Ms. D omits her name. Ms. E adds that she was "honorable" (τίμια).

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Dale C. Allison, Jr.

Damascus

I. Archaeology

Damascus is an important site in Southern Syria, the capital city of the Iron Age kingdom of Aram Damascus (and as such a rival of the Israelite and Judahite kingdoms), where the Apostle Paul converted to Christianity, an important Medieval city, and the capital of modern-day Syria. Located along the banks of the Barada river, in rich "oasis-like" surroundings, to the southeast of the Anti-Lebanon mountain range, it has served as an important cultural and economic center for millennia.

Ancient Damascus is located under the ruins of the present "Old City" and thus, there is very little archaeological evidence of the pre-Classical city, and information is culled solely from historical sources. While in the past it has been suggested that it is mentioned in the Mari archives, this is questionable. In Egyptian sources, Damascus, known as ʾApu/ʾOpu, is apparently mentioned in the Middle Kingdom execration texts, as well as in several Egyptian New Kingdom sources, including lists of Thutmosis III, Amenophis III and in four of the Amarna letters.

During the Iron Age, Damascus was the capital of the Kingdom of Aram Damascus. The biblical texts include many references to Damascus and its kings, and their relationship with biblical Israel and Judah, but the historicity of many of these, and in particular ones relating to the early Israelite monarchy are highly debated and questionable. The list of kings as seen from the biblical text is far from clear, and several alternative interpretations on the sequence of the kings of the city have been suggested. During the 9th century BCE, Aram Damascus reached its ascendancy, under the reign of Hazael, who usurped the throne around 842 BCE (e.g., 2 Kgs 8 : 7–15). It is during this time that Aram Damascus and the Israelite kings fought repeatedly, as echoed in the biblical text, and most likely, in the "BYT DWD" stele from Dan. During his reign he also fought several times with the Assyrians. Following the reign of Hazael, Aram Damascus quite rapidly lost its power, and in 732, Tiglath–Pileser of Assyria captured the city and killed its last king Radyan, annexing the city to the Assyrian empire.

Little is known regarding Damascus between the late Iron Age and the Hellenistic period. During the Hellenistic period, the city was controlled, periodically, by the Seleucids and Ptolemids. With the conquest of Syria-Palestine by Pompey in 63 BCE, the city came under Roman control. According to the NT, Paul was converted to Christianity near Damascus (Acts 9 : 22; 26 : 12–23). A large Jewish community existed in Damascus, many of whom were killed during the First Revolt (Josephus, *J.W.* 2.561). Damascus continued to be an important city during the Roman and Byzantine periods, being an important center of eastern Christianity. Following the rise of Islam, Damascus fell at first to the Arab armies in September 635 and then again, after the battle of Yarmuk, in December 636. During the Medieval periods, Damascus had an oscillating status. Archaeological evidence of the Roman-Byzantine city can be seen in the city plan of the current center of Damascus, as well as various architectural remains (including portions of the Temple of Jupiter) in and around the ancient city. The Medieval city is represented by many remains, with the fabulous Umayyad grand mosque as the true jewel.

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Aren M. Maeir

II. Ancient Near East and Hebrew Bible/Old Testament

The historic site of Damascus lies at an oasis once lavishly watered by the Barada River through the melting snows of the Anti-Lebanon Range before petering out in the steppe to the East. Indications of the earliest settlement from sites on the edge of the oasis go back to the seventh millennium BCE. It is likely that only small-scale settlement was possible within the oasis before the Aramaeans introduced the technology to channel the Barada and drain the swamps. Recent excavation trenches inside the Damascus Citadel, however, have produced Early Bronze Age ceramic material. Structural evidence of Bronze Age settlement has only come from the fringes of the oasis. The most prominent mound in the region of Damascus lies at Tell Salihiye, on the Barada 15 kilometres east of Damascus, possibly a site guarding the approaches to the oasis. A second defensive position, including an Egyptian governor's residence of the 18th century BCE, has been found at Tell Sakka near Damascus airport (Taraqji: 27–40). References in a relief of Thutmose

III and in the Amarna archives indicate the oasis harboured a significant centre in the Middle Kingdom period. Another intriguing find is a basalt stele dating from the 56th year of Ramses II's reign (1236 BCE) found re–used as the roof of a Roman tomb near the town of Kiswe, 25 kilometres south of Damascus (Taraqji: 41–43; Yoyotte: 44–58).

The arrival of the Aramaeans towards the end of the second millennium BCE brought the first consolidation of the oasis hamlets, clustered along the ridgeline joined by the path which is today's Straight Street (*Suq al-Tawil*). The Aramaean irrigation scheme lay between the ridge and the Anti-Lebanon Range. An Aramaean relief later incorporated in the north wall of the Umayyad Mosque provides the first physical evidence pre-dating the early Roman period. The city's role as a capital of regional significance developed under the Kings of Aram-Damascus from ca. 900 BCE. Numerous references to Damascus or Aram in the OT attest rivalry (and occasional collaboration) between the rulers of Aram and the OT kingdoms before the Assyrian conquest that brought their independent existence to an end in 733–32 BCE. Damascus' Aramaean population base remained when the city was incorporated into the Achaemenid Empire as the capital of the satrapy "Beyond the River." Darius left his treasure and his household in the care of the Achaemenid governor in Damascus while he campaigned against Alexander.

In 332 BCE, Damascus was taken by Alexander's general, Parmenion, after Issus. Under Greek rule, the city nominally had the status of a polis, but its fortunes fluctuated as it lay on the line of division between the Ptolemaic and Seleucid empires. The disintegration of Seleucid rule by the end of the second century brought Armenian and Nabataean control before Pompey's move into Syria taking Damascus in 64 BCE. The city must have retained a degree of importance as it was selected by Pompey as the base for his operations against Jerusalem and possibly Nabataea. The townspeople rapidly initiated the rebuilding of the shrine that had previously served the cult of Hadad as a Temple to Jupiter Damascenus, reflecting the importance of massive pilgrimage projects in the early stages of the new era. Herod's benevolence towards cities of his region brought important new civic amenities such as a theater and the probable extension and initial monumentalization of Straight Street.

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Ross Burns

III. New Testament

Until 84 BCE, Damascus was the capital of the Seleucid kingdom, after that the city came under Nabatean rule (Josephus, *J.W.* 1.103). In 64 BCE Pompey incorporated Damascus into the Roman province Syria (*J.W.* 1.127). During the time of Augustus, Herod the Great built a theater and a gymnasium (*J.W.* 1.422). After the death of Claudius in 37 CE, according to some scholars, Caligula gave Damascus back to the Nabateans, but this cannot be proven, neither by literary nor by numismatic sources. All scholars agree Damascus was under direct Roman rule at least since 61/62 CE. For several decades during the first and second century, Damascus belonged to the Hellenistic city coalition Decapolis. Damascus had a strong Jewish community, including a great number of proselytes (*J.W.* 2.561; 7.368). In light of the concrete geographic description of the "Land of Damascus" in CD VII, 15–19 it is highly unlikely that it was only a cover name for the Babylonian Exile or Qumran. Apparently, the region of Damascus was a real Essene area of exile. Some Jewish traditions (e.g., *SifDev* 1:1 [65a]) link the territory surrounding Damascus to Messianic expectations. It is debated if Jewish Christianity reached Damascus via the Jerusalem Hellenists or through conservative Galilean believers. Paul locates his encounter with the risen Christ in the vicinity of Damascus (Gal 1:13–17; cf. Acts 9:2–8). The "Street called Straight" (Acts 9:11), where Paul lodged, is to be identified with the colonnaded main West-East-Street, today named Suq et–Tawil. The community of Damascus was at least as important for Paul's initiation to the Jesus tradition as that of Antioch. The assumption that some of the members of the Messianic community of Damascus were Essene converts, as seems likely for Paul's baptizer Hananias (cf. Acts 22:12–16), may account for some Essene influences in Paul that are rather astonishing for a former Pharisee. Galatians 1:16–17 mentions that Paul spent some time in "Arabia" before returning to Damascus. "Arabia" could well refer to the vicinity of Damascus in this context. However, he had to flee from "the ethnarch of Aretas," being "let down in a basket through a window in the wall" (2 Cor 11:32–33). If, at this time, Damascus was under Nabatean rule, the mentioned ethnarch would have been the governor of king Aretas IV. More probably, however, he was the head of the Nabatean commercial colony

that had some autonomy (for a comparable use of ἐθνάρχης, cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 14.117–18). The Nabatean Quarter lay at the eastern corner of the city where Christian tradition locates the house of Hananias. Until the 4th century CE, Jewish Christian groups existed south of Damascus, some of them showing Essenizing and Gnosticizing tendencies (Epiphanius, *Pan.* 29.7; 30.2).

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Rainer Riesner

IV. Judaism

Damascus was a location of Jewish residence in the post-biblical period, referred to in Jewish sources primarily in relation to political and economic matters in which it played a role. Damascus has no distinctive theological meaning and plays no role in the unfolding of Judaism's salvation history. It was important, rather, as an area of significant agricultural activity and a location of Jewish domicile. In the first centuries BCE, it was one of the first areas in Syria-Palestine into which artificial irrigation was introduced (Diodore 2.48.4).

Damascus is mentioned in connection with the activities of Judah the Macabee's brother, Jonathan, who went there via Jerusalem following his conquest of Gaza (1 Macc 11 : 62) and, similarly, following a battle with the generals of Demetrius (1 Macc 12 : 24–32). Josephus reports that Salome Alexandra tried unsuccessfully to expand her rule to include Damascus (*Ant.* 13 : 418). Herod built a gymnasium there with his own funds (*J.W.* 1, 422), and he sought refuge in Damascus in the face of the Sanhedrin's death sentence for his executing of Galilean rebels (*Ant.* 14 : 177–180). By the first centuries CE, a large Jewish community lived in Damascus, which accounts for Paul's activity there (Acts 11). Josephus narrates that, in the events leading up to the war in 70 CE, Damascene Jews were slaughtered by their gentile neighbors (*Life* 27). Talmudic literature has little to say about Damascus, beyond reflecting on the area's fertility. R. Yose ben Dormasqit, a native of the city, claims that in the days of the Messiah, the gates of Jerusalem are destined to reach Damascus (*SifDev* 1, based on Zech 9 : 1 and Song 7 : 5). Damascus is described as a possible gateway to paradise (*bEr* 19a).

Alan J. Avery-Peck

V. Islam

On the eve of the Arab invasion, Damascus (Arab. *Dimashq*) was one of the major cities of Christian life in the East, but after the occupation of Syria, Islam became increasingly predominant in the city. After the battles of Baisān and Fihl (Pella) in the winter of 635, the Arab army under the command of Khālid ibn al-Walīd advanced against the city with little resistance from the Byzantines, and they took the city after a siege. The Christian and Jewish populations were guaranteed their possessions and were not forced to convert in return for the payment of a tribute.

Under the Umayyads, Damascus became the capital of the new Muslim state, and they began new construction throughout the city. The most impressive and lasting monument of this dynasty is the so-called Umayyad mosque, which replaced a prayer-space (*muṣallā*) that had been located in the church of St. John the Baptist. This great building was evidently necessitated by the need to provide room for the increasing numbers of new Muslims.

After the Umayyad dynasty, there were only sporadic attempts to restore the ancient glory of Damascus, most prominently in the 9th century under the Abbasid Caliph al-Mutawakkil and the ruler of Egypt Aḥmad ibn Ṭulūn. The period of the Crusades ushered in a very turbulent period in the history of the city when, in apparent response to the presence of the Crusaders in greater Syria, from the 12th century, a vigorous anti-*dhimmī* policy was instituted, imposing discriminatory measures and heavy tax burdens upon Christians and Jews. This policy, which remained in force through the beginning of the 14th century with only a brief hiatus during the sultanate of al-Malik al-Manṣūr Lajīn (1296–98), created a harsh and restrictive anti-Christian and anti-Jewish social framework. Jews and Christians were excluded from the civil service, and were forced to wear distinctive clothing. As in Egypt, a great number of churches were closed and destroyed in Syria, and in Damascus itself many Christian medical practitioners and civil servants were forcibly converted to Islam.

Some significant Christian works connected with Damascus are extant. Among these, a bilingual Greek-Arabic fragment of Ps 78 according to the Septuagint that is preserved in the Umayyad Mosque is a milestone of Christian Arabic literature. It appears to be of Syrian origin, and it must be dated to the 8th century. It is of prime significance for the linguistic data it yields, for it includes writing in Greek uncials and a form of Arabic that is a forerunner of Neo-Arabic. Besides this text, the oldest known Arabic version of the NT, MS Sinaitic Arabic 151, was translated in Damascus in 867 CE from Syriac by Bishr ibn al-Sirrī, known as "the Damascene priest" (*al-qass al-dimashqī*). Bishr also composed a homily on the ascension of Christ, which has survived in MS Brit. Mus. Or. 5019 (fol. 4).

Syriac apocalyptic texts were also a prominent genre of literary material, especially at the end of the 7th century, evidently in reaction to the Arab-

Islamic conquests. The confrontation between Byzantines and Muslims at this time was frequently characterized as a "Holy War," and in these texts Damascus is portrayed with apocalyptic overtones.

Damascus also played an important role in the Muslim reception of the Bible, since in Muslim legends biblical figures such as Abraham, Jesus, and Paul are related to sites in and around the city. Thus, the city and its environs are identified as the birthplace of Abraham and the burial place of Moses and the Virgin Mary; the baby Jesus is said to have been taken there by Mary and Joseph to escape Herod's slaughter of the innocents. Sūra 23:50, "And We made the son of Mary and his mother a portent, and We gave them refuge on a height, a place of flocks and watersprings," is interpreted to mean that at the end of time Jesus will descend into the city (*see* →plate 2.a). Straight Street of Acts 9:11 is known in Arabic as *Sūq al-ṭawīl*.

Damascus also appears in hagiographies composed by Christian Arab authors, for example, the "Story of Rawḥ al-Qurashī," a work dated to about 799 CE, relates the experiences of a young Muslim who enjoyed harassing Christians in Damascus before he became a Christian monk and was later executed for his faith.

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VI. Literature

Damascus may not loom large in post–biblical literature, but it has its interesting afterlives. The Dead Sea Scrolls imagine a "new covenant in the land of Damascus" (CD [A] VI, 19 [Wise et al.: 57]) partly on the basis of Amos 5:27, and partly by recalling a tradition about Israel's mythological origins in Damascus (Garbini: 22–35). Similarly, mythological is a comment in the Babylonian Talmud that if Paradise "is [located] between the rivers its gate is" Damascus (*bEr* 19a [Soncino trans.]). A 12th-century Arabic text by Jewish poet Moshe Darʾi reflects the tone in Isa 17: "May Damascus … be speedily violated and destroyed, and our Holy City Jerusalem be rebuilt and God's people inherit its pure luster" (qtd. in Schippers: 144). Christian writers picked up on traditions about Damascus' edenic significance, imagining that Adam was formed in and later exiled to Damascus (*Golden Legend* I.209), and that Cain slew Abel there (Shakespeare, *1 Henry VI* 1.3; Melville, *Omoo*, 353). Thanks to Paul's experience in Acts 9, Damascus also comes to stand for conversion in countless texts, for instance Strindberg's autobiographical trilogy of spiritual development, *The Road To Damascus*.

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See also →Conversion; →Paul

Damascus Covenant

→Damascus Document (CD, 4QD, etc.)

Damascus Document (CD, 4QD, etc.)

The *Damascus Document* (so-called because of the mention of Damascus several times in the text) was first discovered in the genizah of the Ibn Ezra synagogue in Old Cairo in the late 19th century and was published by Solomon Schechter under the title *Fragments of a Zadokite Work* in 1910. Two medieval Hebrew manuscripts (CD = Cairo Damascus) were discovered; Manuscript A (10th cent.) has 16 continuous columns, while Manuscript B (12th cent.) has two columns that partially overlap with Manuscript A. Before the discovery of the Qumran scrolls, the Damascus Document was variously identified as belonging to the Pharisees, the Sadducees, or the Essenes. However, the discovery of fragmentary Hebrew copies of the Damascus Document (D) in the Qumran caves firmly located it as belonging to the Qumran community (often identified with the Essenes).

Eight manuscripts of D were discovered in Cave 4 (4Q266–273), one in Cave 5 (5Q12), and one in Cave 6 (6Q15). All these manuscripts overlap either