic number for the duration of the desolation, derived from *Ezekiel* 4.5. The attempt to derive chronological information from it rests on a shaky foundation. It is no more likely to be accurate than the 490 years in *Daniel* 9.

This is not to deny that the sectarians of Qumran had a specific time in mind for the coming of the eschaton. In order to arrive at that date, however, they did not need to verify every stage of the chronology. It was sufficient that they remember how much time had passed since the death of the Teacher of Righteousness. Even the Damascus Document did not claim that divine intervention would come exactly forty years after that event, but an approximate number was enough to fuel lively expectation. There is no evidence that anyone at Qumran ever counted the days, in the manner of the *Book of Daniel*, or that their expectation ever focused on a specific day or year. Nonetheless, as the years passed, they were aware that the end time was prolonged. "About forty years" could not be extended indefinitely. The lack of a specific date, however, mitigated the disappointment, and made it easier for the community to adapt to the postponement of their expectations.

The Nature of the End. The texts are not as explicit as we might wish about what was to happen forty years after the death of the Teacher of Righteousness. The Damascus Document still expected the coming of the Messiahs, so this is one obvious possibility. Their coming is described as "the age of visitation" when the unfaithful will be put to the sword (CD xix.10). The Damascus Document speaks explicitly of the destruction of the men of war who turned back with the Men of the Lie. The Damascus Document does not indicate, however, how long

the judgment would take. The Rule of the Community from Qumran Cave 1 speaks of "an end to the existence of injustice" (1QS iv.18). The Melchizedek scroll says that after the tenth jubilee is the time for "Melchizedek's year of favor" when he will exact "the ven[geance] of E[l]'s judgments" (11Q13 ii.13). It is also "the day [of salvation about w]hich [God] spoke [through the mouth of Isaiah the prophet]" (11Q13 ii.15). From these passages it is clear that the community expected a day of judgment, as foretold by the prophets. Other passages, however, indicate that a lengthier process was envisaged. The day of salvation in the Melchizedek scroll is the occasion of the arrival of the herald, the "anointed of the spirit" or eschatological prophet. We might expect that he would be followed by the messiahs of Aaron and Israel (cf. 1QS ix.11) and then by the eschatological war, which takes forty years according to the War Scroll.

It is not apparent, however, that all these texts were ever synthesized into a coherent system. The Melchizedek scroll does not speak of messiahs (except the "anointed of the spirit"), and the Rule of the Community from Qumran Cave 1 does not mention the tenth jubilee. Different texts provided different models for the end time or highlighted different aspects of it. Some of these, such as the expectation of messiahs, envision the restoration of a utopian Israel on earth. Other aspects, such as the dualistic conflict between the archangel Michael and Belial, have a cosmic and supernatural character. These different emphases cannot be clearly separated in the Qumran documents. The major rule books (Rule of the Community, Damascus Document, War Rule) all allude both to messianic figures and to the conflict with Belial. Presumably, these different aspects were regarded as complementary, but there is no evidence that they were ever synthesized into a consistent doctrine.

While the various models of eschatology found in the scrolls do not yield a fully coherent system, some ideas may be characterized as typical of the sect. One such idea is the expectation of an eschatological war. This is described elaborately in the War Rule, although even the War Scroll found in Qumran Cave 1 (1QM) combines traditions that are in some tension, if not contradictory. But the final war is also alluded to in the *pesharim*, Hodayot, the Rule of the Community, and other texts. A messianic prince would play an important role in this war (4Q285, 4Q161). There was also place for an angelic deliverer, variously identified as Michael, Melchizedek, or the Prince of Light. These deliverers might be accented differently in different documents; the crucial affirmation was that God would put an end to wickedness.

There are surprisingly few descriptions of the state that was to follow the eschatological war. The War Scroll

mentions the rule of Michael among the angels and the kingdom of Israel on earth (1QM xvii.7-8), and this is in accordance with the *Book of Daniel*. There are frequent references to the blessed state of the elect after death, but references to resurrection are remarkably rare, and the few clear texts are of uncertain provenance.

Eschatology of the Essenes. It is interesting in this regard to compare what we find in the scrolls with the descriptions of the eschatology of the Essenes, with whom the Dead Sea sect is most frequently identified. We have, in fact, two sharply different accounts of Essene eschatology. According to Josephus, "It is a firm belief among them that although bodies are corruptible, and their matter unstable, souls are immortal and endure forever" (*The Jewish War* 2.154-158). He goes on to compare the ideas of the Essenes to those of the Greeks with respect to reward and punishment after death, comparing the abode of the righteous dead with the Islands of the Blessed. He says nothing about any transformation of this world. Hippolytus of Rome, in contrast, writing more than a century later, claims that "the doctrine of the resurrection has also derived support among them, for they acknowledge both that the flesh will rise again, and that it will be immortal, in the same manner as the soul is already imperishable." He goes on to compare Essene and Greek concepts of eschatology in terms very similar to those used by Josephus, including the comparison with the Islands of the Blessed. In addition to the postmortem rewards and punishments, however, Hippolytus allows for "both a judgement and a conflagration of the universe" (*Refutation of All Heresies* 27).

There is good evidence that Josephus and Hippolytus used a common source; Hippolytus was not dependent on Josephus for his information. Some of the statements that are peculiar to Hippolytus seem to be due to confusion; he says that the Essenes are also called Zealots and Sicarii (*Refutation of All Heresies* 26). He may preserve some information that was omitted by Josephus. The idea of a conflagration of the universe finds striking support in a passage in Hodayot^b (1Q35 xi.29-32; formerly iii.29-32). This is, however, the only passage in the scrolls that attests to such a belief, so it does not appear to have played any central role in the expectations of the sect.

Hippolytus's claim that the Essenes affirmed bodily resurrection receives little support from the Dead Sea Scrolls. While the belief in resurrection is prominent in the apocalypses of Enoch and Daniel, which were also found at Qumran, only two of the previously unknown texts clearly affirm such a belief. These are the Messianic Apocalypse ("He will . . . revive the dead"; 4Q521 2.ii.12) and Pseudo-Ezekiel^a and Pseudo-Ezekiel^b (4Q385, 4Q386). Neither can be identified unambiguously as a product of

the Dead Sea sect. Even if they are sectarian compositions, the evidence suggests that resurrection was only a minority belief at Qumran and was not typical of the eschatology of the sect. The sectarians hoped for fellowship with the angels and for "eternal joy in life without end," while they condemned the wicked to "destruction by the fire of the dark regions" (1QS iv). The resurrection of the body did not figure prominently in their hopes. Josephus's account, although admittedly cast in Hellenistic terms, corresponds more closely to the typical expectations of the scrolls.

It must be admitted, however, that neither Josephus's nor Hippolytus's account of the Essenes corresponds completely with what is found in the scrolls. No ancient account of the Essenes mentions the expectation of messiahs nor the prospect of an eschatological war. This discrepancy is not fatal to the view that the Dead Sea sect was Essene. The source on which Josephus and Hippolytus drew was evidently composed for a Hellenistic audience, and the author may have judged that some aspects of Essene belief were better ignored. But if the scrolls contain firsthand evidence of Essene views, then the accounts of the Greek authors (Philo, Josephus, and Hippolytus) are less than fully reliable.

[See also Apocalyptic Texts; Catena; Damascus Document; Essenes; Florilegium; Hodayot; Messiahs; Miqtsat Ma'asei ha-Torah; Peshet Habakkuk; Resurrection; Rule of the Community; Rule of the Congregation; Teacher of Righteousness; and War of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness.]

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ESSENE GATE. In the description of the walls of Jerusalem prior to the city's fall in 70 CE, Josephus also tells about the western and southern sections of the First Wall (*The Jewish War* 5.145); starting from the Hippicus tower (the approximate site of the present-day citadel), the First Wall passed by a place called Bethso (q.v.) to the Essene Gate.

The likeliest candidate for this gate is the one excavated in 1894-1895 by F. J. Bliss and A. C. Dickie and reexcavated with its surroundings between 1977 and 1988 by Bargil Pixner, Doron Chen and Shlomo Margalit. The gate, built with well-cut ashlar stones, is 2.66 meters (9 feet) wide and lies close to the southwestern corner of the city. Its earliest stage (out of three) is to be dated to the Herodian period, an intrusion into the Hasmonean wall.

A gate in the Western Wall unearthed between 1973 and 1978 by Magen Broshi and Shimon Gibson was identified by Yigael Yadin as the Essene Gate. Yadin's suggestion is hard to accept since this seems to have been a private entrance to Herod's palace and not a public thoroughfare.

It is highly plausible that the Essene Gate got its name from a nearby Essene neighborhood. However, no archaeological remains were unearthed in the vicinity of the gate that would show that this area was settled by sectarians (but it is doubtful that nonmonastic Essene residences differed from those of other Jews). The existence of an Essene community in or near Jerusalem was proven recently by the discovery of a large cemetery, the tombs of which are very similar to those of Qumran. In this cemetery, 4.5 kilometers (3.8 miles) to the southwest of the Essene Gate in the southwestern corner, B. Zissu excavated in 1996 over forty shaft graves totally different from the normal Second Commonwealth burials but of great similarity to those dug at Qumran. [See Cemeteries.]

[See also Archaeology; Qumran, article on Archaeology.]