

LUTHER'S "LEHRER ZUR GERECHTIGKEIT"

[Joel 2:23]

By Paul W. Peters

Luther's translation of Joel 2:23 reads: *Und, ihr Kinder Zions, freuet euch, und seid fröhlich im Herrn, eurem Gott, der euch Lehrer zur Gerechtigkeit gibt, und euch herabsender Frühregen und Spatregen, wie vorhin* (And you children of Zion, rejoice and be happy in the Lord, your God, who gives you teachers unto righteousness and sends down to you the former and the latter rain, as formerly). No mention is made of these "teachers unto righteousness" in the rendition of our verse in the King James Version. It reads: "Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month." Instead of translating *hammoreh litsdaqah* with "teachers unto righteousness," as Luther does, the King James Version preferred to render this expression with "the former rain moderately." In a marginal note the English translators did record one other possible translation: "A teacher unto righteousness." A reader either of both versions or of the English Version with its marginal note will be prompted to ask which of the two renderings is true to the original.¹ In seeking an answer to this question we have found it necessary and profitable to compare other passages in the Old Testament, in which the terms "teacher" and "teach" occur and to follow up their usage in the New Testament.

Nowhere in the Old Testament does the term *hammoreh litsdaqah* of Joel 2:23 occur again. With but a slight variation, namely in the form of *moreh hatsedeqah*, "Teacher of Righteousness,"² it is often used in the Dead Sea Scrolls, the newly discovered writings of the Qumran Community. No matter when this Teacher of Righteousness may have lived—according to many scholars in the second century B.C.—and whoever he may have been, there can be no doubt that the name, even if not the exact form of it, was derived from the Old Testament itself. This becomes quite evident when comparing the term *yoreh tsedeqah* of Hosea 10:12 with *moreh litsdaqah* in Joel 2:23, and then seeing what use was made of the former in one of the documents of the Dead Sea Scrolls. *Yoreh tsedeqah* can either be translated, as it is done in most versions, with "rain righteousness," or as in some versions, for instance the Peshitta and the Vulgate, with "who will teach righteousness."³ Luther rendered it *regne Gerechtigkeit*. But he does say in his commentary on Hosea: "The verb 'rain,' *yoreh*, also means 'teach,' as in Isaiah 28:9: *eth mi yoreh de'ah*, 'whom shall he teach knowledge?' And also here," he adds, "it would not be unfitting to translate: And the Lord will teach righteousness. But it seemed best to us," he concludes, "to retain the figure of speech which the prophet here employs in regard to the field and the plowing of the field."⁴ However, in his other commentary on Hosea as edited by Stephan Roth, Luther in applying this passage to Christ, does say: "No one has publicly *taught* (italics ours) righteousness but Christ alone."⁵ This interpretation brings our Hosea passage altogether into line with our Joel passage and

1 There is a third or fourth rendering of *hammoreh litsdaqah* which deserves every consideration and which we find in Laetsch's *Bible Commentary on The Minor Prophets*, namely the one with the definite article: "The Teacher unto Righteousness." This translation is to be found in the modern German Commentary, *Das Alte Testament Deutsch, Das Buch der zwölf Kleinen Propheten* by Artur Weiser, Göttingen 1949, whose translation reads: *Denn er gibt euch den Lehrer zur Gerechtigkeit* (for He gives you the teacher unto righteousness), p. 101.

2 In *Amazing Dead Sea Scrolls and the Christian Faith* by William Sanford La Sor, Moody Press 1956, the various renditions of this expression are discussed. One of them is: "Righteous" or "right—teacher" as rendered by Theodor H. Gaster, *The Dead Sea Scriptures in English Translation*, Doubleday Anchor Books 1956. It is rejected by La Sor on the grounds that "the context suggests that the expression, each time it occurs, is an objective genitive," consequently "Teacher of Righteousness."

3 The point is that the form *yoreh* in Hosea 10:12 was regarded by the Peshitta and the Vulgate as a participle and was translated by the Vulgate *qui docebit*. In the Masoretic text *yoreh* is preceded by a copulative *Waw*, which connects it with the foregoing verb and is therefore taken to be a Hiph'il imperfect form: "He (God) will rain" or "He will teach."

4 St. Louis Ed., Vol. VI, p. 1300.

5 Ibid., p. 1009.

makes it clear to us that Luther understands Hoses as speaking of a future Teacher of Righteousness.⁶ This was *suo modo* the understanding which the author of the Damascus Document⁷ of the Dead Sea Scrolls also had, when speaking of the Teacher of Righteousness in apparent allusion to our Hoses passage: “Until the coming of him who shall teach righteousness (*yoreh hatsedeq*) at the end of time.”⁸ It is therefore evident that the name, “Teacher of Righteousness,” which played a key roll in the Dead Sea Scrolls, had its basis for the Qumran Community in the Old Testament.⁹ And we today who live under the New Testament Dispensation have more reason than they to study and use the Old Testament terms for “teach” and “teacher” as they are applied to God and His Messiah, and to follow them up in the New Testament, where they are applied to Jesus who alone is the fulfilment of these Old Testament prophecies,

Our first question is as to the translation of *hammoreh litsdaqah*, whether *hammoreh* is to be rendered “teachers” (Luther) or “a teacher” (marginal note of the King James Version) or “the teacher” (Laetsch), or whether we are to follow the King James Version and understand *hammoreh litsdaqah* to mean “the former rain moderately.” Did Luther advance any arguments in favor of his translation, “teachers unto righteousness”? After what we already have heard Luther say about the twofold meaning of *yoreh* in Hosea 10:12, it is to be expected that he will refer to this twofold meaning of our word in his commentaries on Joel. In two of his commentaries he even gives preference to the translation which we find in our King James Version. After stating that “*moreh* in Hebrew means both teacher and rain, as is quite apparent from this one verse in Joel, where this very word is translated teacher and rain,” Luther continues: “Therefore we shall not understand it to mean ‘teacher’ here, but ‘rain’, and render it accordingly: For he will graciously give you rain. After all the word righteousness (*tsedaqah*), which we find here, can be translated quite well with the word ‘grace’ or ‘mercy’, as it is also rendered in Psalm 24:5 (Vulg.): He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and mercy from the God of his salvation. We shall therefore take it here in the adverbial sense: Graciously He will give you rain.”¹⁰

6 Luther gains the idea of a future teacher from the words '*ad yabho*, “till he come,” which precede the words: “and rain righteousness upon you” in Hosea 10:12. Of the words “till he come” Luther says: “This title is given to no prophet. No one has publicly taught righteousness but Christ alone. Therefore Hoses can be speaking of no one else but a future teacher” (Ibid., p. 1009). In this connection we again would like to quote Artur Weiser, *Das Buch der Zwölf Kleinen Propheten*, whose translation and interpretation are worthy of note. His translation reads: *Denn Zest ist's, Jahwe zu suchen, his er kommt und Euch Gerechtigkeit lehrt* (for it is time to seek Jahwe till He comes and teaches you righteousness)! After having carried out that a living faith, the fruits of which are obedience and love, is a gift of God, without whose grace all human endeavors are in vain, he adds: *Zu dem Gott suchenden Volk kommt Gott und lehrt es “Gerechtigkeit”* (God comes to the people that seeks God and teaches it “righteousness”), p. 67.

7 The *Damascus Document*, also called the *Zadokite Document* or the *Zadokite Fragments*, is already referred to by Laetsch in his *Grammatical Notes* on our Joel passage (p. 125). This document was discovered almost 50 years ago, but since fragments of it were found in the Qumran caves, it can be considered as one of the original writings of the Qumran Community. Those of our readers who desire a translation of this and the other documents of the Qumran Community will find them in Gaster's “The Dead Sea Scrolls” (cf. footnote 2) and in Géza Vermès, *Discovery in the Judean Desert*, Desclée Company, New York 1956.

8 Quoted from *The Zadokite Documents* by Chaim Rabin, Oxford, 1954, which offers the readers the Hebrew text, an English translation, and footnotes. “The end of time” in our quotation does not extend beyond the writer's own generation. “In the Qumran literature ... there is no provision for generations to come. Only immediacy of the end was taught” (La Sor in *Amazing Dead Sea Scrolls*, p. 176.)

9 Gaster, *The Dead Sea Scriptures*, traces the title back to Moses' farewell blessing upon the priestly tribe of Levi: “They have observed thy word and kept thy covenant. They shall teach (*yoru*) Jacob thy judgments, and Israel thy law” (Deut. 33:9–10). No doubt this passage is basic for the concept of the “Teacher of Righteousness.” As a title, however, it apparently has been derived from Joel's *hammoreh litsdaqah* and from Hosea's *yoreh hatsedeq*. While the latter title is taken directly by the writer of the Damascus Document from Hosea 10:12, the title *moreh hatsedeq* can only have been borrowed from Joel and from Isaiah 30:20. The latter passage as a source for this title is considered but rejected by La Sor, because he takes *morekha* to be a plural form (p. 171). We have found no one among English scholars till now who has called attention to Joel 2:23 as a basis for this title. This can only be explained by the fact that most English commentators and scholars follow the King James Version in its translation of our passage. Only in the *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* herausgegeben von Otto Eissfeldt und Johannes Hempel, 69. Band, 1957, p. 261 we have found a brief review of an article entitled *Der Lehrer der Gerechtigkeit in den Handschriften vom Toten Meer und die Bibel*, appearing in the 1956/7 issue of the theological periodical, *Der Seelsorger*, pp. 125–128. The reviewer points out that the author of the article, S. Grill, has based his study of this name on Isa. 30:20, Joel 2:23, and Ps. 83(4):7.

10 St. Louis Ed., Vol. VI, p. 1451.

This comment is found in the *Altenburg Manuscript*. The *Zwickau Manuscript* compiled by Stephan Roth has the following comment: “A Teacher of Righteousness, rather: a rain of mercy or of grace. *Moreh* causes the translators much difficulty. It means ‘teacher’ and ‘rain’. He does not speak of a teacher, but of a rain, which the Lord will give to the earth, i.e., mercifully and graciously, ‘doing it gladly and kindly.’ Ps. 24:5 (Vulg.): He shall receive blessing and mercy from the Lord,” etc.¹¹

According to these two comments Luther seems to be altogether in favor of the translation as we have it in our English Version. But in Veit Dietrich’s second compilation of the *Altenburg Manuscript* Luther brings both meanings of *moreh*, “teacher” and “rain,” together, saying in reference to our verse: “The word *moreh* is well known, it has both meanings of ‘teacher’ and ‘rain,’ perhaps because the same thing can be said of both as we have it in Isaiah 55:10. The rain is sent down from heaven and good teachers are also a gift of God. The rain never falls on parched land without producing fruit. And likewise there is always a certain fruit of the Word to be found in the Church... The prophet is showing us the favorable progress of the Gospel and the fine fruits which follow this doctrine of righteousness, not only in the small corner of the world, where the Jews lived, but in the whole world... Yet this parable,” Luther adds, “also promises the Church a temporal blessing and sufficient sustenance, as both spiritual and temporal blessings are joined together in a similar prophecy by Isaiah in chapter 30 verse 20: ‘In tribulation the Lord shall give you bread, and water in distress. For he shall not let your teacher flee anymore, but your eyes shall see your teacher.’”¹² Thus Luther also finds this twofold promise in our Joel verse and therefore can say: “The other rain which falls after the sowing has the name which we above have translated with ‘teacher’.”¹³

Although Luther takes our word *hammoreh* to have a plural meaning, *Lehrer der Gerechtigkeit*, “teachers of righteousness,” he does not want his readers, especially the Jews, to interpret the passage as merely referring to Moses and the prophets. On the contrary, it should be evident to everyone, whether a Jew or someone else, that the Lord is promising a teacher who is to be preferred to Moses and the prophets and who is to preach an altogether different doctrine from that of Moses. Therefore Christ, the king on the holy hill of Zion, is “the teacher unto righteousness,” who through the Holy Spirit brings about a change of heart. Luther undoubtedly wants *hammoreh* to be understood as a collective noun, including Joel and all former prophets, but not excluding the Messianic prophet and teacher, the antitype of all other prophets and teachers, who as such is the true fulfillment of this Messianic prophecy. But whether we translate *hammoreh* as a singular, “the teacher,” or as a collective noun in the plural, “teachers,” the question still remains whether it at all has the meaning of “teacher,” be it singular or plural, definite or indefinite, or whether the translation “rain moderately” or “graciously,” as Luther has it, is not to be preferred.

11 Ibid., p. 1668f.

12 Ibid., pp. 1559 and 1564. The manner in which Luther renders the first half of our verse is worthy of special note. The King James Version has an altogether different reading: “And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers.” Modern scholars in order to avoid the expressions “bread of adversity” and “water of affliction” practise textual criticism on the text. This is not necessary as Delitzsch in his *Commentary on Isaiah* shows, who in the main translates as Luther does: “And the Lord gives you bread in scarcity, and water in affliction” (p. 32f.).

13 Ibid., p. 1563f.—In a different manner Weiser in his *Buch der zwölf Kleinen Propheten*, endeavors to find the temporal and spiritual blessings of our passage in the word *moreh*, which occurs twice in our verse. After having carried out that the people have been exhorted to rejoice (v. 21), not only because of the earthly blessings, but still more because of God Himself who is near to them in these temporal blessings, he continues: “In this way the play of words with the word *moreh*, which can mean ‘teacher’ (23b) and ‘rain’ (23c), is to be understood. The rain, the gift of God, is the ‘teacher unto righteousness,’ i.e. it directs the attention of the people to the righteousness of God, which here really means grace, which results in salvation (as to this meaning of ‘righteousness’ cf. for instance Isa. 54:17).” We welcome Weiser’s translation of the name, the Teacher of Righteousness, and his interpretation of *tsedaqah*, also his reference to Isa. 54:17 which reads: “This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.” In view of passages like Hos. 10:12 and Isa. 30:20, however, we regret that he does not distinguish in meaning between *moreh* and *moreh* in our verse.

In answer to our question it can be said that according to our best knowledge of this Hebrew word, *moreh* never has the meaning of “rain,” as Luther assumed, but only the meaning of “teacher.”¹⁴ Derived from a stem *yarah*, “to direct,” which is used forty-five times in the sense of “instruct,” “teach,” the noun *moreh* occurs six times including Joel 2:23.¹⁵ In Isaiah 30:20, where it is used twice with a suffix, *morêkha*, it is translated by Luther, *deinen Lehrer*, “your teacher,” by the King James Version “thy teachers.” Other versions¹⁶ and a number of commentaries¹⁷ take *morêkha* to be a noun in the singular, “your teacher,” referring to God. Rendered thus it reads: “And the Lord gives you bread in scarcity and water in affliction; and your Teacher will not hide himself anymore, but your eyes shall see your Teacher.” The rendering of *morêkha* as a singular conforms best to the whole context comprising verses 18 to 21. It is the Lord who will have mercy upon His people (verse 18); it is He who will answer their cry (verse 19) and who as their Teacher will not hide himself anymore, but their eyes shall see Him as their Teacher (verse 20) and their ears shall hear the word of their Teacher behind them saying: “This is the way, walk in it.” “Who is a *moreh*, a teacher like Him” we must ask with Elihu in Job 36:22.

In Psalm 84:7 *moreh* does have a collective meaning. This passage has received its inimitable rendition by Luther: *Die durch das Jammertal gehen, und machen daselbst Brunnen. Und die Lehrer werden mir viel Segen geschmückt* (They who go through the vale of tears, and there make wells for themselves. And the teachers are adorned with many blessings). In Proverbs 5:13 our word has the plural ending *morai*, “my teachers,” and is followed in the next line by *melammedai*, “my instructors.” The whole verse reads: “I did not listen to the voice of my teachers or incline my ear to my instructors.”

The only other passage in which *moreh* occurs is Joel 2:23. Here it is preceded for the first time by the article, something worthy of special note, since the following two words for rain, *moreh (yoreh)* and *malqosh*, never have the article. Still it is extremely difficult to determine whether in this instance the article gives the word a unique meaning, distinguishing this teacher from all other teachers and designating him as the Messiah, or whether the article merely determines the whole class or series of teachers proraised to Israel. It is interesting to find in the *Protocol and Written Entries* of Luther’s revision of Joel that the members of the *Bible Revision Commission* were already seeking an answer to this question. It seems to have been the opinion of the majority that “the whole text speaks of rain.” To leave no doubt the entry is made: “*Zedaka* means mercy, which we show to the poor. Here we translate gracious rain, which falls after spring.” Then follows in a separate column the translation of our verse: “Who gives you (gracious rain) and sends down the former and the latter rain (as formerly). But now follows an additional translation written by Luther’s own hand: “Who gives you teachers unto righteousness and sends down the early and the latter rain as formerly.” In other words, Luther adhered to his original rendition, “teachers unto righteousness,” and even adds a comment with his own hand: “He wants to

14 The most recent European Hebrew dictionary, the *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros*, edited by Koehler and Baumgartner in both German and English in Leiden 1950, lists *moreh* only in the meaning of “teacher.” The latest *Konkordanz zum Hebr äiscken Allen Testament* by G. Lisowsky, Stuttgart 1955/7 takes our word *hammoreh* to have the meaning of “*Lehrer/ teacher*.” In only two instances *moreh* is given the meaning of “former rain,” namely in the second part of our verse 23 and in Psalm 84:7. In regard to the second occurrence of *moreh* in our verse, attention must be called to the fact that 34 Hebrew manuscripts read *yoreh*, the usual word for “former rain.” As to *moreh* in Ps. 84:7, which our King James Version has translated: “The rain also filleth the pools,” Laetsch in his commentary on Joel has this to say: *Moreh* here also=teacher, collective, teachers clothe (others) in blessing. So LXX, Vulgate: ‘For a lawgiver will also give blessings,’ Syriac: ‘With blessings will be covered a lawgiver.’” Luther here also translated *moreh* with *Lehere*, teachers: *Und die Lehrer wetden mit viel Segen geschmückt* (and the teachers are adorned with many blessings).

15 The five other times that we find it occurring are: Job 36:22; Prov. 5:13; twice in Ise. 30:20; Hab. 2:18. In three other passages Gen. 12:6; Deut. 11:30, and Judg. 7:1 it is used as a place name. Gen. 12:6: “plain of Moreh”; Deut. 11:30: “plains of Moreh,” and Judg. 7:1: “hill of Moreh.”

16 *An American Translation*, *Moffatt*, and the *Revised Standard Version* read “your teacher.”

17 Johann Fischer, *Das Buch Isaias*, argues: “Instead of ‘your teacher’ (i.e. Yahweh), one could translate the Hebrew form with ‘your teachers’ (i.e. the prophets). But this would not give a good meaning. Rather the teacher is Yahweh.” Proksch in his *Jessie I* refers us to the predicate which is in the singular and to Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar, § 93ss, which enumerates nouns “which have apparently plural suffixes.” Although Luther uses the singular, *Lehrer*, in his translation, he interprets it in his *Kurze Auslegung über Jesaja* (St. Louis Ed., Vol. VI, p. 387) as a promise that Israel “shall have prophets, who shall teach you the fast and firm word of promise.”

say till that Christ comes there shall remain with you preaching and food [*utrumque regimen*], i.e. the teachers unto righteousness and the fruit of the land, as was the case in the beginning and formerly.”¹⁸

Melanchthon apparently was not in full accord with Luther. He had the following to say, which Rörer by his own hand entered on the outer margin of the page preceded by the initials P.M., which are those of Philip Melanchthon. Then follow these words: “Or also: He who gives you the teacher unto righteousness, i.e., the Savior Messiah, who above all is the teacher unto righteousness, for through Him the hidden counsel of God concerning salvation and the promise is revealed, whereby He Himself justifies believers. He is not the teacher unto fear and condemnation as Moses.”¹⁹

The difficulty which the professors of Wittenberg as members of the *Bible Revision Commission* had with the translation of Joel 2:23 is typical of the difficulty which we are still encountering in our rendition of the expression *hammoreh litsdaqah*. Many commentators agree with Luther in understanding *hammoreh* as a collective noun.²⁰ Others again follow Melanchthon in regarding *hammoreh* as a designation for the Messiah defined and determined by the article.²¹ If we keep in mind that *moreh* in Psalm 84:7 is used in the collective sense but without an article, then we see no reason why it should not have also been used in our verse as an anarthrous noun, had Joel intended to use it in a collective sense. *Moreh* without an article would then have been in full conformity with the following *moreh* or *yoreh*, also without an article, Still Joel uses the first *moreh* with an article, which sets it apart from the succeeding *moreh* without the article. A determination of *moreh* is also effected in Isaiah 30:20 by means of the pronominal suffix *kha*, whereby Jehovah is referred to as “your Teacher” in contrast to the graven and molten images which Israel shall cast away as unclean things. Then there also follows the promise of rain for the seed and grain which will be rich and plenteous (v. 23). The context in both passages is the same, the promise of the Teacher being followed by the promise of rain.²² Only that in Joel 2:23 Jehovah is not the Teacher but gives the Teacher. Who can this Teacher be but the promised Messiah, whom in the last analysis Luther also finds prophesied in this our passage and whom he regards as the only one who teaches the *Lehre der Gerechtigkeit*, the doctrine of righteousness? He is “The Teacher unto Righteousness.” Due to the nature of Old Testament prophecy with its “prophetic perspective” and its “foreshortening of the prophet’s horizon”²³ Luther can go from one extreme to the other, speak of *hammoreh* in the collective sense as of those prophets who have preached and are to preach the fast and firm word of promise and then again speak of *hammoreh* in the singular as of that Teacher who is the antitype, of all Old Testament teachers and prophets, namely “The Teacher unto Righteousness.”

We owe it to Luther and his Bible translation that we have not lost sight of our Joel passage as a Messianic prophecy of the Teacher unto Righteousness. With the aid of Luther’s *Exposition of Hosea* we also find this Teacher unto Righteousness prophesied in Hosea 10:12. And again by means of his translation of

18 *Weimarer Ausgabe, Die Deutsche Bibel*, 4. Band, p. 231. —The translation “formerly,” constantly used in this quotation, goes back to some Hebrew manuscripts, the LXX, Peshitta, and Vulgate, which read *kari’shon*, as before, i.e., before the drought (cf. Isa. 1:26), “which,” according to the *Interpreter’s Bible*, “makes better sense.”

19 *Ibid.*, p. 232.

20 Keil in *The Twelve Minor Prophets* understands it in this sense, although he puts *hammoreh* into the singular, “the teacher for righteousness” and then adds: “All of these (Moses, the priests, and other prophets) were teachers for righteousness and are included under *hammoreh*. Still we must not stop at them.... We must not exclude the reference to the Messiah, to whom Moses had already pointed as the prophet ... (Deut. 18:18, 19), but must rather regard the sending of the Messiah as the final fulfilment of this promise” (Vol. I, p. 207).

21 Laetsch in his *Bible Commentary* argues on the basis of the article, which this word has in the Hebrew: “The article demands ‘the’ Teacher, that prophet foretold Deut. 18:15–19. Hence not ... a series of prophets, including the Messiah (Keri); that would conflict with the definite article and the context speaking of the marvelous result of this gift already promised to mankind in Gen. 3:15.”

22 *The Interpreter’s Bible* (p. 751) is therefore not justified in saying that the context of Joel 2:23 “deals with the physical, not spiritual blessings.” It deals in one and the same verse with both spiritual and physical blessings.

23 Cf. *Principles of Biblical Interpretation* by L. Berkhof, Baker Book House, 1950, p. 150. Concerning “the prophetic perspective” Prof. Pieper in his *Jesaia II* in reference to John the Baptist has this to say: “One must observe the rule that this prophecy does not only apply to John alone but to all preachers who have the same call as John the Baptist had whether they preached prior to or after him. For it often is the mode of prophecy to array future events of the same nature, which occur earlier or later, without a perspective on one and the same level” (p. 14 on Isa. 40:3–5).

Isaiah 30:20, *dein Lehrer*, we are reminded of the fact that the original speaks of the Lord as the promised Teacher of His people. There is no denying that the Joel verse together with the above mentioned Hosea and Isaiah verses are the key passages not only for the Old Testament Messianic concept of “teacher,” but also of “teacher unto righteousness.” From these heights we can look back to those first promises which are basic for the name “Teacher unto Righteousness” and can look forward to the New Testament Scriptures where we find the fulfillment of all the prophecies pertaining to the Teacher of Righteousness.

In tracing the source of the title *hammoreh litzdaqah*, “The Teacher unto Righteousness,” we naturally turn back to the beginnings of Israel’s history and to what the Pentateuch has to say about Moses’ activity as a teacher. Nowhere is the title *moreh* or any synonymous term¹ having the meaning of “teacher” applied to Moses. The one title which Moses has is that of “prophet.” In the Pentateuch this title is used indirectly of Moses, “a prophet like unto me” (Deut. 18:15; 34:10). Only in Hosea 12:13 is he directly designated a prophet: “And by a prophet the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet was he preserved.” Prophecy, of course, was the type of the teaching of God’s people by God Himself through His prophets, and we have to keep this in mind when encountering the title “prophet” in the New Testament. Now we are interested in the specific term for “teacher,” which in reference to Moses we only find used in the Vulgate and in Luther’s *Deutsche Bibel*, not, however, in the King James Version. Both versions, the Vulgate and the *Deutsche Bibel*, give the Hebrew term *mechoqeq*, really meaning “commander” and “sceptre,” the meaning of “teacher,” the Vulgate with its *doctor* in Deuteronomy 33:21, Luther with his *Lehrer* in Numbers 21:18 and Deuteronomy 33:21. Numbers 21:18 represents a song sung by two choirs and reads in Luther’s translation: *Das ist der Brunnen, den die Fürsten gegraben haben; die Edlen im Volk haben ihn gegraben durch den Lehrer und ihre Stäbe* (This is the well which the princes dug. The nobles of the people dug it with the teacher and their staves). Here the King James Version renders “lawgiver” instead of Luther’s *Lehrer* and reads: “The princes digged the well, the nobles of the people digged it, by the direction of the lawgiver, with their staves.” With its translation of “lawgiver” the King James Version follows the Vulgate which has *in datore legis*. Luther’s revision of the

¹ There are a number of synonymous terms in the Old Testament used as titles for “teacher” also in participial form as we have it in *moreh* derived from *yarah*, all of them denoting some phase of a teacher’s ability and activity. Thus *melammed*, “one who teaches,” is often used instead of or together with *moreh* (cf. *Quartalschrift*, p. 58). We again find it occurring in Psalm 119:99: “I have more understanding than all my teachers” (*melammedai*). A second synonym is *mehhin*, “one who makes somebody to understand something,” “one who instructs,” which in reference to Ezra 8:16 and I Chron. 25:8 is simply given the meaning *Lehrer*, “teacher” by Koehler-Baumgarten in their *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros*. In the Chronicles passage 288 singers are mentioned who were instructed (*melummedê*) in the songs of the Lord, even all who were expert (*mehhin*), whom God disposed by lot, the small as the great, the teacher (*mehhin*) as the scholar (*thalmid*). It goes without saying that Luther here also has *dem Lehrer wie dem Schüler* and that he retains this meaning in Ezra 8:16 where the word *mehhin* is applied to the Levites Jojarib and Elnathan, while the King James Version has “men of understanding.” Likewise Zechariah, “who had understanding in the visions of God (II Chron. 26:5) receives the title of *Lehrer* from Luther and is designated as *der Lehrer in den Gesichten Gottes* (the teacher of the visions of God). Quite similar to *mehhin* is *maskhil*, “one who has insight,” which Luther also rendered *Lehrer* in the well-known passage: *Die Lehrer werden leuchten wie des Himmels Glanz* (the teachers shall shine as the brightness of the heavens), while our King James Version reads: “And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament.”

Luther at times uses the term *Lehrer* in order to aid his readers in understanding the Hebrew expression with its singular meaning. Where the Lord says to Jeremiah: “Thou shalt be my mouth,” Luther quite appropriately renders: *So sollst Du mein Lehrer sein*. And again when Ezra (7:11) is introduced as a *sopher*, a scribe, and in addition to this title again as a *sopher*, “a scribe of the words of the commandments of the Lord,” Luther distinguishes between *sopher* and *sopher*, translating the first one as *Schriftgelehrter*, the second one as *Lehrer*, so that his rendering reads: *Dem Schriftgelehrten, der ein Lehrer war in den Worten des Herrn und seiner Gebote über Israel* (a scribe, who was a teacher of the words of the Lord and of His commandments in regard to Israel), a rendering which one can more readily understand than the one in our English version. But even at the expense of rendering the exact meaning of a term or phrase, Luther gives precedence to the title *Lehrer* as in the complaint of the Psalmist: “There is no more any prophet; neither is there among us any that knoweth how long” (74:9), where Luther has: *Und kein Prophet predigt mehr, und kein Lehrer lehret uns mehr* (and no prophet preaches anymore, and no teacher teaches us anymore). There are, of course, instances where one can only surmise why Luther did not use a German equivalent for a specific Hebrew title, as for instance for *shophet*, “judge,” *Richter* in Psalm 141:6, where our King James Version has: “When their judges are overthrown in stony places, they shall hear my words; for they are sweet,” while Luther renders: *Ihre Lehrer müssen gestürzt werden über einen Fels: so wird man dann racine Lehre hören, class sie lieblich sei*. Both versions, however, agree in equating the Hebrew title *melitz*, “interpreter,” with “teacher,” *Lehrer* in Isaiah 43:27: “Thy teachers have transgressed against me,” *deine Lehrer haben wider reich misshandelt*.

Vulgate has *per Doctorem*,² which is in full accord with his rendering in his *Deutsche Bibel, durch den Lehrer*. We see here already that Luther had a strong preference for the term *Lehrer*, so that he did not even let himself be influenced by the Vulgate and also not by the medieval commentator Rashi (1040–1105),³ who translates “through the lawgiver.”⁴

Luther’s preference for the title *Lehrer* also shows itself in his rendition of Deuteronomy 33:21, although here he is preceded by the Vulgate with its *doctor*. This passage deals with the blessing that Gad received, and reads in Luther’s translation: *Und er sahe, dass ihm ein Haupt gegeben war, ein Lehrer, der verborgen ist; welcher karo mir den Obersten des Volks, und verschaffte die Gerechtigkeit des Herrn, und seine Rechte an Israel* (and he saw that a leader was given to him, a teacher, who is hidden, who came with the heads of the people and executed the righteousness of the Lord, and his judgments with Israel).⁵ Our King James Version agrees with Luther in its translation of the second half of this verse, while in the first half it differs: “And he provided the first part for himself, because there, in a portion of the lawgiver, was he seated; and he came with the heads of the people, he executed the justice of the Lord, and his judgments with Israel.”⁶

All three versions, the Vulgate, Luther’s *Deutsche Bibel*, and the King James Version, err in both instances in their translation and application of the Hebrew term *mechoqeq*,⁷ which means both “commander” and “commander’s staff” or “sceptre,” and not “teacher” and “lawgiver.” The correct translation of both passages can be found in the *Revised Standard Version* and is as follows:

‘Spring up, O well! —Sing to it! —
the well which the princes dug,
which the nobles of the people delved,
with the sceptre and with their staves’ (Num. 21:17).

‘He (Gad) chose the best of the land for himself,
for there a commander’s portion was reserved;
and he came to the heads of the people,

² *Weimarer Ausgabe, Deutsche Bibel*, 5. Band, p. 190, 191ff.

³ Cf. *The Soncino Chumash*, The Five Books of Moses with Haphtaroth, Hebrew Text and English Translation with an Exposition Based on the Classical Jewish Commentaries, Edited by The Rev. Dr. A. Cohen, Hindhead Surrey, The Soncino Press, 1947, p. 908, Footnote 18.

⁴ “The lawgiver” according to both Jewish and Christian commentators was Moses who began the work of digging the well and whose example the nobles of the people followed. The Damascus or Zadokite Document has its own exegesis of this “Song of the Well,” the closing words of which make mention of the Teacher of Righteousness. The document elucidates our passage “in terms of persons and events of the commentator’s day” and reads: “The ‘well’ is the law; the diggers are the repentant ones of Israel, who went out of the land of Judah and sojourned in the land of Damascus...; the ‘Staff’ is the Expounder of the Law ...; and the nobles of the people are those who have come to dig the well with the staffs which the ‘Staff’ ordained to walk therewith during the whole epoch of wickedness, and apart from them they will not grasp (instruction) until he who teaches righteousness arises in the end of the days” Prof. F. F. Bruce from whose lecture on *The Teacher of Righteousness in the Qumran Texts* (London, The Tyndale Press; cf. *The Biblical Archaeologist*, Vol. XIV, p. 56) we have quoted, calls attention to the closing words of this exegesis as “a conscious allusion to Hosea 10:12” and to the “obvious play” on the two-fold sense of the word *mechoqeq*, “lawgiver” and “ruler’s staff” by this ancient commentator.

⁵ In a marginal note (*Weimarer Ausgabe, Deutsche Bibel*, 8. Band, p. 673; cf. 3. Band, p. 337) Luther states: “And the teacher is Elijah the prophet who was taken up into heaven and hid; for he was a citizen of Gilead in the tribe of Gad” (cf. I Kings 17:1). If we had a Qumran commentary on this passage with its tendency to interpret every passage in terms of persons and events of its day, we undoubtedly again would have been informed that the *mechoqeq* is the “Teacher of Righteousness” of the Qumran Community.

⁶ By “a portion of the lawgiver” we are to understand that portion of the Eastjordan land which Moses, the lawgiver, gave to the tribe of Gad, which was to “go ready armed before the children of Israel” until it had “brought them unto their place” (Num. 32:17).

⁷ Luther did render *mechoqeq* correctly in Judges 5:9 and 14 with *Regenten*. But this meaning he erroneously applied to *mechoqeq* in the well known Messianic passage: *Es wird des Scepter von Jude nicht entwendet werden, noch ein Meister (mechoqeq) von seinen Füßen* (Gen. 49:10). He apparently did not know that *mechoqeq* did not only mean *Regent*, *Meister*, “commander,” but also “commander’s staff,” the emblem of ruling power. This is the meaning which *mechoqeq* also has Psalm 60:9 and 108:9: “Judah is my sceptre” (Revised Standard Version), not as Luther has it: *Jude ist mein Fürst* (Judah is my prince), and still less “Judah is my lawgiver,” as we find it rendered in our King James Version.

with Israel he executed the commands
and just decrees of the Lord' (Deut. 33:21).

It is evident from these two renderings, which adhere closely to the original, that they do not at all refer us to Moses and that here the titles *doctor*, *Lehrer*, "lawgiver" are not at all in place. Nevertheless, the fact that these titles were used in the old versions goes to show how much they were uppermost in the minds of the translators.

Although the noun form *moreh* was never used in the Pentateuch in reference to Moses, yet the verb form *yarah* was employed in one passage to express Moses' activity as a teacher. It was when the Lord said unto Moses that he should come up to Him into the mount and that He would give him tables of stones and a law and commandments which He had written, "that thou mayest teach them" (*lehorotham*, Exod. 24:12).⁸ In the other passages of the Pentateuch *horoth*, to teach, is applied to Aaron and his sons, who are to teach (*lehoroth*) the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord has spoken to them by Moses (Lev. 10:11). And when Moses blessed the tribes he said of Levi, who had observed God's word and kept His covenant: "They shall teach (*yoru*) Jacob thy judgments, and Israel thy law" (Deut. 33:10). Indeed, these passages are basic for the Messianic title, "The Teacher unto Righteousness," as we have found it used in Joel, although it was never applied to Moses either by Moses himself or by any other sacred writer. The fact, however, that Jerome in the Vulgate used it in speaking of Moses as a *doctor* (Deut. 33:21) and Luther in his *Deutsche Bibel* in designating him as a *Lehrer* (Num. 21:18) only proves that both Bible translators regarded the title as a very fitting and appropriate one for him who was the first one to be called by God "to teach" His chosen people.

It is not surprising that the term *yarah* is also used for those men of God who followed Moses in teaching God's people. When Samuel reasoned with the people after they had made Saul king in Gilgal (I Sam. 12), he assures them that he will continue to pray for them and then declares: "I will teach you (*horethi ethkhem*) the good and the righteous way" (I Sam. 12:23). As one who taught them the good and the righteous way Samuel certainly was a teacher unto righteousness for his people, although he, no more than Moses, bore the title, "Teacher unto Righteousness." Thus also the priest Jehoiada proved himself to be such a teacher when he instructed (*horahu*) Jehoash "that which was right" (II Kings 12:2). Also the priest who was sent to Samaria to teach foreign peoples placed there by the king of Assyria "the manner of the God of the land" (*yorem eth mishpat*),⁹ in other words to teach them "how they should fear the Lord" (II Kings 17:27, 28), was no less a teacher unto righteousness.

However, before we continue with the usage of *yarah* in the books of the Latter Prophets, we must retrace our steps and study the manner in which the word was applied to God Himself. The first time that Jehovah is represented as teaching is in Exodus 4:12, where Moses complains that he is slow of speech and of a slow tongue. The Lord answers him: "I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee (*horethikha*) what thou shalt say." And in view of Aaron the Levite, his brother, who was to join him, the Lord adds: "I ... will teach you (*horethi ethkhem*) what ye shall do." In the case of Bezaleel of the tribe of Judah, the Lord "put in his heart that he may teach" (*lehoroth*), i.e.. He gave him the ability to teach others by filling him "with the spirit of God in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship" (Exod. 35:31-34). Above all in the Psalms we learn to know the Lord as the one who "teaches sinners in the way" (*yoreh chattaim baddarekh*, Ps. 25:8), who shall teach in the way that He shall choose (*yorennu bederekh yibchar*, *ibid.* 12). It is the Lord's way (Ps. 27:11) in which the sinner shall go (32:8), the way of His statutes (Ps. 119:33). He will not depart from them, for he can say: "Thou hast taught me" (*'attah horethani*, *ibid.* 171).

However not only individuals but all of God's people were taught by God. Thus Solomon at the dedication of the temple prays that God in heaven may hear the supplication of His people when they have sinned and have turned again to Him, to forgive the sin of His people Israel and to "teach them (*thorem*) the

8 According to Deuteronomy 5:31 Moses also received the command to "teach" the people, but here and in all other passages of Deuteronomy the verb form of *lamad* instead of *yarah* is being used, both words having the same meaning in their respective *Piel* and *Hiphil* forms.

9 *Mishpat*, which often occurs together with the different names for the law of God, can here also be rendered "law" (Revised Standard Version) or "righteousness" (*tsedeq*), together with which it is used in Psalm 89:14 (15).

good way wherein they should walk,” and then adds: “And give rain upon thy land, which thou hast given to thy people for an inheritance” (I Kings 8:36). Here again we have both the spiritual and material blessings mentioned in one verse as we already have found both associated with one another in Joel 2:23. The passage in Kings stands us in good stead in understanding our Joel passage with its spiritual and material blessings in one verse, as finally all the passages speaking of God as teaching both the individual men of God and the people in general are basic for the description of His teaching in the Messianic future, which we can now take under consideration.

At the very beginning of the Book of Isaiah, chapter 2, verse 3 (cf. Micah 4:2), we find the Messianic prophecy which culminates in the teaching on the part of the Lord Himself. This well-known promise reads: “In the last days ... many people shall go and say, Come ye and ... he will teach us of his ways (*yorenu midderakhâw*) ... and we will walk in his paths.” The conviction of the nations that the Lord will teach them of His ways is based on the fact that “out of Zion shall go forth the law,” the *thorah*, i.e. the teaching, the instruction of the Lord. This teaching is that of the New Covenant. It will not be the teaching of the law which was given by Moses, but the teaching of that Gospel grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ and which He has given to His Church, from whose midst it proceeds into all the world. The ideal ministry of the Church is that of those “priests” who shall teach (*voru*) God’s people “the difference between the holy and the profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean” (Ezek. 44:23). But once more it is Isaiah who dwells on the time of the fulfillment of it by presenting the Lord to His reborn people as their Teacher who will say to them: “This is the way, walk ye in it” (Isa. 30:21). The whole promise of this blessed time must be read from the beginning to the end in order to get the full import of it and to learn to evaluate it as a complete setting forth of the promise in Joel 2:23 both as to its spiritual and temporal blessings:¹⁰

Therefore the Lord waits to be gracious to you,
 And therefore he will arise to have pity upon you;
 For the Lord is a God of justice—¹¹
 Happy are all those who wait for him!
 O people in Zion, who dwell at Jerusalem,
 No more will you weep;
 He will be gracious to you at the sound of your crying;
 As soon as he hears, he will answer you.
 In tribulation the Lord shall give you bread,
 And water in distress.
Your Teacher will no more hide himself,
But your eyes will behold your Teacher.
And when you turn to right or to left,
Your ears will hear the word (of your Teacher) behind you, saying,
“This is the way; walk in it!”
 And you will defile your carved images overlaid with silver,
 And your molten images plated with gold;
 You will scatter them to the winds like an unclean thing,
 You will say to them, “Begone!”

10 The following translation is that of *An American Translation* and has been chosen because it presents the whole passage in verse form. We have put those lines in italics which make mention both of the Teacher and of the temporal blessings of the new dispensation as we also find them in Joel 2:23.

11 Here “justice” is actually to be preferred to “judgment” of our King James Version, since the prophet wants to tell those “who wait” for the Lord how God will exercise judgment, namely “moderately and to an advantage,” as Luther puts it. Therefore he renders *mishpat* with *Recht*, “justice” in Isaiah 5:16, where mention of the judgment or exile (v. 13) has gone before: *Aber der Herr Zebaoth erhöhet werde im Recht, und Gott, der Heilige, geheiligt werde in Gerechtigkeit* (But the Lord of hosts shall be exalted in justice, and God, the Holy One, shall be sanctified in righteousness). And in his *Kurze Auslegung über Jesaia* he says: This the Lord will do, that He may destroy the ungodly, as also preserve the godly. And thus through Him justice (*das Recht*) will be exalted, so that one must say: The Lord is a just judge on earth etc.” (St. Louis Ed. VI, p. 55;.

Then will he give you rain for your seed,
 With which you sow the soil,
 Which will be rich and nourishing.
 On that day will your cattle graze in broad pastures,
 And the oxen and your asses that till the soil
 Will feed on salted fodder,
 Which has been winnowed with shovel and fork.
 And on every lofty mountain and on every high hill
 There will be streams brimming with water,
 On the day of the great slaughter,
 When the towers fall.
 And the light of the moon will be as the light of the sun,
 And the light of the sun will be sevenfold,
 As the light of seven days,
 On the day when the Lord binds up the bruises of his people,
 And heals the wounds with which they were smitten.”

(Isa. 30:18–26.)

Also in the Second Book of Isaiah we learn to know the Lord as the Teacher of His people although His activity as teacher is not any more described by means of the verb *yarah*. This well-known word for “teaching” has now been replaced by *lamad*, which we already have seen used by Moses. After the Lord has addressed Himself to His people in chapter 48, verse 17, as Redeemer and as the Holy One of Israel, He assures them: “I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee (*melammedkha*) to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldst go.” He teaches His people that which is for their good and leads them in the way of salvation. The result of this teaching will be that Jerusalem’s “children shall be taught of the Lord” (*limmudê Adonay*, Isa. 54:13). Jerusalem, the city of the Redeemed, will not any longer be in need of priests, prophets or other teachers and leaders. God Himself will put His *thorah*, His teaching, in their inward parts, will even write it in their hearts, and as result “they shall teach (*yelammedu*) no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying: Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord” (Jerem. 31:33–34). It is here that the climax of God’s teaching is reached, still couched in the form of promises, which, however, were to receive their fulfillment in Jesus Christ, “a teacher come from God” (John 3:2), and in His disciples, “all taught of God” (John 6:45). It would be strange and surprising if nowhere in the Old Testament mention were made of this teacher in any of the Messianic passages. But we have such a promise in Joel 2:23, which must read:

“Be glad, O sons of Zion,
 And rejoice in the Lord your God;
 For he has given you *The Teacher unto Righteousness*,
 He has poured down for you abundant rain,
 The early and the latter rain as before.”

Although the title, “The Teacher unto Righteousness” does not occur in the New Testament, still the Greek term for “teacher,” *didaskalos*, is used no less than 58 times, 48 times in the Gospels, and there 41 times in reference to our Lord,¹² who is none other but “The Teacher unto Righteousness.” Next to *kyrie*, *didaskale* as a mode of addressing Jesus is used more often than any other, 29 times in all. As modern readers of the King James Version we are not at all aware and conscious of the number of times that the Greek term for “teacher,” *didaskalos*, actually occurs in the Gospels. With the exception of John 3:2, “We know thou art a teacher come from God,” the King James Version always has “master” as an equivalent for *didaskalos*, a title which we in our day do not so readily associate with “teacher.” For this reason the Revised Version already employed the term

12 Cf. Gerhard Kittel, *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, Zweiter Band, p 154.

“teacher” instead, not at all to mention the Revised Standard Version. Modern readers of Luther’s *Deutsche Bibel* are at the same disadvantage, since Luther also used the same title in German, *Meister*. The title *Lehrer*, of which he availed himself so often in his translation of the Old Testament, he applies but once to Jesus in translating John 3:2: *Meister, wir wissen, dass du bist ein Lehrer von Gott kommen* (Master, we know that Thou art a teacher come from God), and once to the “doctors” in the temple, to wit: *Jesus sass im Tempel mitten unter den Lehrern* (Jesus sat in the temple in the midst of the teachers). With the exception of these two passages Luther always uses *Meister* as a translation of *didaskalos* and consequently with the exception of the John 3:2 passage Jesus in Luther’s Bible is also not spoken of as *Lehrer*. Both versions, the English and the German, derived their translation from the Vulgate with its *magister*. Even this term did not only have the meaning of “teacher,” but was applied to all persons of high rank and station. It is equivalent in meaning and usage to the Hebrew title *Rab* or *Rabbi*,¹³ which was linked to persons of a high station in life. A teacher was, of course, regarded as one of high rank and therefore was addressed by the Jews as *Rab* or *Rabbi*, and by the Romans as *magister*. In two instances the New Testament interprets the title *Rabbi* for us as *didaskalos*, once when two disciples of John the Baptist addressed Jesus as *Rabbi* (John 1:39) and the other time when Mary addressed the Resurrected One as *Rabboni*, John adding: *ho legetai didaskale*, “which is to say, Teacher” (ibid. 20:16). Here again both our English and German Bibles have “master” and *Meister* respectively. While both are quite correct in their choice of these words as far as the etymology of the two Hebrew terms is concerned and naturally quite in place in as far as the usage of “master” and *Meister* in the English and German languages of the 16th and 17th century comes into consideration, still they are inadequate for the modern reader, since they are only commonly employed by us in the compound words “school master” and “*Schulmeister*.”¹⁴ There is therefore no denying that the rendering “teacher” for *didaskalos* as used by the Revised Version and the Revised Standard Version is much to the advantage of the modern reader.

Our main concern, however, is to ascertain in how far the thought concept which is contained in the title, “The Teacher. unto Righteousness,” is found in the New Testament. God in promising His people “The Teacher unto Righteousness” gave them and finally all nations the assurance that this teacher would teach them of His ways (Isa. 2:3) and that they would walk in His paths (Micah 4:2). The means whereby He would teach them according to Isaiah and Micah would be God’s Law and God’s Word. Now Jesus left no doubt in the minds of men that He was fully conscious of His calling as teacher. At His trial He told His accusers: “I was daily with you in the temple teaching” (*didaskōn*, Mark 14:49) and “I always taught (*edidaxa*) in the synagogue” (John 18:20). No less was He conscious of being the promised Teacher. He tells His disciples: “You have one Teacher” (RSV: Matt. 23:8). Again He said to them: “You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am” (RSV: John 13:13). As the one and only teacher Jesus not only laid emphasis on the fact that His teaching (*didachē*) was His that sent Him (John 7:16), but that He as teacher is true (*alēthēs*) and that there is “no unrighteousness” (*adikia*) in Him (ibid. 18). Isaiah already had declared Him to be “the Righteous One”¹⁵ who by His knowledge was to justify many, i.e. declare many righteous (53:11). In Christ Jesus alone this prophecy found its fulfilment, “who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness” (I Cor. 1:30); wisdom, for “by his knowledge” shall He “justify many”; righteousness, for “my righteous servant” (lit. the righteous one, my servant) “shall declare many righteous.”

13 As *Rab* or *Rabbi* are derived from *rab* meaning “large,” “great,” *magister* is formed from the stem *mag*—“great,” as in *magnus*. Both words received a great variety of specific meanings dependent upon the office or position of the persons to whom they were applied. Consequently *Rabbi* was not only a title used for a teacher, but also, for instance, for a chieftain. *Magister* likewise was not only the title of a schoolmaster, but also of a general and a high priest. The same and more can be said of “master” and *Meister* in English and German usage.

14 We are well aware of the fact that even in our country in private schools of higher learning, fashioned somewhat after the English system, “the principal” carries the title “the master.”

15 Our King James Version has “my righteous servant” for *tsaddiqabdi*, while Luther’s translation is more in conformity with the Hebrew: *Mein Knecht, der Gerechte*. The Revised Standard Version follows the exact order of the Hebrew: “The righteous one, my servant,” *tsaddiq* and not *abdi* being the subject of the sentence. Cf. Aug. Pieper, *Jesaias II*, pp. 412ff., who translates: *Durch sein’ Erkenntnis wird mein Knecht, der Heiland, den vielen Heil zusprechen* (By His knowledge my servant, the Savior, will attribute salvation to many).

Jesus in the full sense of the word is “The Teacher unto Righteousness.” He spoke as His Father taught Him (John 8:28) and thus proved Himself to be the Teacher sent by God, the One whom the Lord God had given the tongue of the learned, that He should speak a word in season unto him that is weary (Isa. 50:4). Even the Jews testified to the truth which He taught. Not only did Nicodemus, “a teacher of Israel,” say to Him: “Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God” (John 3:2), but the disciples of the Pharisees said to Him: “Teacher, we know that you are true, and care for no man; for you do not regard the position of men, but truly (*ep'alētheias*) teach the way of God (*tēn hodon tou theou didaskeis*, RSV: Mark 12:14). According to Luke they spoke in these words: “Teacher, we know that you speak and teach rightly (*orthōs*), and show no partiality, but truly teach the way of God” (RSV: 20:21). Certainly, these His enemies, the Pharisees and the Herodians, only “pretended to be sincere” (RSV: *ibid.* 20) and sought “to entrap him in his talk” (RSV: 12:13). But they nevertheless spoke the truth far beyond anything they had ever spoken (cf. John 11:51). In a very positive way they not only speak of Jesus as a teacher of righteousness by saying: “Teacher, we know that you speak and teach rightly,” but also by speaking with the words of the Old Testament promise: “But truly teach the way of God.” What these disciples of the Pharisees do not say is the truth concerning His person.

Jesus as *didaskalos* is also *kyrios* (John 13:13). This is the meaning which Jesus Himself puts into the title *didaskalos* when authorizing His disciples to prepare the Feast of the Passover for Him: “The Teacher says” (RSV: Matt. 26:18). With such a word of divine authority Jesus also introduces His sayings in the Sermon on the Mount: “I say unto you” (Matt. 5:18, 20, 22). He as one with the Father did not have to use the *kho 'amar Adonai*, “thus says the Lord,” but could say: *Egō de legō hymin*, “For I say unto you.” As such He came to fulfil the Law (Matt. 5:17) and as such He taught a righteousness which exceeded by far the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees (*ibid.* 20). In the strength of such a righteousness Jesus in the full sense of the word claims to be “The Teacher unto Righteousness,” even if He never did apply this title unto Himself. He alone was worthy of it. Therefore His disciples and followers never had others address them by this title. They did not forget the words of their Teacher: “But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all brethren” (RSV: Matt. 23:8). Him alone they recognized as Teacher and Lord knowing that “there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

Yet when Jesus ascended to heaven the disciples were not to remain without a divine Teacher. It was the Holy Spirit, the promised Paraclete, the Counsellor (RSV), who was to “teach” the disciples all things (*ekeinos hymas didaxei panta*, John 14:26) and it was He of whom Jesus said: “He, the Spirit of Truth ... will guide you (*hodēgēsei hymas*) into all truth” (*ibid.* 16:13), i.e. He will teach you the truth. “Whatever the Spirit shall hear (v. 13), whatever He shall take of mine (v. 14), and whatever the Father has, is one substance of truth; the Father has it, the Son owns it, the Spirit takes it—all three combine in making this blessed treasure our own. It is for this reason that Jesus spoke as he did regarding the work of the Spirit in the disciples.”¹⁶

This fact that only Jesus or the Spirit sent by Him is the Teacher in the true sense of the word, did not exclude the other fact that among the gifts given by Christ to His Church *didaskaloi* are always mentioned (I Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11; Rom. 12:6–8). Certainly, James warns: “Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, for you know that we who teach shall be judged with greater strictness” (RSV: 3:1). But this warning only confirms the high esteem in which the calling of teachers was held. “He who teaches,” is to “use” the gifts which he has according to the grace given to him “in his teaching” (cf. RSV: Rom. 12:7). Indeed, among all the functionaries of the Church teachers play a leading role. Prophets and teachers are not only listed together in the enumeration of gifts which the ascended Lord gives to men (I Cor. 12:28), but in I Corinthians 14:26–29 the “prophets” who “speak” (*laleitōsan*) are in turn the ones who also have a “teaching” (*didachēn*) flanked by “a psalm” and “a revelation,” i.e. some portion of the Word of God. This leads us back to the terminology of Deuteronomy 18:15–19 according to which the Lord will raise them up a prophet ... and “he shall speak” (*dibber*) unto God’s people all that the Lord shall command him and he shall “speak” (*yedabber*) to them in the Lord’s name. This speaking presupposes a *didachē*, a teaching, of which the Apostle makes mention to the

¹⁶ Lenski, Interpretation of St. John’s Gospel, p 1071.

Corinthians and which Moses had in mind when blessing the children of Levi: “They shall teach Jacob thy judgments, and Israel thy law” (Deut. 33:10).

Likewise the terms “preaching” and “teaching” are used on the same level next to one another. Paul and Barnabas, for instance, continued in Antioch “teaching and preaching the word of the Lord” (Acts 15:35), even as all the apostles “ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ” (ibid. 5:42). When therefore Noah in II Peter 2:5 is called a *dikaioynēs keryka*, a “preacher of righteousness” of his day, we realize that all preachers of Christ in their day are not only deserving of this name, but also of the name “teacher of righteousness” in contrast to the prophet or teacher who is a *moreh sheqer*, “a teacher of lies” (Isa. 9:14). It is therefore not surprising that the Apostle Paul who is the preacher *par excellence* in the Apostolic times, not only calls himself “a preacher,” but at the same time “a teacher” (II Tim. 1:11), and in addition to that “a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity” (*didaskalos ethnōn en pistei kai alētheia*, I Tim. 2:7). This is formally speaking, the closest to which the Apostle comes in calling himself a teacher of righteousness. In essence he is doing nothing less than just that and thereby placing himself in contrast to the “false apostles ... transforming themselves into apostles of Christ” and into “ministers of righteousness” (II Cor. 11:13, 15). With this latter title, *diakonoi dikaiosynēs*, “ministers of righteousness,” the Apostle indirectly is characterizing all true preachers and teachers as “servants of righteousness.” They serve their Lord and Teacher by preaching and teaching that righteousness which is not of the law, “but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith” (Phil. 3:9).

It is not merely a coincidence that in German parlance *Lehramt* and *Predigtamt* are spoken of as one. Professor Hoenecke in his *Dogmatik* under paragraph 68, in which *Das Lehramt* is treated, defines it as follows: *Das Lehramt, worunter wir hier den Stand der Diener am Wort, die Pastoren verstehen, ist göttlicher Einsetzung* (The office of teaching, whereby here we understand the status of the servants of the Word, the pastors, is divinely instituted). In speaking thus of the *Lehramt* or *Predigtamt* in concrete Dr. Hoenecke also quotes among other passages our Joel 2:23 passage to prove that it is divinely instituted.¹⁷ In this connection he also cites Quenstedt’s Scriptural proofs for the ministry as a divine institution, which are of value to us in this article both because of their terminology and their content. These Scripture proofs are enumerated by Quenstedt in the following order: “I. *promittendo doctores ecclesiae* (by promising teachers of the Church), Jer. 3:15; 23:4; Joel 2:23; II. *dando, quod promisit* (by giving what he promised), I Cor. 12:28; II Cor. 5:18; III. *conservando ministerium usque ad consummationem saeculi* (by conserving the ministry until the end of the world) Eph. 4:11; IV. *ipso docendi munere fungendo* (by Himself performing the office of teaching) Heb. 1:1; V. *doctores ecclesiae necessariis donis instruendo* (by providing the teachers of the Church with the necessary gifts), II Cor. 3:5.”

It is also of interest to note what mention is made of “teachers” as gifts of the Church in our Confessions. In the Smalcald Articles “pastors and teachers” are designated as “the gifts specially belonging to the Church.”¹⁸ In the Apology¹⁹ we are being exhorted “to give thanks to God ... because He has given teachers or other gifts to the Church,” for the labors of those “who taught the churches, are holy works, are true sacrifices acceptable to God.”²⁰ Finally everything is summed up by the Large Catechism in the “true and good saying of old and wise men: *Deo, parentibus et magistris non potest satis gratiae rependi*, that is, To God, to parents, and to teachers we can never render sufficient gratitude and compensation.”²¹

17 Vol. IV, p. 175. Our attention has been called by one of our readers to the use that Dr. Hoenecke makes of our Joel passage in regard to the office of the ministry. Due to the nature of Old Testament prophecy with its “prophetic perspective” and its “foreshortening of the prophet’s horizon” our dogmaticians were justified in availing themselves of the Joel passage as a proof passage for the ministry of teaching and speak of “the teacher” in Joel 2:23 in the collective sense as of those teachers and prophets who have taught and preached and are teaching and preaching “the righteousness which is of God by faith.” This usage of our passage does not exclude the interpretation of Jeer 2:23 as a Messianic passage in which the term *hammoreh* refers directly to the Messiah (cf. Quartalschrift, January 1958, p. 60).

18 *Concordia Triglotta*, p. 523.

19 Ibid., p. 343.

20 Ibid., p. 175.

21 Ibid., p. 619.

After having looked back to those Old Testament promises which we found to be basic for the title “The Teacher unto Righteousness” and after having looked forward into the New Testament Scriptures where we have found the fulfillment of all the prophecies pertaining to “The Teacher unto Righteousness,” we can now evaluate the repeated mention made of the “Teacher of Righteousness” in the Dead Sea Scrolls. The question for which we in view of the foregoing are seeking an answer is: What did this Teacher of Righteousness teach? We are constrained to ask this question because the *moreh hatsedeqh* has been translated by one scholar as “the True Teacher” and has been identified with Jesus. The teaching of Jesus as the promised Teacher unto Righteousness is set forth in Jesus’ own words by the inspired writers of the New Testament. What claim is made for and by the Teacher of Righteousness of the Qumran Community in reference to his own teachings?

According to the Habakkuk Commentary it is “the Teacher of Righteousness to whom God made known all the mysteries of the words of his servants the prophets”²² (p. 9) and “into whose heart God has put wisdom to interpret all the words of His servants the prophets, through whom God told all that was to come upon His people and upon His land” (p. 9). There are, of course, those “who will not believe when they hear all that is coming upon the last generation” (ibid.), but the commentator consoles himself with the fact that “God commanded Habakkuk to write the things that were coming upon the last generation” (ibid.). Although He did not make known “the time of the fulfilment of the epoch” unto Habakkuk, He made it known to the Teacher of Righteousness. The knowledge of this one “mystery,” “the time of the fulfilment of the end,” was reserved to this Teacher of Righteousness (ibid.).

But this Teacher of Righteousness did not only regard himself as “an interpreter of knowledge in wonderful mysteries” (p. 16), but also as a teacher of the law who teaches the law to his disciples and who endeavors to persuade them to fulfill the precepts of the law. In a commentary on Micah 5:1 the commentator in referring to “the Teacher of Righteousness” speaks of him as one “who teaches the law to his council and to all those who offer themselves willingly to be gathered among the elect people of God, practising the law in the council of the community, who will be saved from the day of judgment”²³ (p. 12). And in the *Zadokite Admonition* the promise is made: “All who hold fast to these rules, to go out and to come in according to the law, and who listen to the voice of the Teacher, and make confession before God, saying, Verily we have done wickedly, both we and our fathers, by walking contrary to the ordinances of the covenant; just and true are thy judgments against us; who do not act with a high hand against His holy ordinances and righteous judgments and truthful testimonies; who learn from the former judgments wherewith the men of the community were judged; who hearken to the voice of the Teacher of Righteousness, and do not repudiate the ordinances of righteousness when they hear them—they shall rejoice and be glad, and their heart shall be strong, and they shall gain the mastery over all the children of the world, and God shall make propitiation for them, and they shall see His salvation, for they have put their trust in His holy name” (p. 12f.). To be a doer of “the ordinances of righteousness,” i.e. of the law, was in the end the way of salvation and therefore the Habakkuk Commentator lets the well-known words of Habakkuk 2:4b: “The just shall live by his faith” concern “all the doers of the law in the house of Judah, whom God will save from the house of judgment”²⁴ because of their trouble and their faith in the Teacher of Righteousness” (p. 12).

22 We are quoting this translation, which is a comment on the well-known words in Habakkuk 2:1: “That he may run that readeth it,” and the following translations from “The Teacher of Righteousness in the Qumran Texts” by F. F. Bruce, M.A., Professor of Biblical History and Literature in the University of Sheffield,” London, Tyndale Press. We owe much to this monograph of 36 pages in seeking our answer to the question concerning the teachings of the Qumran teacher and their evaluation. It can only be recommended to pastors and interested laymen who are looking for a brief and concise evaluation of the Teacher of Righteousness in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

23 Throughout we are omitting the brackets which Prof. Bruce has inserted into his translations and which enclose the lacunae of the original text as emended by D. Barthelemy and J. T. Milik in their publication of the manuscript fragments of Cave 1.

24 *Bêth hammishpat*, the house of judgment, apparently stands for those who are to be judged. In opposition to them “the doers of the law”, i.e., the members of the *Qumran* sect were called *bêth hattorah*, “the house of Torah,” not designating here the place where the Law was taught, but the school “viewed from the standpoint of its human constituency.” Cf. *The Biblical Archaeologist*, September 1951, p. 58.

These references to the Teacher of Righteousness in the Qumran Scrolls may suffice for the time being to show that the righteousness which this teacher taught was the righteousness of the law and not the righteousness of God by faith. Even the last reference which speaks of “faith in the Teacher of Righteousness” does not imply belief in his person but rather in his teaching. And his teaching never involves more than the righteousness of the law²⁵ and salvation from the day of judgment promised to “all the doers of the law.” In contrast to this teacher, Habakkuk and Paul, who quotes the prophet in Romans 1:17, promise a righteousness and justification “without the law” (Rom. 3:21) by and from faith in Jesus Christ unto life eternal. Not “the doers of the law” are declared “just,” but on the contrary “to him that worketh not but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness”²⁶ (ibid. 4:5). This is the righteousness which Jesus Christ as *The Teacher unto Righteousness* taught (Luke 18:14), which He fulfilled (Matt. 3:15), and whereby He as “The Righteous One” justified many (Isa. 53:11).

25 Theodor H. Gaster in “The Dead Sea Scriptures in English Translation with Introduction and Notes” (Anchor A 92) always renders the title *moreh hassedeq* with “the teacher who expounds the Law aright.” His translation of the commentary on Hab. 2:4 reads: “This refers to all in Jewry who carry out the Law (Torah). On account of their labor and of their faith in him who expounded the Law aright, God will deliver them from the house of judgment” (p. 253).

26 Prof. Bruce in quoting these words of the Apostle adds: “The Qumran sect would have thought this a scandalous misapplication of their proof-text from Habakkuk” (p. 29).