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STUDIES IN THE BIBLE
AND ANTIQUITY

STUDIES IN THE BIBLE AND ANTIQUITY

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Studies in the Bible and Antiquity is dedicated to promoting a better understanding of the Bible and of religion in the ancient world, bringing the best LDS scholarship and thought to a general Latter-day Saint readership. Questions may be directed to the editors at sba@byu.edu.

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EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

We are pleased to present this issue dedicated to Latter-day Saint (LDS) scholarship and the Dead Sea Scrolls for the broader “community of general LDS readers who study and teach the Bible and who wish to better understand both the biblical text and its world.”¹ This issue comes thirteen years after the appearance of *LDS Perspectives on the Dead Sea Scrolls*² and also marks the completion of the massive project (forty volumes) titled *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert* (DJD), which serves as the official scholarly publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls.³ Therefore, we felt it appropriate to publish a special issue of *Studies in the Bible and Antiquity* that focuses particularly on LDS scholarship and the scrolls.

Latter-day Saints have been interested in the Dead Sea Scrolls since their discovery during the years spanning 1947–56, in which

1. “Editors’ Introduction,” *Studies in the Bible and Antiquity* 1 (2009): vii.

2. Donald W. Parry and Dana M. Pike, eds., *LDS Perspectives on the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1997). See also M. Gerald Bradford, ed., *Ancient Scrolls from the Dead Sea* (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1997); Donald W. Parry and Stephen D. Ricks, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Questions and Responses for Latter-Day Saints* (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2000). These three publications are freely available online at maxwellinstitute.byu.edu/publications/books/.

3. The DJD volumes contain texts, translations, and commentaries on the Dead Sea Scrolls. Four BYU scholars have served as members of the international team of editors of the Dead Sea Scrolls and have contributed to select DJD volumes: Donald W. Parry, Dana M. Pike, David R. Seely, and Andrew C. Skinner.

over 900 ancient documents were found “amid the crumbling limestone cliffs that line the northwestern rim of the Dead Sea, in the area of Qumran.”⁴ The documents have been categorized according to three types of texts: Hebrew biblical scrolls, containing portions of all the books of the Old Testament except for Esther; apocryphal or pseudepigraphal texts (for example, Enoch, Jubilees); and sectarian texts (for example, the *Community Rule* and *War Scroll*). Before the discovery of the scrolls, the earliest manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) dated to the ninth or tenth century AD, but the Dead Sea Scrolls provide manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible dating approximately one thousand years earlier (that is, from the third century BC to the first century AD). Significantly, this has allowed textual critics of the Hebrew Bible to examine the accuracy of its transmission.

In “The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible,” Donald W. Parry introduces readers to the scrolls as they relate to the Hebrew Bible, parabiblical texts, and to the sectarian documents. He explores particularly the significance of the scrolls for our understanding of scribal transmission, variant readings between the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Masoretic text of the Hebrew Bible, and how the Dead Sea Scrolls sectarians understood scripture. Parry’s article provides an important discussion of these topics from an LDS scholarly perspective.

One of the challenges for Latter-day Saints curious about the Dead Sea Scrolls is finding accurate information. Dana M. Pike, in “The Dead Sea Scrolls and Latter-day Saints: Where Do We Go from Here?,” argues that too many Latter-days Saints rely on outdated information and flawed methodologies. Pike gives several suggestions for keeping up to date and countering misinformation. He also proposes a framework for approaching the Dead Sea Scrolls within their proper historical, textual, and religious contexts.

Andrew C. Skinner sheds light on the connection between the Dead Sea Scrolls and first-century Christianity in “The Dead Sea Scrolls and the World of Jesus.” Skinner takes a measured and cautious approach in exploring certain parallels between the scrolls and

4. *Ancient Scrolls from the Dead Sea*, 1.

the earliest Christian texts, such as similar terminology and phrasing, temple ideology, and messianic expectations.

While there is great utility in the rigorous textual and historical approaches to the scrolls that characterize contemporary scholarship, Latter-day Saints have found the scrolls compelling from their first publication for the resonances they exhibit with our own religious tradition. A number of LDS studies have highlighted these correspondences, though too often (as Pike notes) with more enthusiasm than scholarship. A number of the better studies are cited in the select bibliography of LDS scholarship on the Dead Sea Scrolls included in this issue. But few match in vision or vigor Hugh Nibley's "From the Dead Sea Scrolls (1QS)," which first appeared in 1975 as appendix 1 to *The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri*.⁵ His translation of this text, as Stephen Ricks's introduction notes, retains a "clarity and simplicity" that "does stand the test of time." Even if more critical translations are now available, it serves here to introduce readers directly to one of the most famous of the scrolls. More important, Nibley's translation and commentary (and all translation, at a certain level, *is* commentary) are a seminal example of a sympathetic LDS reading of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

We hope this issue of *Studies* will aid interested Latter-day Saints in better understanding and appreciating the Dead Sea Scrolls and their place within LDS scholarship.

5. Hugh Nibley, *The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri: An Egyptian Endowment* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1975), 255–62; 2nd ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 2005), 461–75.

THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS BIBLE

Donald W. Parry

The Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS) are arguably the greatest archaeological discovery of the twentieth century. Since their initial discovery in 1947, the scrolls have been the focus of thousands of books, articles, monographs, and other writings.¹ Two academic journals are dedicated entirely to their study,² and academic conferences discuss their significance. The popular press attempts to reveal the scrolls to the public, often with misinformed and sensational approaches; however, one does not need such approaches because the scrolls, on their own, are spectacular. The press, at times, also presents a number of unsolved puzzles—for example, one scroll comprises cryptic texts, or texts appear to be written in code, while another is a mysterious text written backwards. Yet another is a composition written on a copper scroll that details the whereabouts of massive hidden treasures of gold, silver, spices, and precious objects—treasures that presumably once belonged to Herod's temple. Another scroll features some words written in red

1. See, for example, Florentino García Martínez and Donald W. Parry, *A Bibliography of the Finds in the Desert of Judah, 1970–1995: Arranged by Author with Citation and Subject Indexes* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), and the bibliography in this volume, pages 105–16.

2. *Dead Sea Discoveries* and *Revue de Qumran*.

ink, rather than the standard black ink. Yet still other scrolls depict the name *Jehovah* with four dots or in an ancient form of Hebrew, possibly to protect against improper utterance of this sacred name.

More than twenty percent of the DSS are copies of books from the Hebrew Bible, known in the Christian world as the Old Testament. The biblical scrolls are consequential finds because they show us what the Bible looked like during the century or two that preceded Jesus Christ and his apostles. The scrolls disclose ancient writing styles, the manner in which words were spelled anciently, the formation of the biblical canon, the making of ancient scrolls from leather or papyrus and the linen thread that tied the pieces of parchment together, the consistency and quality of ink used for writing the scrolls, the manner in which the scribes corrected their errors as they copied the text, and their way of creating sense units, or paragraphs. Taken as a whole, the various scribal conventions disclose the nature of the scribal schools that produced the DSS. These conventions demonstrate the high level of competence among the scribes who were producing new copies of the scriptures; the scribes' professionalism should give us, as modern readers, confidence that biblical scripture has come down to us in excellent order.

This paper examines various significant aspects of what may be designated the Dead Sea Scrolls Bible, including its contents and description, scribal conventions, variant readings, the use of the DSS by modern English Bible translations, parabiblical texts and their possible affiliation with the DSS Bible, canonicity, scriptural commentaries, *tefillin*, and *mezuzot*.

Contents of the Dead Sea Scrolls Bible

The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible, also called the Qumran Bible, is a collection of books from the Hebrew Bible. Neither expression—Dead Sea Scrolls Bible or Qumran Bible—may adequately express the contents of the “Bible” used by the Jews who owned this collection of religious texts because we do not know which texts they considered to have religious or canonical authority. That is to say, we do not know for certain which books were included among the sacred texts of the Jewish

Qumran sect. Their Bible may have had more or fewer texts than we have in our Bible. On this, see the section below entitled Parabiblical Texts at Qumran.

Of the approximately 900 different compositions and fragmented texts of the DSS discovered in the eleven Qumran caves, just over 200 represent books from the Old Testament,³ including, for example, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Isaiah, Jonah, and Daniel.⁴ Multiple copies of single works have also been found. For instance, 19 or 20 copies of the book of Genesis have been discovered,⁵ 13 of Leviticus, 7 of Numbers, 30 of Deuteronomy, 21 of Isaiah, 36 of Psalms, and 4 of Ruth. Qumran scholar James C. VanderKam notes that “the raw totals [of copies of the biblical books discovered among the DSS] probably also indicate which books were used frequently.”⁶ Based on the greater number of manuscripts found, Psalms, Deuteronomy, and Isaiah, for example, were likely held in great esteem by the inhabitants of Qumran.⁷ The historical books (i.e., Joshua, Judges, 1–2 Samuel, 1–2 Kings, and 1–2 Chronicles) were probably less important to the religious goals of the Jews who owned the scrolls.

3. “Within the Qumran corpus of some 900 texts, the c.200 biblical texts constitute 22% (not counting the *tefillin* and *mezuzot*).” Emanuel Tov, “Categorized List of the ‘Biblical Texts,’” in *The Texts from the Judaean Desert: Indices and An Introduction to the Discoveries in the Judaean Desert Series*, DJD XXXIX, ed. Emanuel Tov (Oxford: Clarendon, 2002), 167.

4. For a listing of biblical texts discovered among the DSS, see Eugene Ulrich, “An Index of the Passages in the Biblical Manuscripts from the Judean Desert (Genesis–Kings),” *Dead Sea Discoveries* 1 (1994): 113–29; and “An Index of the Passages in the Biblical Manuscripts from the Judean Desert (Part 2: Isaiah–Chronicles),” *Dead Sea Discoveries* 2 (1995): 86–107; see also Emanuel Tov, *Revised Lists of the Texts from the Judaean Desert* (Leiden: Brill, 2010).

5. It is sometimes difficult, due to the fragmented nature of some of the scrolls, to determine if certain fragments came from a single scroll or from two different scrolls—hence the uncertainty of precisely how many copies of a given book were discovered at Qumran. See Tov, “Categorized List of the ‘Biblical Texts,’” 166–67, plus 167 n. 10.

6. James C. VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994), 31.

7. It is probably more than coincidence that the early Christian community held the same three Old Testament writings—Psalms, Deuteronomy, and Isaiah—to be of great value, for they are the most quoted scriptural books in the New Testament.

The following table lists the number of biblical manuscripts discovered among the DSS (as ordered in the Hebrew Bible):⁸

Genesis	19–20
Exodus	17
Leviticus	13
Numbers	7
Deuteronomy	30
Joshua	2
Judges	3
1–2 Samuel	4
1–2 Kings	3
Isaiah	21
Jeremiah	6
Ezekiel	6
Twelve Prophets	8–9
Psalms	36
Job	4
Proverbs	2
Ruth	4
Song of Solomon	4
Ecclesiastes	2
Lamentations	4
Esther	0
Daniel	8
Ezra–Nehemiah	1
1–2 Chronicles	1

With the exception of the book of Esther, a copy of every book of the Old Testament was discovered in the Qumran caves. One theory on that count is that perhaps Esther did not survive the two millennia of decay in the caves. Biblical scholar Lawrence H. Schiffman wrote concerning the book of Esther, “While several explanations are possible for the absence of Esther, the most likely is simple chance. A finding of zero copies is neither surprising nor statistically meaningful,

8. Tov, “Categorized List of the ‘Biblical Texts,’” 167–76.

for several other books of the Writings are found in only one or two copies.”⁹

The Qumran caves yielded biblical and nonbiblical scrolls. For example, two Isaiah scrolls were discovered in Cave 1; three biblical fragments (Ezekiel 16:31–33; Psalm 2:6–7; Lamentations 1:10–12; 3:53–62) were found in Cave 3; a large number of biblical manuscripts were uncovered in Cave 4 (approximately 15,000 fragments of both biblical and sectarian documents), and Cave 11 produced two fragments of Leviticus (including one written in an old Hebrew script), one of Deuteronomy, one of Ezekiel, and four of Psalms.

Discoveries of nineteen other biblical texts were also made in the Judean desert at Masada (1963–65), Wadi Murabba‘at (1951–52), and Nahal Hever (1951–52; 1960–61).

New Testament texts were not discovered among the DSS. The reason for this is twofold: the sect that inhabited Qumran was not Christian, and the texts belonging to the corpus of the DSS were created and copied before the rise of Christianity in the first century AD.

Description of the Dead Sea Scrolls Bible

The state of preservation of the scrolls varies considerably.¹⁰ Due to its beauty and completeness, the Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa^a) is the best-known biblical scroll found at Qumran and was one of the initial scrolls found in Cave 1 in 1947. It was wrapped in a linen cloth and stored in a clay jar. It consists of seventeen pieces of sheepskin sewn together into a single scroll and shows signs of being well used before it was stored away. The scroll comprises fifty-four columns of text that vary in width and average about twenty-nine lines of text per column. Measuring almost twenty-four feet in length and about ten inches in height, 1QIsa^a is the longest of the Qumran biblical scrolls. The Great Isaiah Scroll demonstrates what a biblical scroll looked like at the time of Jesus and his apostles; perhaps it was similar in appearance to the

9. Lawrence H. Schiffman, *Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1994), 164.

10. P. W. Skehan, “Qumrân: IV. Littérature de Qumran,” *Supplément au Dictionnaire de la Bible* 9 (1978): 805–22, gives a physical description of the biblical fragments.

Isaiah scroll that Jesus read from in the synagogue of Nazareth (see Luke 4:16–20).

The Psalms Scroll from Cave 11, similar to the Great Isaiah Scroll, is in a fair state of preservation; so, too, are several of the nonbiblical scrolls, such as the *Temple Scroll* from Cave 11. For the most part, however, the scrolls that have survived in the caves are extremely fragmented; many of them are no larger than the size of a postcard, and some fragments are as small as a postage stamp. Even the smallest fragment, however, may add to our knowledge.

Before the discovery of the DSS in 1947, scholars relied on medieval manuscripts, often called the Masoretic Text (or, more accurately, Masoretic Texts) for much of their understanding of the Old Testament. Three such manuscripts are the Leningrad Codex B 19a (complete Bible dated to AD 1009), the Cairo Codex of the Prophets (dated to AD 895), and the Aleppo Codex (dated to AD 925).¹¹ These are considered late editions of the Hebrew Bible, especially since the ancient prophets, such as Moses, Isaiah, and Amos, wrote their books many centuries before the birth of Jesus Christ. The biblical scrolls and fragments of the DSS, however, comprise texts that are one thousand years older¹² than the previously known texts of the Hebrew Bible. Most of the biblical texts of the DSS date from 150 BC to AD 68,¹³ although fragments from Exodus, Samuel, and Jeremiah have been dated to the middle of the third century BC.¹⁴ Unlike the medieval Hebrew Bible, with its consonantal and vocalization framework and system of notes, accents, chapters, and versification, the biblical DSS

11. VanderKam, *Dead Sea Scrolls Today*, 123.

12. With regard to dating the scrolls, scholars generally agree, based on three scientific methods, that the scrolls were copied between the years 250 BC and AD 70. These scientific methods are (1) paleographic analysis, or the science of deciphering ancient writing styles; (2) a process called AMS, which is similar to the carbon-14 dating system; and (3) archaeologists' discoveries, such as finds of pottery and dated coins.

13. Other texts of the Judean desert have different dates. For example, the texts from Nahal Hever, Wadi Murabba't, and Masada date from about 250 BC to AD 135.

14. The dates of these three manuscripts are as follows: 4QSam^b (ca. 250), 4QJer^a (ca. 200), and 4QExod^f (ca. 275–225 BC); see David Noel Freedman, "The Masoretic Text and the Qumran Scrolls: A Study in Orthography," *Textus* 2 (1962): 87–102; republished in *Qumran and the History of the Biblical Text*, ed. Frank Moore Cross and Shemaryahu Talmon (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), 196–211.

feature handwritten manuscripts without chapters, versification, vowels, or accents. Additionally, the scrolls contain interlinear or marginal corrections, scribal notations, a different paragraphing system, and special morphological and orthographic features.

Most of the biblical scrolls—approximately 90 percent—are written in Hebrew,¹⁵ the language of the ancient Israelites and the sacred language of the Jews. The scrolls have Hebrew consonants, but no vowels. The scrolls were written without punctuation such as commas, periods, question marks, or semicolons. Hebrew does not use capitalization or uppercase letters. Further, chapters and verses were a later invention, although the scrolls do support evidence of a paragraphing system. About 9 percent of the scrolls were written in Aramaic, a sister language to Hebrew that shares with it the alphabet and numerous grammatical and morphological features. Aramaic was the language adopted by the Jews after their seventy years of exile in Babylon (597–538 BC). A few manuscripts, including the book of Daniel, the apocryphal book of Tobit, a fragment of the book of Job, and fragments of the book of Enoch, are written in Aramaic. Additionally, a small handful of the preserved fragments are in Greek.

The majority of texts are copied on animal skin, although a few texts are written on papyrus. Black ink was the standard color used by scribes, but one scribe used red ink in a number of passages in the book of Numbers.¹⁶

The overall lengths of the scrolls vary according to the text. For example, as mentioned above, the Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa^a) has 17 sheets of leather and measures almost 24 feet long. Based on reconstructions of existing fragments, one copy of Jeremiah (2QJer) is estimated to have been approximately 30 feet long, and a copy of the book of Samuel (1 and 2 Samuel, comprising a single book) may have extended 55 feet. The lengths of several nonbiblical books are also

15. The majority of the Hebrew manuscripts were written in square Hebrew characters known as Assyrian script or Aramaic script, although several texts were copied in paleo-Hebrew script.

16. 4QNum^b: Numbers 20:22–23; 22:21; 23:13; 23:27; 31:25, 28, 48; 32:25; 33:1.

known. The *Temple Scroll* (11Q19), for instance, consists of 19 sheets of leather and is about 28 feet long.

Scribal Conventions and the Dead Sea Scrolls Bible

We have learned much about the history, transmission, and appearance of the Old Testament texts during the last centuries of the Second Temple period from studying the scrolls. For example, we have gained a great deal of knowledge concerning ancient scribal practices,¹⁷ including paragraphing, scribal corrections, and other various marks and notes in the text.¹⁸ We have also gained greater appreciation for the archaic practices of orthography (spelling practices), morphology (form of words), and epigraphy (inscriptions). Our knowledge of the development of Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek languages and scripts has increased considerably.

The DSS reveal much regarding the scribes' or copyists' stylistic methods and conventions as they prepared new copies of scriptural books. These conventions indicate the scribes' high level of professionalism and competence as they transmitted the texts from generation to generation. For example, before the scribes copied the text onto the leather, they created vertical and horizontal rulings or guide dots on the leather to help them maintain orderly and straight lines for the characters. These rulings justified the text on the top, bottom, and right margins (since Hebrew is read from right to left) and gave the composition a professional appearance, which also made it easier to read. The rulings were created with a writing instrument against a straight-edge utensil or, for dry-point rulings, scribes may have employed a sharp bone.

Most leather sheets, with the exception of *tefillin*, were ruled, while papyrus was not because "the horizontal and vertical fibers probably

17. For a comprehensive review of the scribal conventions of the scrolls, see Emanuel Tov, *Scribal Practices and Approaches Reflected in the Texts Found in the Judean Desert* (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

18. See Emanuel Tov, "Scribal Markings in the Texts from the Judean Desert," in *Current Research and Technological Developments on the Dead Sea Scrolls: Conference on the Texts from the Judean Desert, Jerusalem, 30 April 1995*, ed. Donald W. Parry and Stephen D. Ricks (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 41–77.

provided some form of guide for the writing.”¹⁹ A few documents had double vertical rulings (e.g., 1QH^a and 4QNum^b). Guide dots or strokes were used in both biblical and nonbiblical scrolls, although a few scrolls lack evidence of such markings. The dots or strokes were positioned either on the left or the right side of the sheet or column (rarely in the middle), usually at a distance of 0.1 to 1.7 cm from the text’s edge. On average, there are twenty lines of text per column, with 4QIncantation (a nonbiblical text) having only four lines per column and 4QPs^r (a copy of Psalms) having sixty or more lines per column.

A number of different scribal marks or symbols appear in the margins or between the lines of texts of both biblical and nonbiblical scrolls. DSS scholar Emanuel Tov has identified and named about seventy-nine of the different scribal signs. These include *paragraphos* and composite *paragraphos*, paleo-Hebrew characters, section markers, cancellation dots, parenthesis signs used for omission, various cryptic characters, omission or insertion symbols, line fillers, separation dots between words, dots indicating the redivision of words, Tetrapuncta, numbering devices, and others. For example, the Great Isaiah Scroll includes X-shaped scribal marks, a hat-shaped symbol, a Z-shaped symbol, what appears to be a zero or circle, and other scribal marks. While modern biblical scholars have deciphered the meaning of several symbols, others remain a mystery.

Scribal writing practices in the scrolls indicate a fully developed understanding of sense units, or small but definite literary segments (we would call these sense units *sentences*, *paragraphs*, *chapters*, and the like). Although these early texts lacked both verse and chapter numbering arrangements (a much later development), the scribes set forth methods of identifying small and large sense units, poetical units, and entire books of scripture. To identify these units, scribes utilized special spacing techniques, including paragraphing and text divisions as well as marginal and interlinear notations.

The scrolls’ assortment of orthographic features (spelling practices) has revealed much regarding orthography at the turn of the era. Some especially pertinent features include full spelling (with certain

19. Tov, *Scribal Practices and Approaches*, 57.

consonants—especially *waw*, *yod*, and *he*—serving as vowel markers) versus defective spelling (no such consonants serving as vowel markers). Simple comparisons using English words would be *grey* versus *gray*; or *color* versus *colour*; a more complex example includes *Savior* (American spelling), *Saviour* (British spelling), or *svr* (spelling without capital letters and vowels, comparable to Hebrew orthography).

Variant Readings—The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible versus the Masoretic Text

The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible stands as a witness that the Old Testament has been passed down through the centuries with a high degree of accuracy. For this, we must be grateful to prophets, scribes, copyists, and everyone else who was responsible for the Bible's transmission from generation to generation. Book of Mormon prophet Nephi wrote in 2 Nephi 29:4 that we must retain a grateful attitude toward the Jews for the Bible. Nephi reminds us that the Gentiles “shall have a Bible; and it shall proceed forth from the Jews, mine ancient covenant people. And what thank they the Jews for the Bible which they receive from them? Yea, what do the Gentiles mean? Do they remember the travails, and the labors, and the pains of the Jews, and their diligence unto me, in bringing forth salvation unto the Gentiles?”

Despite the fact that the DSS biblical texts bring us one thousand years closer to the original words of the prophets, we still do not have the so-called autograph texts—those penned by the prophets (or the scribes of the prophets) themselves. We possess the apograph texts, copies (or copies of copies of copies) of the autograph texts, which were created several hundred years after the autograph texts. Throughout the history of the texts of both the Old and the New Testaments, various errors (though mostly minor!) have crept in—a fact that scholars have been aware of for centuries.

Scholars have identified variant readings that exist in the Hebrew witnesses of the Old Testament (i.e., the DSS Bible, the Samaritan Pentateuch, and the Masoretic Text) or in other early translations (i.e.,

the Greek Septuagint, the Latin Vulgate, or the Syriac Peshitta).²⁰ Most variant readings are minor and deal with such differences as plural versus singular forms; the use of conjunctions, prepositions, and definite articles; different morphological or lexical forms; and alternative verbal forms (aspects, tenses, active versus passive, etc.). Far fewer in number are major variant readings or those that significantly change the text's meaning. Although major variants do exist in the Old Testament, they are not prominent enough to form the basis for a loss of faith over a conflict of doctrine. To state it differently, there are very few variant readings of consequence that change the meaning of the text, either historically or theologically. Most variants are of a minor nature.

The following four examples illustrate the types of major variants that exist between the DSS Bible and the Masoretic Text:

1. There is a lost passage of scripture (which belongs in 1 Samuel 11:1)²¹ that has been discovered in the DSS texts of Samuel. This passage provides details regarding the Ammonite King Nahash and his evil treatment of Israelite warriors.²² With the restoration of this passage, there is a better transition from the final verse of chapter 10 to the first verse of chapter 11, and the context for the story of King Nahash is now in place. The passage reads:

And Nahash, king of the children of Ammon, oppressed harshly the Gadites and the Reubenites. He would gouge out the right eye of each of them and would not grant Israel a deliverer. No one was left of the Israelites across the Jordan whose right eye Nahash, king of the Ammonites, had not

20. The best work on the topic is Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of Hebrew Bible*, 2nd rev. ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001); see also P. Kyle McCarter Jr., *Textual Criticism: Recovering the Text of the Hebrew Bible* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986). Each of these two works includes serviceable bibliographies.

21. For a discussion of this missing verse of scripture, see Frank Moore Cross, "The Ammonite Oppression of the Tribes of Gad and Reuben: Missing Verses from 1 Samuel 11 Found in 4QSamuel^a," in *History, Historiography and Interpretation: Studies in Biblical and Cuneiform Literatures*, ed. H. Tadmor and M. Weinfeld (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1983), 148–58; and Tov, *Textual Criticism of Hebrew Bible*, 342–43.

22. Josephus refers to this incident of King Nahash in *Antiquities* 6.68–71.

gouged out. But there were seven thousand men who had fled from the Ammonites and had entered Jabesh-gilead. (1 Samuel 11:1)²³

The paragraph helps students of the Bible understand the situation described in chapter 11 concerning the advancement of Nahash and his troops against Jabesh-gilead and the Israelites. It was the plan of Nahash to make a treaty with the Israelites who were dwelling in Jabesh-gilead, with the condition that he “gouge out the right eye of each person in the city,” rendering them helpless in rebelling against him. The story has a happy ending for the Israelites, however, for they rally around King Saul and the prophet Samuel (1 Samuel 11:5–7), who slay a number of Ammonites and cause the remainder to flee. Samuel and Saul gave credit for their victory to the Lord.

2. There is a missing verse in Psalm 145 that was rediscovered with the finding of the scrolls. This psalm is an acrostic, or an a, b, c poem, meaning verse one begins with the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, the second verse with the second letter of the alphabet, the third verse with the third letter, and so on through the Hebrew alphabet. There are twenty-two letters of the alphabet in Hebrew and Psalm 145 should, therefore, have twenty-two verses, but the Masoretic Text contains only twenty-one verses; the DSS book of Psalms includes this missing verse.²⁴ The verse that begins with the Hebrew letter *nun* (roughly analogous to our English letter *n*) is the missing verse. It reads, “God is faithful in all of his words, and pious in all of his deeds; blessed is the Lord and blessed is his name, forever, and ever.”²⁵

3. Another example of a major variant is located in Psalm 22:16, a passage that prophesies of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. In this verse, a copyist created an error in the reading of an important word, an error that pertains to a single, short stroke of the stylus or pen (the difference between a Hebrew *yod* or *waw*). The Masoretic Text of the

23. Translation by the author.

24. The missing verse is also found in the LXX; some commentators think the verse was never there in the original (= a partial acrostic) and that later copyists added that verse.

25. Translation by the author.

Hebrew Bible reads, “like a lion, my hands and my feet.” The DSS Bible provides the correct reading, which is, “They pierced my hands and my feet.” The small (in terms of size) scribal error of the Masoretic Text provided the incorrect reading in a Hebrew manuscript (but compare the Greek Septuagint, which has the correct reading) that has existed for many centuries. It was not until the discovery of the DSS that the correct reading in the Hebrew Bible was revealed to our generation.

4. An important variant is attested in Deuteronomy 8:6, which reads, “And you shall keep the commandments of the Lord your God, by walking in his ways and by fearing him.” This verse indicates that one must keep God’s commandments “by walking in his ways” and by “fearing him.” The DSS Bible, however, has an important variant reading: “And you shall keep the commandments of the Lord your God, by walking in his ways and by loving him” (4QDeut^a 8:6). These variants refer to two powerful but different emotions—*fear* and *love*. The variants also set forth a difference in how one understands Old Testament doctrines; in particular, the variants introduce the question of whether one should keep the commandments through fear or through love. The reading of *love* also provides us with an important view of the God of the Old Testament, who is sometimes portrayed as a strict Deity when compared with Jesus Christ and his teachings of love in the New Testament.

The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible and Modern English Translations

According to Harold Scanlin, a translation adviser for the United Bible Societies, “every major Bible translation published since 1950 has claimed to have taken into account the textual evidence of the Dead Sea Scrolls.”²⁶ Since the discovery of the scrolls, modern Bible committees have examined and have integrated variant readings from the DSS either into the actual translation of the Old Testament or as footnotes or endnotes. For instance, *Tanakh: The Holy Scriptures*, published by the Jewish Publication Society, occasionally utilizes variant

26. Harold Scanlin, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and Modern Translations of the Old Testament* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1993), 27.

readings from the Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa^a) in its English translation or refers to the readings in footnotes. One such example occurs in Isaiah 21:8, where the Masoretic Text (MT) reads *lion* (אַרְיֵה *'ryh*); 1QIsa^a reads *the watcher* (הַרְאֵה *hr'h*), a word that better fits the context of the passage: “and the watcher cried, My lord, I stand continually upon the watchtower all day, and I am stationed at my post all night.” Because *lion* and *the watcher* in the Hebrew language are graphically similar, a copyist likely made a simple error when copying this word onto a new scroll.

Another example noted in *Tanakh: The Holy Scriptures* is from Isaiah 33:8, where MT reads *cities* (עָרִים *'rym*) versus 1QIsa^a's *pact* (עָדִים *'dym*), again an example of graphic similarity. The reading of 1QIsa^a corresponds well with the parallelism, “A covenant has been renounced, a pact rejected.” Isaiah 14:4 provides a third example, one accepted by a number of modern translations, including *Tanakh*, the New International Version, and the New English Bible. In this verse 1QIsa^a reads *mrhbh* (מְרַהֲבָה), meaning “oppression.” This fits the parallelistic structure, “How is oppression ended! How is the taskmaster vanished.” *Tanakh* notes at the bottom of the page, “The traditional reading [of MT] *madhebah* [מְדַהֲבָה] is of unknown meaning.”

The following English bibles have integrated variant readings from the Dead Sea Scrolls: New International Version, Today's English Version, Revised Standard Version, New Revised Standard Version, New English Bible, New American Bible, and, of course, the Dead Sea Scrolls Bible.

Acceptance of alternate readings varies according to the translation committees. By way of example, committees have departed from traditional readings of 1 Samuel for new readings the following number of times:

New International Version: 15

Today's English Version: 51

Revised Standard Version: about 60

New Revised Standard Version: about 110

New English Bible: 160

New American Bible: 230.²⁷

The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible: all major and many minor variants.

The New International Version provides variant readings of the DSS texts of 1 Samuel on 15 occasions versus the readings of the traditional Hebrew text; the New American Bible provides the readings of the scrolls 230 times over the traditional text. The other versions, as shown on the accompanying list, have also used variant readings from the DSS to varying degrees. The New King James Version (NKJV) (1982), not listed above, provides only one variant reading from the DSS book of 1 Samuel; in fact, it relies on the DSS on only six occasions in the entire Old Testament.²⁸ Though the number of accepted changes varies, overall the translation committees have examined and subsequently integrated many variant readings of the DSS into their translations.

A very recent translation of the Old Testament, entitled the Dead Sea Scrolls Bible,²⁹ deserves special attention. While the other English translations of the Bible (listed above) are based on the Masoretic Text and feature selections of variant readings from the DSS, the Dead Sea Scrolls Bible presents a translation of the entire DSS biblical corpus, with the exception of small fragmented texts. This makes the Dead Sea Scrolls Bible unique among modern translations of the Bible. And the Dead Sea Scrolls Bible includes other significant features, such as footnotes that compare readings from the Septuagint and Masoretic Text.

Many of these English translations have gone through subsequent revisions to incorporate the variant readings from the DSS. For instance, the Revised Standard Version (1952) is now the New Revised Standard Version (1990), the New English Bible (1970) was revised to become the Revised English Bible (1989), the Jerusalem Bible (1966) is now the New Jerusalem Bible (1985), and the New American Bible (1970) is currently going through a major revision. Based on various

27. Scanlin, *Dead Sea Scrolls and Modern Translations*, 26.

28. Scanlin, *Dead Sea Scrolls and Modern Translations*, 34.

29. Martin Abegg Jr., Peter Flint, and Eugene Ulrich, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1999).

scholars' positive reaction to the Dead Sea Scrolls Bible, it is anticipated that the translation committees in future years will continue to accept variant readings from the biblical Dead Sea Scrolls and fragments.

Parabiblical Texts at Qumran

Several parabiblical (Bible-like in character, from Greek *para*, "beside"), apocryphal,³⁰ and pseudepigraphic³¹ texts were excavated from the Qumran caves, including the *Temple Scroll*, the *Book of Noah*, the *Testament of Levi*, the *Heavenly Prince Melchizedek*, the *Beatitudes*, Tobit, Sirach, a letter of Jeremiah (=Baruch 6), Enoch (*1 Enoch*), *Jubilees*, an Elisha apocryphon, the *Words of the Archangel Michael*, the *Words of Moses*, the New Jerusalem texts, *Genesis Apocryphon*, the *Ages of the Creation*, *Reworked Pentateuch*, and the *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*. Often, the parabiblical compositions are affiliated with well-known Old Testament characters such as Noah, Jacob, Joseph, Amran, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Esther.³² Many of these writings were unknown prior to the time of their discovery and represent new texts to the modern world.

Additionally, there are nine apocryphal psalms that were "completely unknown prior to the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls."³³ These

30. *Apocrypha* refers to the books that are included in the Catholic version of the Old Testament (derived from the Old Greek translation, or Septuagint), but not included in most Protestant Old Testaments, while additional apocryphal books resemble those in the Apocrypha.

31. *Pseudepigrapha* is a scholarly term that refers to several Jewish religious books written or extant between the fourth century BC and second century AD that did not become part of the Hebrew Bible. "One could characterize [pseudepigrapha] as a reverse form of plagiarism: the author does not publish the work of another under his own name; he publishes his work under the name of someone else." VanderKam, *Dead Sea Scrolls Today*, 36. To our knowledge, three pseudepigrapha are attested at Qumran—*Enoch*, *Jubilees*, and the *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*.

32. For English translations of these texts and others belonging to the same category, see Florentino García Martínez, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls Translated: The Qumran Texts in English* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), passim; and Geza Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, rev. ed. (New York: Penguin, 2004), passim. On the question of whether these books were considered to be authoritative by the Qumranites, see the opposing views of VanderKam, *Dead Sea Scrolls Today*, 153–57; and Schiffman, *Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 162–67.

33. Abegg, Flint, and Ulrich, *Dead Sea Scrolls Bible*, 506.

are called the *Apostrophe to Judah*, the *Apostrophe to Zion*, *David's Compositions*, the *Eschatological Hymn*, the *Hymn to the Creator*, the *Plea for Deliverance*, and three of the *Songs against Demons*.

The following examples of parabiblical texts demonstrate how each of these compositions is “Bible-like.”

1. *The Temple Scroll* (11Q19). At over twenty-eight feet in length, the *Temple Scroll* is the longest discovered in the eleven Qumran caves. Scholars cannot agree on the date of the scroll's composition, nor are they certain of its author. Many of this scroll's sixty-six columns examine aspects of the future temple that would be built at Jerusalem, such as the temple complex, its construction, and its functions. It also describes the sanctuary and provides its measurements. It describes the holy of holies, chambers and colonnades, the mercy seat, cherubim, a veil, a table, a golden lamp, an altar, and courtyards. The *Temple Scroll* gives details of three square concentric courts—an inner, a middle, and an outer court—that informed temple officiators, workers, and worshippers of three levels of holiness. The innermost court of the temple was the most holy, and as one moved outward, the courts (and the respective ordinances or rituals performed therein) decreased in holiness.

The *Temple Scroll* goes beyond the physical features of the temple to describe the ideal temple society by discussing many topics, including a covenant between God and Israel, purity regulations, priests, priestly dues, Levites, witnesses, sacrificial animals, vows and oaths, judges and officers affiliated with the temple, laws relating to idolatry, crimes punishable by hanging, apostasy, the conduct of war, and rebellious sons. The scroll does not simply repeat the laws on social conduct and temple worship as they appear in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy; it blends them into a new, harmonious whole, sometimes adding new material such as festivals of new oil and wine that are not mentioned in the law of Moses. The temple, according to the scroll itself, is “the temple on which I [the Lord] will settle my glory until the day of blessing on which I will create my temple and establish it for myself for all times” (11Q19 XXIX, 7–10).

One important question regarding this scroll is whether it was considered to have religious authority and scriptural value on a par with the books of Leviticus, Deuteronomy, and other biblical books. Some scholars attribute significant religious authority to the *Temple Scroll*. Yigael Yadin argues that the scroll is “a veritable Torah of the Lord.”³⁴ B. Z. Wacholder asserts that the *Temple Scroll* is a new Torah, as opposed to the older Torah (the five books of Moses) and is designed to replace the old.³⁵ Michael O. Wise maintains that the *Temple Scroll* was authored by the Teacher of Righteousness and represents an eschatological religious law.³⁶ And Hartmut Stegemann sees it as a sixth book of the Torah, originating before the establishment of the community of Qumran.³⁷ These views are representative of the opinions regarding the *Temple Scroll*'s relationship to the Torah.

2. *The Book of Enoch* (4QEnoch^{a-g}). The prophet Enoch is scarcely mentioned in the version of the Bible that we use today (as compared to the Dead Sea Scrolls Bible). According to Hugh Nibley, “Aside from brief genealogical notes, all that the Bible tells us about Enoch is that ‘he walked with God, and was not’ (Genesis 5:25), and he prophesied the coming of the Lord to execute judgment (Jude 1:14).”³⁸ Enoch, however, holds a prominent place in many of the compositions found among the DSS, such as *1 Enoch*, *Jubilees*, the *Genesis Apocryphon*, and others. These texts reveal him to be a mighty prophet, a great writer, an eminent astronomer, and one who was granted access to divine books and sacred knowledge. Biblical scholars describe him as

34. Yigael Yadin, *The Temple Scroll* (Jerusalem: IES, Institute of Archaeology of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and the Shrine of the Book, 1983), 1:390–92, 396–97.

35. B. Z. Wacholder, *The Dawn of Qumran: The Sectarian Torah and the Teacher of Righteousness* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College, 1983).

36. Michael O. Wise, *A Critical Study of the Temple Scroll from Qumran Cave 11* (Chicago: Oriental Institute, 1990), 167.

37. See Hartmut Stegemann, “The Origins of the Temple Scroll,” in *Congress Volume: Jerusalem* (Leiden: Brill, 1986), 235–55; and more popularly, “Is the Temple Scroll a Sixth Book of the Torah—Lost for 2,500 Years?” *Biblical Archaeology Review* 13 (1987): 28–35, republished in *Understanding the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. Hershel Shanks (New York: Random House, 1992), 126–36.

38. Hugh W. Nibley, *Enoch the Prophet* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1986), 56 n. 1.

“the colossus who bestrides the Apocrypha as no other”³⁹ and a figure of “extraordinary strength and pervasiveness.”⁴⁰

According to the DSS, Enoch was a great writer, “the first among men that are born on earth who learned writing and knowledge and wisdom.”⁴¹ He was granted access to divine books and great knowledge and “observed the heavenly tablets, and read them carefully, and read the book of all the deeds of mankind to the remotest generations.”⁴² The scrolls identify Enoch as an astronomer. Chapters 72–82 of *1 Enoch* are referred to as Enoch’s “Astronomical Book,” or “the book of the courses of the luminaries of the heavens.”⁴³ One scholar believes that the sources attribute “the solar calendar of 364 days . . . to Enoch, the original astronomer.”⁴⁴

While the scrolls augment the scanty information about Enoch in the Bible (see Genesis 5), our own Pearl of Great Price account of Enoch comprises the most complete and accurate record of this great prophet. Nibley observes that “in giving us a much fuller account than the Bible of how the Flood came about, the book of Enoch settles the moral issue with several telling parts: (1) God’s reluctance to send the Flood and his great sorrow at the event. (2) The peculiar brand of wickedness that made the Flood mandatory. (3) The frank challenge of the wicked to have God do His worst.”⁴⁵ The DSS record many of the iniquities of the people as well as the weeping of God at the necessity of destroying his own creation, just as the Pearl of Great Price does.

A further note of interest appears in the Book of Moses—“out of the blue . . . the name of the only nonbiblical individual named in the whole book—Mahijah (Moses 6:40).”⁴⁶ Strikingly, the name *Mahujah* (MHWY—“the semi-vowels *w* and *y* are written very much

39. Nibley, *Enoch the Prophet*, 19.

40. G. W. Anderson, “Enoch, Books of,” in *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1973 ed.), 8:605; cited in Nibley, *Enoch the Prophet*, 56 n. 2.

41. *Jubilees* 4:17.

42. *1 Enoch* 81:1, 2.

43. *1 Enoch* 72:1.

44. James C. VanderKam, *Enoch and the Growth of an Apocalyptic Tradition* (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1984), 90.

45. Nibley, *Enoch the Prophet*, 4.

46. Nibley, *Enoch the Prophet*, 277.

alike in the Aramaic script and are sometimes confused by scribes”⁴⁷ appears in the Enoch materials in the DSS. In Moses 6:40, “there came a man unto him, whose name was Mahijah, and said to him: Tell us plainly who thou art and from whence thou comest?” This is similar to 4Q*Enoch Giants* I, 20: “And they summoned MHWY and he came to them: And they asked him and sent him to Enoch.”

3. *Beatitudes* (4Q525). A composition that scholars have named *Beatitudes*, discovered in Qumran Cave 4, represents a significant find. A portion of *Beatitudes* is presented here:

Blessed are those who hold to her (Wisdom’s) precepts
 and do not hold to the ways of iniquity.
 Blessed are those who rejoice in her,
 and do not burst forth in ways of folly.
 Blessed are those who seek her with pure hands,
 and do not pursue her with a treacherous heart.
 Blessed is the man who has attained Wisdom,
 And walks in the Law of the Most High.
 He directs his heart towards her ways,
 and restrains himself by her corrections,
 and always takes delight in her chastisements.⁴⁸

This composition forms a genre that recalls three literary types belonging to the ancient world:

a. *Beatitudes* begins several clauses with the formula *Blessed*, a structure similar to the Beatitudes of Matthew 5:3–11; see Psalm 1:1.

b. In *Beatitudes*, wisdom is personified as a woman (the word *wisdom* in Hebrew [*hokmah*] is a feminine noun); those who hold her seek her with pure hands; those who attain her walk in God’s law. Personifying wisdom in *Beatitudes* recalls Proverbs 8, where Wisdom is also set forth as a woman: “Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice? She standeth in the top of high places, by the

47. Nibley, *Enoch the Prophet*, 278.

48. 4Q525 II, in Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 455, formatting by author.

way in the places of the paths. She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city,” and so on (Proverbs 8:1–3 KJV).

c. *Beatitudes* sets forth a number of poetic parallelisms that recall various parallelistic structures found in the books of Psalms, Proverbs, Isaiah, and elsewhere. In *Beatitudes*, some of the parallelisms are synonymous and others are antithetical.

4. *Hymn to the Creator*. An Apocryphal Psalm (11QPs^a). The Psalms scroll that was discovered in Qumran Cave 11 is a significant find, in part because it includes a few apocryphal psalms that are not part of the biblical book of Psalms. The fact that these apocryphal psalms appear among the DSS along with the canonical psalms (i.e., those psalms that are found in our Bibles) suggests that these apocryphal psalms possessed canonical or religious authority for the Jews who owned them. One of these psalms is Psalm 151, which was already known in the Septuagint but is absent from the Hebrew Bible. Psalm 151 deals with King David, his call from the Lord, and his defeat of Goliath. Previously unknown psalms found at Qumran include the *Prayer for Deliverance*, *Apostrophe to Zion*, and *Hymn to the Creator*. The following lines represent a portion of the latter:

The Lord is great and holy,
 the Most Holy for generation after generation.
 Majesty goes before him,
 and after him abundance of many waters.
 Loving-kindness and truth are about his face;
 truth and judgement and righteousness are the
 pedestal of his throne.
 He divides light from obscurity;
 he establishes the dawn by the knowledge of his heart.
 When all his angels saw it, they sang,
 for he showed them that which they had not known.
 He crowns the mountains with fruit,
 with good food for all the living.⁴⁹

49. *Hymn to the Creator* XXVI, in Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 412, formatting by author.

This psalm, with its symbolic forms, figures of speech, and parallel-istic structure, reads like many of the canonical psalms of the Bible.

5. *The Seductress* (4Q184). A composition that scholars have named *The Seductress* pertains to a woman who uses her wiles to seduce others into participating in sexual sin. The poem belongs to a genre called wisdom literature, a literary genre which, in the Bible, is demonstrated in the books of Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and other compositions.

Using poetic language, this composition refers to several of the seductress's body parts, including her lips, heart, kidneys, eyes, hands, and legs. For example, "Her *heart* is set up as a snare, and her *kidneys* as a fowler's nets. Her *eyes* are defiled with iniquity, her *hands* have seized hold of the Pit. Her *legs* go down to work wickedness, . . ." The composition also refers to her skirts, clothes, veils, ornaments (i.e., jewelry), and beds.

Similar to harlots of old, the seductress positions herself in places where she can tempt those who pass by: "In the city's squares she veils herself, and she stands at the gates of towns." As a seductress, she employs sweet talk to those who will listen: "She is ever prompt to oil her words, and she flatters with irony." A portion of *The Seductress* appears here:

She is the beginning of all the ways of iniquity.
 Woe (and) disaster to all who possess her!
 And desolation to all who hold her!
 For her ways are ways of death,
 and her paths are roads of sin,
 and her tracks are pathways to iniquity,
 and her by-ways are rebellious wrong-doings.
 Her gates are gates of death,
 and from the entrance of the house
 she sets out towards the underworld.
 None of those who enter there will ever return,
 and all who possess her will descend to the Pit.
 She lies in wait in secret places.⁵⁰

50. 4Q184, in Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 418.

The cited portion of the poem reveals that disaster will come upon those who are enticed into sexual sin; its form is a series of parallelisms that recall similar structures in numerous biblical psalms and hymns. In the first parallelism shown above (lines two and three), *disaster* corresponds with *desolation*, and *all who possess her* parallels *all who hold her*. In the second parallelism (lines four and five), *her ways* is analogous to *her paths* and *ways of death* parallels *roads of sin*. In the third parallelism (lines six and seven), *her tracks* and *her byways* are comparable and *iniquity* and *wrong-doings* are corresponding elements. In yet another parallelism (lines eight through ten), *gates* corresponds with *entrance*, and *death* is parallel to *underworld*.

Do Any of the Parabiblical Texts Have Canonical Authority?

It is well known that the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) comprises a fixed set of scriptural books that have canonical authority for Judaism and Christianity. Less well known, however, is that Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Eastern Orthodox faiths include different books in their respective versions of the Old Testament. The Jewish and Protestant canons have the same scriptural books, but they are ordered differently. The former orders the books according to three general categories (Law, Prophets, and Writings), and the latter orders them according to a (possible) chronological order. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints uses the same Old Testament books as do Protestants and in the same order.⁵¹

The Roman Catholic Old Testament, in addition to the books of the Protestant Old Testament, contains Tobit, Judith, 1–2 Maccabees, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, and Baruch plus a letter of Jeremiah, Song of the Three Youths, Susanna, and Bel and the Dragon, as well as additional chapters to the books of Esther and Daniel. The Greek Orthodox Old Testament features a few more books than the

51. The 1979 LDS edition of the Old Testament, which uses the text of the King James Version, incorporates readings from the Joseph Smith Translation (JST) in the footnotes and features a special section at the back of the Bible with excerpts too lengthy for inclusion in footnotes.

Roman Catholic: 1 Esdras, Prayer of Manasseh, 3 Maccabees, and Psalm 151.

With the coming forth of the various DSS parabiblical texts, scholars in recent decades have reassessed the meaning of the canon. They have questioned the scriptural authority of these and other texts that have certain Bible-like qualities, even though these texts do *not* exist in our version of the Holy Bible.⁵² For example, Emanuel Tov, editor in chief of the international team of translators of the DSS, has written that “the definition of the scope of the biblical corpus is unclear. . . . The list is limited to the texts which subsequently came to be included in Hebrew Scripture, while the boundaries of that group in the last centuries (165) BCE and the first centuries CE remain open to debate.”⁵³ One recent publication addresses the issue of canonicity head-on. In his article “Questions of Canon Viewed through the Dead Sea Scrolls,” Qumran scholar James C. VanderKam introduces his article with these words: “As nearly as we can tell, there was no canon of scripture in Second Temple Judaism. That is, before 70 C.E. no authoritative body of which we know drew up a list of books that alone were regarded as supremely authoritative, a list from which none could be subtracted and to which none could be added.”⁵⁴

After setting the background and context for his article, VanderKam presents the direction he will take: “The thesis that I would like to defend regarding the second temple period is that while there were authoritative writings, and these were at times gathered into recognizable groupings (e.g., Law, Prophets, Others), the category of revealed literature was not considered a closed and fixed one, at least not for the type of Judaism

52. See especially the following publications: Eugene Ulrich, “The Notion and Definition of Canon,” in *The Canon Debate*, ed. Lee Martin McDonald and James A. Sanders (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002), 21–35; Philip R. Davies, “The Jewish Scriptural Canon in Cultural Perspective,” in *Canon Debate*, 36–52; Joseph Blenkinsopp, “The Formation of the Hebrew Bible Canon: Isaiah as a Test Case,” in *Canon Debate*, 53–67; and Lee Martin McDonald, *The Biblical Canon: Its Origin, Transmission, and Authority* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007). See also the bibliographies cited in these publications.

53. Tov, “Categorized List of the ‘Biblical Texts,’” 165–66.

54. James C. VanderKam, “Questions of Canon Viewed through the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in *Canon Debate*, 91.

for which we now have the most evidence—the people of the Dead Sea Scrolls.”⁵⁵ VanderKam then examines three individual compositions—*Reworked Pentateuch*, the *Temple Scroll*, and *Jubilees*—in light of the possibility that these three may have had scriptural status for the Jews who possessed them. All three of these compositions fit textual forms of scripture, meaning that they read like scripture. The *Temple Scroll*, writes VanderKam, “reproduces pentateuchal material and generally has a known form of scriptural text,”⁵⁶ as do the other two compositions under discussion.

It is not known what books from Qumran were considered to be scripture or hold canonical authority for the Jews who possessed them (the Essenes, according to most scholars). Because of this, several questions remain with regard to those who possessed these scrolls: What books constituted their Bible or scriptural canon? Did they consider all the books of our LDS Old Testament to have equal authority? Did they consider other books, beyond those in the Old Testament, to have canonical authority? Although it is quite probable that these Jews accepted all the books of the Old Testament as biblical and canonical, it is also possible that they accepted other books as scripture—books such as the *Temple Scroll*, *1 Enoch*, the book of *Jubilees*,⁵⁷ some of the apocryphal psalms, the *Beatitudes*, and others.

Three notable Qumran scholars of our present day—Martin Abegg, Peter Flint, and Eugene Ulrich—apparently consider a few of the Qumran parabiblical books to have been biblical books to the Jews who owned them. These scholars include five texts in their Dead Sea Scrolls Bible that have not been part of the traditional Protestant Bible as we know it today—*Jubilees*, *1 Enoch*, Ben Sira (Sirach), Tobit, and the Epistle of Jeremiah. The introduction to their book states, “It is . . . most likely that the Qumran community viewed the books of 1 Enoch and Jubilees as Scripture.”⁵⁸ VanderKam provides an appropriate

55. VanderKam, “Questions of Canon,” 92.

56. VanderKam, “Questions of Canon,” 108.

57. VanderKam, *Dead Sea Scrolls Today*, 153–57.

58. Abegg, Flint, and Ulrich, *Dead Sea Scrolls Bible*, xvii.

summary of how we should view the apocryphal and parabiblical books of Qumran: “In view of the evidence from Qumran, we should avoid using the words *Bible* and *biblical* for this period and this community. This is not to deny that group had authoritative writings; the difficulty is that we . . . cannot always be sure which of those writings were authoritative and which were not.”⁵⁹

Scriptural Commentaries, *Tefillin*, and *Mezuzot*

In addition to the various books of the Old Testament listed above, the DSS include scriptural commentaries, *tefillin*, and *mezuzot*.

Ancient Scriptural Commentaries. The Jews who owned the scrolls wrote out their interpretations of individual books of the Old Testament⁶⁰—including Isaiah, Habakkuk, Hosea, Micah, Nahum, and the Psalms. These commentaries reveal a striking method of biblical interpretation—the passage of scripture is first quoted and then followed by an interpretation. For example, a passage in the *Commentary on the Psalms* first quotes Psalm 37:10: “A little while and the wicked shall be no more; I will look towards his place but he shall not be there,” followed by the interpretation, “At the end of the forty years [from the time that the commentary was written,] they [the wicked] shall be blotted out and no [evil] man shall be found on the earth.”⁶¹ In a passage in the *Commentary on Habakkuk*, an interest in the last days can also be seen: “And God told Habakkuk to write down that which would happen to the final generation, but He did not make known to him when time would come to an end.”⁶²

The author(s) of the commentaries frequently likened the scriptural passage to themselves (i.e., the Qumran community of believers) by arguing that its fulfillment had reference either to themselves or to contemporary events. Such an approach of likening the scriptures to the present community of believers is an ancient practice, for it was

59. VanderKam, “Questions of Canon,” 109.

60. VanderKam, *Dead Sea Scrolls Today*, 152–53.

61. 4Q171 II, in Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 510; final brackets in original.

62. 1QpHab VII, in Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 512.

also used by the prophet Nephi.⁶³ Similar commentaries find a place in the modern world, authored by church authorities or scholars.

Tefillin and Mezuzot. Other biblical texts, in the form of small parchments containing passages from Exodus and Deuteronomy, have been excavated at Qumran. The parchments were part of *tefillin* (called phylacteries in the New Testament; see Matthew 23:5) and *mezuzot* (small boxes fastened to the doorposts of some Jewish houses or structures). The texts are usually from Exodus 12:43–13:16 and Deuteronomy 5:1–6:9, 10:12–11:21. Twenty-one *tefillin* texts and eight *mezuzot* texts have been found in the Qumran excavations.⁶⁴

Conclusion

We may conclude with the words of President Howard W. Hunter, who wrote with regard to the Bible, “No greater literary work was ever compiled.”⁶⁵ And the biblical and parabiblical DSS provide us with a treasure trove of knowledge regarding what the Bible looked like during the century or two before the Christian era. The biblical scrolls are significant because they disclose the manner in which ancient scribes and copyists transmitted the Bible from generation to generation. These scrolls also provide us with confidence that our Old Testament has been preserved with a high degree of accuracy, notwithstanding the relatively small number of variant readings that exist between the Masoretic Text and the DSS Bible. The parabiblical scrolls are important because they open possibilities that the textual contents of our present Old Testament is incomplete, that perhaps in antiquity there were other scriptural books that had canonical status.

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63. See 1 Nephi 19:23; 2 Nephi 6:5; cf. 11:2, 8.

64. These texts are still in similar use today.

65. Clyde J. Williams, ed., *Teachings of Howard W. Hunter* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1997), 58.

THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS AND LATTER-DAY SAINTS: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Dana M. Pike

The story of the initial discovery of seven Dead Sea Scrolls in late 1947 in a cave near Qumran, accounts of the further discovery of texts by Bedouin and scholars, and overviews of the challenges with organizing, matching, and publishing the thousands of scroll fragments, have been related numerous times and will not be repeated here.¹ Neither will I cover here the involvement of a few Latter-day Saints as members of the international team of editors of the Dead Sea Scrolls or who in other ways have been connected with the scrolls. The purpose of this essay is to suggest answers to the question, “Where can or should Latter-day Saints go from here regarding the Dead Sea Scrolls?” This paper is thus written for Latter-day Saint readers, from the perspective that there is somewhere to “go” from here. First, however, a few words of introduction are in order.

1. For a fascinating and detailed account of scroll discovery and activity during the years 1947–60, see Weston W. Fields, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A Full History*, vol. 1 (Boston: Brill, 2009). For a recent, good-quality overview of the scrolls and their significance, see James C. VanderKam and Peter W. Flint, *The Meaning of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Their Significance for Understanding the Bible, Judaism, Jesus, and Christianity* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2002). For a Latter-day Saint approach to the scrolls, see Donald W. Parry and Dana M. Pike, eds., *LDS Perspectives on the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1997), and Donald W. Parry and Stephen D. Ricks, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Questions and Responses for Latter-Day Saints* (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2000).

Anyone with even a passing interest in the Dead Sea Scrolls has hopefully read at least some of them in translation if not in the original (mainly Hebrew). Several reliable translations are available, ranging from the official publication series, *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert* (Oxford, 1955–2010), which contains all the biblical and nonbiblical texts (along with transcriptions and technical notes), to more user-friendly compilations of the nonbiblical texts such as Geza Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*.² The biblical texts from Qumran are conveniently available in translation in *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible* and in *The Biblical Qumran Scrolls: Transcriptions and Textual Variants*.³ Furthermore, a database of the Qumran biblical texts will soon appear in the Dead Sea Scrolls Electronic Library (DSSEL), produced by BYU's Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship in conjunction with Brill.⁴ This powerful electronic corpus allows for productive research opportunities not easily available to scroll scholars of the previous generation.

There was great excitement about the Dead Sea Scrolls among Bible scholars and many other people in the years following their initial discovery. Based solely on the scrolls found in Cave 1 near Qumran, it was evident that some of these texts were biblical (two copies of the book of Isaiah were discovered in the first cave). Other scrolls contained completely unknown texts that appear to have been unique to the Qumran community, such as the *Community Rule*, the

2. Geza Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, rev. ed. (New York: Penguin Putnam, 2004). Other recent English translations of the nonbiblical scrolls include Florentino García Martínez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated: The Qumran Texts in English*, rev. ed. (New York: Brill, 1997), and Donald W. Parry and Emanuel Tov, eds., *The Dead Sea Scrolls Reader*, 6 vols. (Boston: Brill, 2004–5).

3. Martin G. Abegg, Peter W. Flint, and Eugene C. Ulrich, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible: The Oldest Known Bible* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1999); and Eugene C. Ulrich, *The Biblical Qumran Scrolls: Transcriptions and Textual Variants* (Boston: Brill, 2010).

4. Private communication from Kristian Heal, director of CPART, 22 June 2010. The DSSEL runs on the PC-based WordCruncher search engine. Mac users who wish to run a native Mac application should consider Accordance, which has a variety of biblical texts and numerous collections of related texts, including the Dead Sea Scrolls in Hebrew and English (www.accordancebible.com), but without the associated pictures of Qumran fragments available in the DSSEL.

Thanksgiving Hymns, and the *War of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness*. Still other texts discovered in the caves around Qumran had been utilized by many Jews, not just the Qumran community, such as Tobit, *Jubilees*, and *1 Enoch*, although these were never included in the official canon of Jewish scripture. The Dead Sea Scrolls thus represent a variety of Jewish religious texts copied during a period of about three centuries (250 BC–AD 68).

As it turns out, the Dead Sea Scrolls are exceptionally significant for a number of reasons, including:

- They demonstrate the text and transmission history of the Hebrew Bible (the Old Testament) during the last two centuries BC and first century AD (the “turn of the era”). The scrolls illustrate that in Jesus’s time there was not just one authorized version of any book of the Hebrew Bible, but that there were slightly to moderately differing Hebrew texts of the same biblical books concurrently used by Jews in Palestine (greater standardization of biblical texts did not occur until several decades after the Roman destruction of the Jerusalem temple in AD 70).
- They further illustrate the existence of “Judaisms” at the turn of the era: Jewish religion was not a universal, monolithic form of belief and practice, nor were the differences restricted to the Pharisees and Sadducees emphasized in the New Testament. The Dead Sea Scrolls help demonstrate that the Jewish religious landscape of the time was much more fascinating and diverse (especially in relation to purity and temple matters) than previously supposed, as they expand our view of the broader religious and cultural background out of which Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism “developed” in the first and second centuries AD.
- They provide contemporary evidence for the broad corpus of Jewish religious texts that are not part of the biblical canon, but were important to Jews of Jesus’s day for doctrine, devotion, exhortation, and entertainment.

- They significantly increase our understanding of the Hebrew and Aramaic languages at the turn of the era.
- And they provide the best evidence of scribal practices and scroll-making procedures from that time period.

Although all these contributions can be of interest and value to Latter-day Saints, none of them is Restoration-specific. And given the reality that many Saints do not spend much time studying large portions of the Old Testament and are relatively unfamiliar with certain portions of the New Testament,⁵ preaching the values of the Dead Sea Scrolls to Latter-day Saints in general must rank lower than emphasizing the value of greater scripture literacy.

The Place of the Dead Sea Scrolls in the Restoration Era

Hugh Nibley was the first Latter-day Saint scholar to publish about the Dead Sea Scrolls and their value for better understanding the background of scripture. Only a relatively few academically trained Latter-day Saint scholars have published on the Dead Sea Scrolls in the past two decades.⁶

Some Latter-day Saints have a general interest in the Dead Sea Scrolls because they connect them with prophecies such as Psalm 85:11, “Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven,” and Moses 7:62, “And righteousness will I send down out of heaven; and truth will I send forth out of the earth, to bear testimony of mine Only Begotten; his resurrection from the dead; yea, and also the resurrection of all men.” While I do not believe these scripture passages specifically foretell the discovery and publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls, I do think the scrolls are an important part of the larger restoration of knowledge about the Bible and the ancient world of the Bible that the Lord has brought about in connection with the Restoration. As I have written elsewhere,

5. This is my opinion, based on my personal experience. I have not conducted, nor have I seen, any type of methodologically sound survey regarding this claim.

6. See Daniel B. McKinlay and Steven W. Booras, “The Dead Sea Scrolls: Select Publications by Latter-day Saint Scholars,” in this issue, pp. 105–16, as well as Hugh Nibley, “From the Dead Sea Scrolls (1QS),” also in this issue, pp. 83–104.

Given the accumulation of discoveries and decipherments during the past two centuries, it is easy to forget that before 1800 very little was known about the ancient world of the Bible. The avalanche of historical and linguistic knowledge relating to that ancient world that began in the early 1800s, *at the same time* the Lord was restoring doctrine and authority to the earth through Joseph Smith, is part of the Lord's work in "the fulness of times" to "gather together in one all things, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth" (D&C 27:13).⁷

From the discoveries of the early and mid-nineteenth century to such landmark twentieth-century discoveries as the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Lord seems to be providing an ever-increasing amount of knowledge about the world in which ancient Saints lived and a backdrop against which to understand gospel truths as revealed in past dispensations as well as in this current one.

Having personally worked with and published some of the thousands of small Dead Sea Scroll fragments, I have a professional interest in both these texts and the contribution they can continue to make to the academic study of the Bible and Judaism at the beginning of the Christian era, as well as the value they can have for interested believers in the Restoration. This essay is *my* attempt to answer the question, "Where can or should Latter-day Saints go from here regarding the Dead Sea Scrolls?" in which I suggest how and why I think the scrolls have value for Latter-day Saints and what can be done to further maximize the use of the scrolls by Latter-day Saints. Rather than dividing my points into categories addressed to academics and church members in general, I provide here a single list of five broad points for consideration:

7. Dana M. Pike, "Recovering the World of the Bible," in *Prelude to the Restoration: From Apostasy to the Restored Church* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2004), 159–60, emphasis in original. I have also commented on this topic in Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, Dana M. Pike, and David Rolph Seely, *Jehovah and the World of the Old Testament* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2009), 380–83.

1. Countering Ongoing Ignorance and Misinformation about the Dead Sea Scrolls

My own experience affirms that many Latter-day Saints have heard something about the Dead Sea Scrolls but in reality know little *accurate* information about them. Unfortunately, some people's zeal to share what they find interesting about the scrolls outpaces the accuracy of their fireside presentations. This can be attributed to, among other things, a lack of personal familiarity with the content of the scrolls themselves, the use of outdated secondary sources, a lack of careful assessment of the claims in secondary source materials of any date (including much of what circulates on the Internet), and mixing of information about the Qumran texts with other ancient but quite different manuscripts (such as those discovered at Nag Hammadi, Egypt).

Knowing that the Qumran community was not a divinely authorized Restoration group, but rather a protesting and reforming movement within Jewish religion in the last century BC and the first century AD, Latter-day Saints should not expect to find a complete and accurate catalog of gospel truths preserved in the scrolls.⁸ However, it is true that beyond the biblical texts there are some interesting, but generally superficial similarities between passages in the sectarian Dead Sea Scrolls—those unique to the Qumran community—and Latter-day Saint organization and belief. For example, the *Community Rule* (1QS III, 16–25) claims that God created the Prince of Lights and the Angel of Darkness, who influence people on earth to follow “truth” or “deceit.” This may seem to Latter-day Saints like the aftermath of the so-called war in heaven. However, the Qumran texts never mention a “war” in heaven, nor a loss of status for the Angel of Darkness (in contrast to Satan being cast out of heaven), and they clearly include the false doctrine that God predestined, not just foreordained, people's

8. This view has been expressed numerous times, but many Latter-day Saints do not seem to have grasped it. See recently Andrew C. Skinner's remark that the Qumran community is *not* a previously “unknown group of pre-Christian ‘Latter-day Saints’ living down by the Dead Sea in the Holy Land,” in “The Dead Sea Scrolls and Latter-day Truth,” *Ensign*, February 2006, 44.

mortal lives and their fate in the life to come (as well as other doctrines not in harmony with Restoration belief).⁹ Beyond what doctrine is already preserved in the Old Testament, the nonbiblical scrolls preserve, at best, what I call “corrupted echoes” of truth—original truths not completely understood or preserved by the Qumran community that come to us in vaguely familiar but corrupted condition.¹⁰

I here reaffirm my statement above. Emphasizing scripture study must take precedence over trumpeting scroll study. However, these are not mutually exclusive. And the more Latter-day Saints understand and properly utilize the Dead Sea Scrolls, along with other ancient Near Eastern texts, the more fully they will appreciate the richness of the Old and New Testaments *in their own contexts*.

A second example of an oft-cited superficial similarity involves the passage prescribing part of the governing structure of the Qumran community: “in the Council of the Community there shall be twelve men and three priests who are blameless in all that has been revealed from all the Law” (1QS VIII, 1–2; my translation). This leads to a common assumption that the leadership of the community included three priests and twelve other men. However, these priests were Aaronic priests and the “twelve men” were Israelite males with no priesthood at all. Given the important role of priesthood leadership, priesthood keys (lacking at Qumran), and the significance of the numbers three and twelve in the Old Testament (twelve Israelite tribes is probably the basis for there being twelve apostles), it is hard for me to see how this passage provides specific support for the Restoration, as some Latter-day Saints have implied.¹¹ Furthermore,

9. For a summary discussion of this and related passages, see, for example, Dana M. Pike, “Is the Plan of Salvation Attested in the Dead Sea Scrolls?,” in *LDS Perspectives on the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 76–81. In addition to the Qumran community’s belief in predestination, another false doctrine in the Dead Sea Scrolls is their apparent belief in the coming of two messiahs, a priestly one and a royal one, whereas Latter-day Saints and other Christians would see these two authoritative roles combined in Jesus.

10. This phrase was first used in Pike, “Is the Plan of Salvation Attested in the Dead Sea Scrolls?,” 90.

11. See, for example, Keith Terry and Stephen Biddulph, *Dead Sea Scrolls and the Mormon Connection* (n.p.: Maasai, 1996), 112–13; reviewed by Dana M. Pike in *FARMS Review of Books* 9/2 (1997): 88–98.

it is not even clear from the New Testament that the church in the first century AD had a separate three-member Quorum of the First Presidency in addition to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, as the Restored church does. Finally, there is debate among scroll scholars over the interpretation of this passage (1QS VIII, 1–2), with some rejecting the traditional view that this prescribes the form of the Qumran community’s leadership.¹²

Although the Qumran texts occasionally hint at something that is not well preserved in the Old Testament but that is believed by Latter-day Saints, they do not contain complete and unadulterated doctrinal truths other than what is already preserved in the Bible—there are *no new* whole doctrines clearly preserved in the Dead Sea Scrolls that only Latter-day Saints recognize. Furthermore, the Dead Sea Scrolls make no mention of several important doctrines such as the Fall, an infinite atonement by a Redeemer, and saving ordinances that require the holy Melchizedek Priesthood. Thus, in contrast to the Book of Mormon, the Dead Sea Scrolls do *not* “bear testimony of mine Only Begotten; his resurrection from the dead,” and thus do not qualify as a specific fulfillment of the prophecy that “truth will I [the Lord] send forth out of the earth” (Moses 7:62).

Therefore, one important and absolute necessity is to continue the effort to educate interested Latter-day Saints about what the scrolls are, what they say, and what they do not say. I trust a sustained effort will help eliminate from among most Latter-day Saints such totally false claims as “the Sacrament prayers are contained in the Dead Sea Scrolls” and “the temple endowment and marriage sealing ceremony are preserved in the Dead Sea Scrolls.”¹³ It is most important for Latter-day Saints to appreciate that the value of the scrolls and scroll

12. For a recent alternative approach, see John J. Collins, *Beyond the Qumran Community: The Sectarian Movement of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010), 69–72.

13. I have on file the transcript of a woefully inaccurate Latter-day Saint fireside given in California in the late 1990s that includes these and similarly false statements. Sadly, I have heard versions of these and related claims reported many times to me by colleagues and students. For a specific published example, see Richard Neitzel Holzapfel in “The Dead Sea Scrolls: A Roundtable Discussion Celebrating the Sixtieth Anniversary of Their Discovery, Part 2,” *Religious Educator* 9/2 (2008): 93–94.

fragments is not that they contain seemingly sensational proof texts of the Restoration, for they do not,¹⁴ but rather that they include the oldest surviving copies of biblical texts and they illustrate the richness and variety of Jewish religious writings at the beginning of the Christian era.

This need for accurate information is especially true among church missionaries and teachers, including seminary and institute teachers, so as to minimize the misinformation that is so often spread, unintentionally to be sure, about the Dead Sea Scrolls. I commend organizations such as the Maxwell Institute and the Religious Studies Center, both housed at Brigham Young University in Provo, for providing quality resources (such as this issue of *Studies in the Bible and Antiquity*) for Latter-day Saints on the Dead Sea Scrolls and other relevant ancient texts, and hope they will continue to do so. Additionally, the resources cited in the footnotes to this article are a good place to begin for those who are interested in learning more. Perhaps the editors of the *Ensign* and *Liahona* would consider periodically publishing more often than they have in the past twenty-five years short articles on such texts as the Dead Sea Scrolls and ancient Israelite inscriptions, particularly ones that illustrate the contribution of such texts to a better understanding of our canonical scriptures.¹⁵ It seems to me that the effort to educate Latter-day Saints about the scrolls will always be more successful when it is not just about the scrolls themselves (important as this can be), but rather about the value they can have in helping us better grasp and appreciate our own scriptures.

14. See recently on this topic the comments of Seely, Parry, and Pike in “A Roundtable Discussion, Part 2,” 84–87. It is important to note that the Maxwell Institute and its previous iterations, FARMS and ISPART, have sponsored a number of informed firesides over the years about the Dead Sea Scrolls, as well as a conference and related publications (see McKinlay and Booras, “Publications by Latter-day Saint Scholars,” in this issue, 105–16). And recently BYU’s Religious Studies Center published Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, Donald W. Parry, Dana M. Pike, and David Rolph Seely, “The Dead Sea Scrolls: A Roundtable Discussion Celebrating the Sixtieth Anniversary of Their Discovery, Part 1,” *Religious Educator* 8/3 (2007): 127–46, and Holzapfel, Parry, Pike, and Seely, “A Roundtable Discussion, Part 2,” 83–97.

15. See most recently, Skinner, “Dead Sea Scrolls and Latter-day Truth,” 44–49.

2. Keeping Up-to-Date

In spite of the important efforts of Hugh Nibley to publicize the Dead Sea Scrolls among Latter-day Saints, if Latter-day Saints want to be accurately and more fully informed, it is essential to move beyond *just* or *primarily* utilizing Nibley's publications as a resource. Dr. Nibley's writings on the Dead Sea Scrolls were mainly produced in the 1950s and 1960s, decades before much of the scroll material was published and accessible.¹⁶ Although Nibley brought a Restoration perspective to his studies and was correct about some things regarding the scrolls, the limitations of working with incomplete data hindered his efforts, and those of every other scholar of that period, at fully and accurately grasping the content and contribution of the scrolls. As is inevitable in scholarship, aspects of Nibley's publications on the Dead Sea Scrolls are dated, as are other authors' books and articles produced on the scrolls prior to 1995.

There are now reliable, more up-to-date publications by Latter-day Saint and non-Latter-day Saint scholars that must be accessed by Latter-day Saints who desire to be well-versed on the Dead Sea Scrolls. And there will continue to be further advances made in understanding the Qumran community, their beliefs, and their historical situation. Research on Qumran and the scrolls is ongoing, not static. Those who wish to keep current must make the investment of not only studying the primary texts—the scrolls and fragments themselves (at least in translation)—but new developments as they are published by responsible scholars. As with the need for Latter-day Saints to access accurate information on the Dead Sea Scrolls, so likewise there is the need to access up-to-date information from reliable and legitimate sources.

3. The Larger Context of Religious Writings

Without replacing or superseding the canonical scriptures, religious writings such as the nonbiblical Qumran texts can certainly be

16. For a list of Nibley's publications relating to the Dead Sea Scrolls, see the composite bibliography of Latter-day Saint publications in McKinlay and Booras, "Publications by Latter-day Saint Scholars," in this issue, 107–8.

of value to Latter-day Saints. Such texts can help us more fully appreciate concepts such as covenant, the influence of the Holy Spirit, the challenge of individual spirituality in a wicked world, and “likening” the scriptures to present-day circumstances, as we see how others have understood and grappled with such important religious matters. In reality, this is not much different from other types of studies in which any student of the scriptures can engage, whether examining the New Testament apocrypha, the Jewish Mishnah and related writings, the Qur’an, the writings of Martin Luther or John Milton, or the Dead Sea Scrolls.

There are broad perspectives as well as specific insights to be gained when we study other texts connected to and growing out of the biblical tradition. I think it is possible to generalize on the principle the Lord revealed to Joseph Smith in regard to his question about the Old Testament Apocrypha when he was engaged in his inspired revision of the Bible: “There are many things contained therein that are true, . . . [and] There are many things contained therein that are not true, . . . Therefore, whoso readeth it, let him understand, for the Spirit manifesteth truth; And whoso is enlightened by the Spirit shall obtain benefit therefrom; and whoso receiveth not by the Spirit, cannot be benefited” (D&C 91:1–6).

The Lord also counseled Joseph Smith and other Saints to “study and learn, and become acquainted with all good books, and with languages, tongues, and people” (D&C 90:15) and to “obtain a knowledge of history, and of countries, and of kingdoms, of laws of God and man, and all this for the salvation of Zion” (D&C 93:53; see also 88:77–80). Increasing one’s knowledge about the Dead Sea Scrolls and the history of the Jewish Second Temple period, for example, fits wonderfully well into the Lord’s “general education” perspective on learning about history, cultures, and peoples, both past and present.

While there are certainly priorities regarding various kinds of truth and knowledge, Latter-day Saints who focus *only* on doctrine in their scripture study seem to be out of step with the just-cited instruction in latter-day revelation. Doctrine is unquestionably most important, but much of Latter-day Saint scripture contains doctrine couched

in narrative that always includes cultural and other contextual background information. Knowing even a little bit of accurate information about these matters dramatically improves scriptural understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment.¹⁷

Returning to our focus on the Dead Sea Scrolls, as David Rolph Seely recently stated,

I think we [Latter-day Saints] should study the [nonbiblical] Dead Sea Scrolls just like we study [religious texts from] other religions that are not our own. If we go to them for added perspective and appreciation for the truth that we already have, we will gain greater insights. . . . But if we go to the scrolls to prove the Church is true, we won't be satisfied. . . . We need to remember that the scroll writers were people who found themselves in a crisis, with apostasy all around them. They sought a meaningful relationship with God, and they found something. What they found was not the fulness of the gospel, yet it is still worth studying. . . . But if we want to look just for parallels, then we would be better off just reading the scriptures.¹⁸

4. Further Academic Contributions by Latter-day Saint Scholars

As Professor Frank Cross observed over fifty years ago, “When the majority of these documents from the wilderness of the Dead Sea are published the main labors of research will not be done. Scholars will be occupied for decades in the tedious studies required to assimilate adequately the knowledge available in these new sources, and to relate this learning to biblical and ancillary disciplines.”¹⁹ Since the

17. Two more modern examples further help to illustrate this point: (1) Joseph Smith did not just provide us with a doctrinal exposition after seeing the Father and the Son in his “first vision,” but rather couched this revelation in the context of his life experiences so we could more fully appreciate the uniqueness of what he saw and the reaction he experienced as he shared this new understanding; (2) the church’s scripture committee produced short historical sketches, printed in italics before each revelation in the Doctrine and Covenants, to provide historical background for each revelation.

18. Seely, in “A Roundtable Discussion, Part 2,” 89.

19. Frank Moore Cross, *The Ancient Library of Qumran*, 3rd ed. (1st ed., 1958; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 20.

available Dead Sea Scrolls have now all been officially published, this type of thorough investigative work of which Cross spoke continues and will continue for a long time to come.²⁰

Latter-day Saint scholars can and will continue to contribute to scholarship on the Dead Sea Scrolls. There is no reason that interested and well-trained Latter-day Saint scholars cannot make important contributions to better understanding such issues as (1) the larger Jewish context of John the Baptist's and Jesus's ministries; (2) the generally accepted connection between Qumran (the site) and the scrolls; (3) the seemingly Essene nature of the Qumran community and the question of the community's relationship to Essenes living elsewhere throughout Palestine; (4) the specific question of Qumran's status—the sole center or hub of sectarian activity or merely one of several such centers?²¹—as well as the proposed relationship between the Qumran community and so-called Enochic Judaism;²² (5) the matter of which scrolls were copied at Qumran and which ones were brought there, from where, when, and why; (6) the ongoing questions about the nature and content of a canon of scripture in the Qumran community; and (7) the nature of messianic conceptions among Jesus's followers and the Qumran community, including the significance of such scroll fragments as 4Q246 (the so-called Son of God text) and 4Q521 (Messianic Apocalypse).²³

20. It has long been claimed that there are some scroll fragments not available to scholars to publish. For example, Fields, *Dead Sea Scrolls: A Full History*, 157, claims that “there are as many as 16 Hebrew biblical fragments and one fragment of Enoch languishing in a vault in Switzerland, 140 Greek fragments in Jerusalem, and a large fragment of Genesis elsewhere, for whose purchase I have not been able to get one penny despite four years of work, scores of letters and meetings, and hundreds of dollars' worth of phone calls.”

21. This latter position is favored by Collins in his recent *Beyond the Qumran Community*, 10.

22. Gabriele Boccaccini, *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), first postulated that the Qumran community was a “radical, dissident” offshoot from the “mainstream” Essene movement, which he labels Enochic Judaism (p. 16).

23. For a recent review of messianic texts in the Bible, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and related texts, see Adela Yarbro Collins and John J. Collins, *King and Messiah as Son of God: Divine, Human, and Angelic Messianic Figures in Biblical and Related Literature* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008); see also John J. Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*:

There are still many important insights to be gained and contributions to be made in Qumran and Dead Sea Scroll studies, as well as in the greater context of late Second Temple Judaism. The official publication of all the known Dead Sea Scroll fragments allows scholars to more confidently review their methodology and undertake various types of intertextual and interdisciplinary studies of the scrolls and the Qumran community.²⁴ To fully participate in such work requires a person's commitment of energy, time, and money to receive quality academic training in a recognized graduate program. I trust that Latter-day Saints who currently are graduate students or will be in the future will make important contributions to the academic study of the scrolls and will thus be in a good position to help further inform other Latter-day Saints who are interested in Qumran and the scrolls.

5. Improved Readings of Biblical Texts

Joseph Smith's statement that Latter-day Saints "believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly" (Article of Faith 8) must of necessity include the factor of its accurate *transmission*, not just the accurate translation or rendition of it from an ancient language to a modern one. To this end the church included notes in the 1979 Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Version of the Old Testament that provide more accurate or more modern renditions of over five hundred passages. These are introduced with the abbreviation "HEB." These four examples provide an illustration of this practice: Genesis 1:1, note c; 2:2, note b; Exodus 2:3, note a; and 2:25, note a. Occasionally, the Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Version of the Old Testament provides a citation to a textual reading preserved in the Septuagint (often abbreviated LXX), the translation of the Hebrew scriptures into Greek produced by Jews living in Alexandria, Egypt, in the third and second centuries BC. Examples of

The Messiahs of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Ancient Literature (New York: Doubleday, 1995).

24. See, for example, the recent publication by Maxine L. Grossman, ed., *Rediscovering the Dead Sea Scrolls: An Assessment of Old and New Approaches and Methods* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010).

the sixteen occurrences of “Septuagint” in the footnotes of the Latter-day Saint edition of the KJV Old Testament include Genesis 48:14, note b, and 1 Kings 11:32, note a.

Given this effort by the church’s scripture committee to help readers more clearly and accurately understand the text of the KJV, I wonder if the day will come when such helpful footnotes will also include “DSS” or “QUM” or “HEB DSS,” followed by a reading from one of the biblical texts from the Qumran caves that seems to provide a more accurate rendition of scripture.²⁵ Such an enterprise is somewhat subjective (what are the most important variant readings?) and takes time and money the church may be unwilling to dedicate to the Bible footnotes at this time. Either way, Latter-day Saint scholars can help by highlighting in their own writings some of the Old Testament passages that are better understood with help from the biblical texts belonging to the Dead Sea Scrolls.

I hasten to point out that none of the Qumran copies of biblical texts include any startling insights or new doctrines compared to what is preserved in our canonical Bible. Neither Zenos nor Neum, for example, is mentioned in the Dead Sea Scrolls, nor are important lost passages of Isaiah found.²⁶ The content damage that occurred to books of the Old Testament had primarily already taken place by the first century BC, and the writings of earlier prophets such as Zenos had apparently disappeared; at any rate they are nowhere to be found among the religious texts known as the Dead Sea Scrolls.

25. See Donald W. Parry, “The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible,” in this issue, pp. 1–27.

26. Interestingly, modern translations of the book of Isaiah now routinely follow 1QIsa^a and other Qumran texts for several passages in which the Hebrew Masoretic Text is deemed problematic. Examples include Isaiah 14:4 and 49:12, 24. The challenge for Latter-day Saints in such cases as those just cited is that the Book of Mormon (2 Nephi 24:4 and 1 Nephi 21:12, 24, respectively, for the examples given) follows the KJV readings in these passages. The KJV utilized the Hebrew Masoretic Text, the readings of which recent translators have rejected in certain, problematic instances. This can generate a number of questions for Latter-day Saints, who are prone to accept the passages of Isaiah in the Book of Mormon as accurately reflecting the text of Isaiah. For examples of instances in which readings in 1QIsa^a agree with the Book of Mormon against the KJV, see Parry and Ricks, *Questions and Responses*, 44–46.

Centuries before the Qumran community existed, in Jeremiah and Lehi's day (the late 600s BC), Jeremiah accused some scribes of altering the text of scripture: "How can you say, 'We are wise, and the law of the Lord is with us,' when, in fact, the false pen of the scribes has made it into a lie?" (Jeremiah 8:8 NRSV).²⁷ It seems that the prophecy in 1 Nephi 13:23–29 refers primarily to the New Testament and secondarily to *further* corruption of the books of the Hebrew Bible, which occurred after the textual corruptions and the removal of the writings of specific prophets (like Zenos) that had taken place in the centuries *prior* to Jesus's mortal ministry. Most of the hundreds of different textual readings contained in the biblical texts from Qumran preserve relatively minor variants.

Having said this, there are a number of Old Testament passages that can be more fully or accurately understood with the aid of the biblical Qumran scrolls and fragments, which are the oldest surviving copies of biblical texts.²⁸ Three examples must suffice here. Although examples can be found throughout the Old Testament, the first two come from 1 Samuel. As has been stated elsewhere,

Scholars have long recognized that the book of Samuel in the traditional Hebrew Bible—the Masoretic Text—contains a number of mistakes and other textual challenges. Fragments of four copies of Samuel were discovered among the Dead Sea Scrolls. One of these—4QSam^a, copied about 50 BC—has contributed significantly to better understanding the textual history of the book of Samuel. While 4QSam^a often agrees with the Masoretic Text, it also preserves readings that

27. While this is the most common translation of this challenging verse, some modern versions (such as that of the New Jewish Publication Society) render it somewhat differently. The NRSV translation is cited here because the sense of the verse is clearer than in the KJV.

28. Interested readers can pursue further examples in such publications as Abegg, Flint, and Ulrich, *Dead Sea Scrolls Bible*, and Harold Scanlin, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and Modern Translations of the Old Testament* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1993). Scanlin's work is cited by Donald W. Parry in "The Contribution of the Dead Sea Scrolls to Biblical Understanding," in *LDS Perspectives on the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 64–65, and by Ricks and Parry, *Questions and Responses*, 47–48.

agree with the Greek Septuagint against the Masoretic Text and sometimes preserves independent readings not attested elsewhere. Such textual variants, found in 4QSam^a and other biblical manuscripts from Qumran, highlight the status of the biblical text at the turn of the era. They further illustrate that readings in the Septuagint that differ from the Masoretic Text were often based on Hebrew manuscripts that likewise differed from proto-Masoretic Text manuscripts.²⁹

The first example is 1 Samuel 1:22. The KJV, following the Masoretic Text, presents Hannah saying about her young son Samuel: “I will bring him [to Shiloh], that he may appear before the Lord, and there abide for ever.” However, the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), for example, reads: “I will bring him, that he may appear in the presence of the Lord, and remain there for ever; I will offer him as a nazirite for all time.” The extra wording in the NRSV at the end of the verse, containing Hannah’s explicit mention that she would offer Samuel as a Nazirite, is based on the occurrence of this phrase in Hebrew in 4QSam^a; the NRSV translation committee accepted it as a legitimate textual reading that had been lost from the traditional Hebrew Bible.³⁰

The second example is 1 Samuel 10:27–11:1. Again, the KJV is based on the traditional Masoretic Text, in which there is a distinct lack of transition between the narrative at the end of 1 Samuel 10 and the beginning of 1 Samuel 11. However, 4QSam^a contains a few sentences here about the mutilation of the right eyes of many Israelites by Nahash, king of the Ammonites, which help readers make better sense of the episode. Again, the NRSV and other recent translations have incorporated this text from a scroll into their Old Testament.³¹

29. Holzapfel, Pike, and Seely, *Jehovah and the World of the Old Testament*, 199.

30. See Abegg, Flint, and Ulrich, *Dead Sea Scrolls Bible*, 215.

31. See Abegg, Flint, and Ulrich, *Dead Sea Scrolls Bible*, 224–25; and Holzapfel, Pike, and Seely, *Jehovah and the World of the Old Testament*, 199. See this latter citation also for a summary of the textual differences regarding the height of Goliath, the Philistine warrior killed by David.

The final example is Deuteronomy 32:43, the last verse of the so-called Song of Moses, a poetic rendition of praise for Jehovah and a warning of the consequences the Israelites would receive if they broke their covenant with him. The differences between the KJV translation, which accurately renders the traditional received Hebrew text, and the NRSV, based upon 4QDeut^a, which itself exhibits similarities with the Septuagint text of this verse, are underlined:

KJV: Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, and to his people.

NRSV: Praise, O heavens, his people, worship him, all you gods! For he will avenge the blood of his children, and take vengeance on his adversaries; he will repay those who hate him, and cleanse the land for his people.³²

Not surprisingly, there are also textual readings in some of the Qumran biblical scrolls that appear to be incorrect. For example, 1QIsa^b does not contain the end of Isaiah 60:19 and the beginning of verse 20 as found in 1QIsa^a and in the traditional Hebrew Masoretic Text. It appears that the scribe who copied this scroll inadvertently skipped from a phrase in verse 19 to the same phrase in verse 20, omitting the words in between. No one argues that this shorter reading in 1QIsa^b is correct or preferable, but rather that it is a mistake. This reminds us that there are corruptions in and challenges with the biblical texts from Qumran, even though they are the earliest exemplars that we have, just as there are in all other ancient biblical manuscripts.

Helping Latter-day Saints better understand the nature and value of the *biblical* texts found at Qumran and elsewhere in the Judean desert is a productive enterprise. It deserves further, ongoing attention from Latter-day Saints scholars of the Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls.³³

32. See Abegg, Flint, and Ulrich, *Dead Sea Scrolls Bible*, 192–93.

33. BYU professors David Rolph Seely, Donald W. Parry, and myself, as well as others, have emphasized this point on various occasions over several years, but the need to reemphasize it continues. Similarly, there are nonbiblical Dead Sea Scrolls passages that

Conclusion

The Dead Sea Scrolls provide a wonderful window onto the history of the biblical text and the past convictions of some Second Temple period Jews. Understandably, they also encourage Latter-day Saints to look forward to the time when the Lord will provide additional scripture to his restored church. Elder Dallin H. Oaks emphasized this latter point in general conference a few years ago when he observed,

We conclude from this [review of prophecies about the future coming forth of more scripture, as found in 1 Nephi 13:38–39 and 2 Nephi 29:8, 11–13] that the Lord will eventually cause the inspired teachings He has given to His children in various nations to be brought forth for the benefit of all people. This will include accounts of the visit of the resurrected Lord to what we call the lost tribes of Israel and His revelations to all the seed of Abraham. The finding of the Dead Sea Scrolls shows one way this can occur.³⁴

His statement seems to indicate Elder Oaks considers it feasible that some portion of future, additional scripture will be made known via the human discovery of ancient manuscripts, that they will not just be delivered by an angel from the Lord to the president of the church. I do *not* consider Elder Oaks's statement to indicate he considers the nonbiblical texts of the Dead Sea Scrolls to be scripture in their own right, on a par with the contents of the Latter-day Saint canon. His deliberate choice of words—"the finding of the Dead Sea Scrolls"—emphasizes *one manner* in which future scripture *may* be found. Elder Oaks did not claim the nonbiblical Dead Sea Scrolls should be viewed by Latter-day Saints as legitimate scripture.³⁵

The Dead Sea Scrolls continue to fascinate and educate many people. I hope that well-prepared Latter-day Saint scholars will continue

help illuminate certain New Testament texts. Helping Latter-day Saints better appreciate and understand these connections is also valuable. See in this issue, for example, Andrew C. Skinner, "The Dead Sea Scrolls and the World of Jesus," 49–82.

34. Dallin H. Oaks, "All Men Everywhere," *Ensign*, May 2006, 80.

35. I emphasize here that this is *my* understanding of Elder Oaks's comment. I have not consulted him on this matter to gain further clarification.

to engage in scrolls research and to provide an ever-increasing collection of accessible materials about the scrolls for a Latter-day Saint audience. And I hope that interested Latter-day Saints will take the initiative to more fully understand these miraculously preserved ancient texts, to learn about their limitations, and to take greater advantage of what they do have to offer the curious and careful student of the Bible and antiquity.

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THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS AND THE WORLD OF JESUS

Andrew C. Skinner

The Dead Sea Scrolls, according to the late Professor Yigael Yadin, “are undoubtedly the most important discovery found in Israel in the field of the Bible and history of Judaism and Christianity.”¹ Indeed, these manuscript discoveries in the middle decades of the twentieth century (1947–56) provide us a window into the life and times of Jesus of Nazareth and his disciples as chronicled in the New Testament. They shed light on the birth of rabbinic Judaism and Christianity, as well as on the Qumran covenant community itself. And though there were “major differences between the Qumran literature and early Christian literature and between the Qumran community and the early Christian community, nevertheless, they were also remarkably similar in theological vocabulary, in some major doctrinal tenets, and in several organizational and ritual practices.”² By looking at some of these parallels we may therefore come to more fully understand and appreciate the world of Jesus.

1. As cited in Hanan Eshel, *Qumran* (Jerusalem: Carta, 2009), 7.

2. James C. VanderKam, “The Scrolls and Early Christianity,” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls* (Washington, DC: Biblical Archaeology Society, 2007), 66.

Qumran and Christianity: Early Theories

As early as 1950, only three years after Cave 1 was discovered with its treasure trove of manuscripts, the French epigrapher André Dupont-Sommer began drawing connections between the Qumran community and Christianity. He argued that Qumran's leader, the Teacher of Righteousness, looked a lot like Jesus.

The Galilean Master . . . appears in many respects as an astonishing reincarnation of the Master of Justice [the Teacher of Righteousness in the scrolls]. Like the latter He preached penitence, poverty, humility, love of one's neighbour, chastity. Like him, He prescribed the observance of the Law of Moses, the whole Law, but the Law finished and perfected, thanks to His own revelations. Like him He was the Elect and the Messiah of God, the Messiah redeemer of the world. Like him He was the object of the hostility of the priests, the party of the Sadducees. Like him He was condemned and put to death. Like him He pronounced judgement on Jerusalem, which was taken and destroyed by the Romans for having put Him to death. Like him, at the end of time, He will be the supreme judge. Like him He founded a Church whose adherents fervently awaited His glorious return.³

Dupont-Sommer stopped short of identifying Jesus as the Teacher of Righteousness, the legendary leader of the Qumran community; he also did not explicitly equate the Qumran covenanters with the Christian movement. However, Dupont-Sommer's ruminations greatly influenced American writer Edmund Wilson, who made the next leap. He flatly claimed that the Qumran sect and early Christianity were "the successive phases of a [single] movement,"⁴ that Qumran "more than Bethlehem or Nazareth [was] the cradle of

3. André Dupont-Sommer, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A Preliminary Survey* (New York: Macmillan, 1952), 99.

4. Edmund Wilson, *The Scrolls from the Dead Sea* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1955), 95.

Christianity.”⁵ Just a year later, in 1956, John Allegro, who was a member of the international editorial team working on the scrolls, gave a series of lectures on BBC radio regarding his interpretation of the scrolls’ contents. In one lecture he described how the Wicked Priest, opponent of the Teacher of Righteousness, had delivered the latter into the hands of the Gentiles (Romans) to be crucified.

When the Jewish king had left and peace descended once more on Qumran, the scattered community returned and took down the broken body of their Master, to stand guard over it until the Judgment Day. For they believed that the terrible events of their time were surely heralding the Visitation of God Himself. . . . In that glorious day, they believed their Master would rise again, and lead his faithful flock, the people of the New Testament, as they called themselves, to a new and purified Jerusalem.⁶

After John Allegro’s BBC radio broadcasts, his colleagues on the scrolls publication team wrote a letter to the *Times* of London refuting Allegro’s ideas and, though not intending to do so, answering the earlier assertions and bold statements of Edmund Wilson. The letter, signed by five of the greatest names in early scrolls research—Roland de Vaux, Jozef Milik, John Strugnell, Patrick Skehan, and Jean Starcky—reads:

It has come to our attention that considerable controversy is being caused by certain broadcast statements of Mr. John Allegro, of the University of Manchester, concerning the Dead Sea Scrolls. We refer particularly to such statements as imply that in these scrolls a close connection is to be found between a supposed crucifixion of the “teacher of righteousness” of the Essene sect and the Crucifixion and the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. The announced opinion of Mr. Allegro might seem to

5. Wilson, *Scrolls from the Dead Sea*, 98.

6. J. M. Allegro, Broadcast Talk for BBC Northern Home Service, 23 January 1956, as reported in Judith Anne Brown, *John Marco Allegro: The Maverick of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005), 77.

have special weight, since he is one of the group of scholars engaged in editing yet-unpublished writings from Qumran.

In view of the broad repercussions of his statements, and the fact that the materials on which they are based are not yet available to the public, we, his colleagues, feel obliged to make the following statement. There are no unpublished texts at the disposal of Mr. Allegro other than those of which the originals are at present in the Palestine Archaeological Museum where we are working. Upon the appearance in the press of citations from Mr. Allegro's broadcasts we have reviewed all the pertinent materials, published and unpublished. We are unable to see in the texts the "findings" of Mr. Allegro.

We find no crucifixion of the "teacher," no deposition from the cross, and no "broken body of their Master" to be stood guard over until Judgment Day. Therefore there is no "well-defined Essenic pattern into which Jesus of Nazareth fits," as Mr. Allegro is alleged in one report to have said. It is our conviction that either he has misread the texts or he has built up a chain of conjectures which the materials do not support.⁷

Closer to our own day, three other scholars have put forward ideas that resemble those of the 1950s. Robert Eisenman of California State at Long Beach claims that Qumran was a community that existed for centuries and included Ezra, Judas Maccabee, John the Baptist, Jesus, and James the brother of Jesus. Barbara Thiering of the University of Sydney, Australia, argues that John the Baptist was the Teacher of Righteousness and Jesus was the Wicked Priest mentioned in the Qumran texts. J. L. Teicher of Cambridge University believes that the apostle Paul was the Wicked Priest.⁸ Though few, if any, authorities on the scrolls are persuaded by these propositions, there are certainly connections between the Dead Sea Scrolls and early Christianity. But

7. Quoted in Hershel Shanks, *The Copper Scroll and the Search for the Temple Treasure* (Washington, DC: Biblical Archaeology Society, 2007), 31–32.

8. These positions are summarized in VanderKam, "Scrolls and Early Christianity," 66.

we must be careful to follow the evidence and not overstep it—and there is plenty of evidence, with no need to invent more. (In 1966 a work of over 300 pages, *Qumran und das Neue Testament*, was published by Herbert Braun; he attempted to list every passage in the New Testament for which a parallel existed at Qumran.)⁹ Because the Essenes at Qumran and the early Christians in Galilee and Jerusalem shared a common tradition in Judaism and lived on the same soil of Roman Judea, we should expect to find similar ideas and practices between the two without needing to manufacture identifications for the anonymous figures mentioned in the scrolls.

Common Scripture

No known figures from the New Testament are explicitly mentioned in the Dead Sea Scrolls. No copies of clear and undisputed New Testament texts have been found at Qumran. At least two scholars claim to have identified tiny fragments from Cave 7 as New Testament passages. But these identifications have been rejected by almost all Dead Sea Scroll scholars.¹⁰ One of the largest of the fragments, 7Q5, preserves no more than twenty partial or whole letters. The only full word is *kai* (Greek “and”). Yet, Carsten Thiede argued that 7Q5 can be reconstructed as Mark 6:52–53 (Jesus walking on water). But to make this claim fit the evidence, Thiede was required to posit an unattested textual variant for Mark 6 and an unusual grammatical construction—not convincing.¹¹ The best recent scholarship on the Greek fragments from Cave 7 has concluded that several of them are from the pseudepigraphal book of *1 Enoch*.¹² This identification underscores the importance of *1 Enoch* for the Qumran community. It was perhaps regarded as part of their canon, which was more expansive

9. Herbert Braun, *Qumran und das Neue Testament* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1966).

10. See two summaries; the briefer is Timothy H. Lim, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 107. The more comprehensive is James VanderKam and Peter Flint, *The Meaning of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (New York: HarperSan Francisco, 2002), 311–20.

11. Lim, *Dead Sea Scrolls: A Very Short Introduction*, 107–8.

12. VanderKam and Flint, *Meaning of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 316–20.

than the canon subscribed to by almost all Jewish and Christian communities today.

Cave 7 is an unusual repository since it preserved only Greek texts written on papyrus, whereas most of the other Qumran texts were written on leather in Hebrew or Aramaic. This, too, is significant for our understanding of Jesus's world. For in the words of Bruce Chilton, "it was often said that Jesus spoke Greek rather than Aramaic, but the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls shows that Aramaic was used during the first century and earlier, and the discovery of other scrolls near Qumran establishes that the usage of Aramaic persisted there until the second century C.E."¹³

The prominence of certain biblical texts at Qumran parallels the way Jesus used the Bible in his ministry. The Dead Sea Scrolls are usually divided into three categories, based on content: biblical texts, apocryphal and pseudepigraphal texts (the category into which *1 Enoch* fits), and sectarian texts or documents. Biblical texts comprise about 25 percent of the total number of manuscripts, or portions of manuscripts, found. Complete copies or fragments of copies of every book of the Hebrew Bible (Christian Old Testament) have been found except for the book of Esther. Copies of Deuteronomy, Isaiah, and Psalms were the most numerous of the biblical texts discovered. Among biblical scrolls, 30 surviving manuscripts of Deuteronomy were found, 21 of Isaiah, and 36 of the Psalms.¹⁴ Significantly, Jesus also quoted more often from Deuteronomy, Isaiah, and Psalms than from other books of the Old Testament. Perhaps this reflects a common didactic principle in Judaism of this era, or perhaps it reflects a general mind-set possessed by eschatological communities (groups embracing a theology focused on the last days and end of times). It certainly tells us how these two messianic congregations valued or ranked books of the Hebrew Bible.

13. Bruce Chilton, "Jesus, a Galilean Rabbi," in *Who Was Jesus? A Jewish-Christian Dialogue* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 155.

14. Emanuel Tov, "Categorized List of the 'Biblical Texts,'" in *The Texts from the Judaean Desert: Indices and An Introduction to the Discoveries in the Judaean Desert Series*, DJD XXXIX, ed. Emanuel Tov (Oxford: Clarendon, 2002), 167–76.

One of the real treasure troves from Qumran was found in Cave 1. It contained two scrolls of Isaiah. The first one, the Great Isaiah Scroll, was found preserved in a clay jar, and is a complete manuscript of the entire book, all 66 chapters, and measures 7.34 meters in length. The second one is only fragmentary. The texts of the two differ in style. The complete scroll is described as coarser than the second, the scribe less exacting over spelling, exchanging difficult words for more common ones, and sometimes incorporating Aramaic words into the text. The scribe of the second Isaiah scroll copied a text which followed the Masoretic text very closely.¹⁵ The Masoretic text (Hebrew *masora* meaning “traditional”) is the standardized version of the Hebrew text from which the King James Old Testament was produced. Obviously, as the artifactual evidence demonstrates, Isaiah was very important to the covenant makers at Qumran. In this regard, Latter-day Saints are reminded of Jesus’s words to the Nephites soon after his resurrection: “a commandment I give unto you that ye search these things diligently; for great are the words of Isaiah” (3 Nephi 23:1). This suggests the importance of Isaiah to the early church in the Old World in Jesus’s day as well.

The Qumran covenanters “interpreted Scripture above all *as relating to themselves in the present*.”¹⁶ A prime example is the Habakkuk Peshier where the Assyrians and Egyptians were reinterpreted as references to the Seleucid and Ptolemaic empires, which were contemporary with the early Qumran community. Another example is Ezekiel. The Qumran inhabitants understood themselves in terms of Ezekiel’s prophecy. The site of Qumran was chosen as their living site because that is where “Ezekiel’s mighty, healing river would flow into the Dead Sea,”¹⁷ healing it—as Joseph Smith also said¹⁸—and inaugurating a new Eden, heaven on earth. This interpretive principle resonates with

15. Eshel, *Qumran*, 18.

16. David Noel Freedman and Pam Fox Kuhlken, *What Are the Dead Sea Scrolls and Why Do They Matter?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007), 101, emphasis in the original.

17. Freedman and Kuhlken, *What Are the Dead Sea Scrolls?*, 103.

18. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, comp. Joseph Fielding Smith (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1970), 286.

Latter-day Saints because of the “likening” principle articulated by Nephi: “for I did liken all scriptures unto us, that it might be for our profit and learning” (1 Nephi 19:23).

This “likening principle” was not foreign to the authors of the synoptic gospels. This is apparent as they report on John the Baptist’s ministry as a forerunner. All three quote Isaiah 40:3 and apply it to John, stating that he came preaching in the wilderness of Judea like “the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight” (Matthew 3:3).¹⁹ In other words, like a royal herald, announcing the coming of the king and clearing the path before him, so came John preparing the way for Jesus, the true king of the Jews.

But the synoptic authors do more here than just liken scripture to their own circumstances. They use the very same passage to describe John’s mission as the Qumran community used to describe its mission—Isaiah 40:3. The *Community Rule* quotes this passage to affirm that the community was literally fulfilling the prophet’s injunction by living in the wilderness and preparing the way of the Lord through study of the law:

And when these become members of the Community in Israel according to all these rules, they shall separate from the habitation of unjust men and shall go into the wilderness to prepare there the way of Him; as it is written, *Prepare in the wilderness the way of . . . , make straight in the desert a path for our God* (Isa. xl, 3). This (path) is the study of the Law which He commanded by the hand of Moses, that they may do according to all that has been revealed from age to age, and as the Prophets have revealed by His Holy Spirit.²⁰

Of course one notes that both the prophets and the Holy Spirit were immensely important in the early Church of Jesus Christ, as well as at Qumran. In fact, these are major themes in both groups. However,

19. See Mark 1:3 and Luke 3:4.

20. *Community Rule* VIII, 12–15, in Geza Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, rev. ed. (London: Penguin Books, 2004), 109, emphasis in the original.

it is the connection between John the Baptist and the Qumran covenanters that is most striking in this discussion. John comes preaching in the wilderness of Judea—the very location of the Dead Sea Scroll community. He is described as the embodiment of the very same text that the Qumran community believed itself to embody or exemplify. He proclaims his message with the same eschatological fervency as the Qumran covenanters.²¹ He preaches and performs the baptism of repentance, which parallels the Qumran concept of ritual immersion for cleansing and sanctification. From the *Community Rule* we read that a member of the community “shall neither be purified by atonement, nor cleansed by purifying waters, nor sanctified by seas and rivers, nor washed clean with any ablution” if “he despises the precepts of God.”²² Ritual immersion at Qumran was explicitly associated with the tenets of repentance and sanctification. Also, “They shall not enter the water to partake of the pure Meal of the men of holiness [saints], for they shall not be cleansed unless they turn from their wickedness: for all who transgress His word are unclean.”²³

The most striking feature of the Qumran archaeological site is its complex gravity-flow system of interconnected cisterns and decantation pools—in the midst of a desert landscape. Almost every scholar believes that at least some of these cisterns were used as *miqveot*, ritual immersion pools. While the argument cannot be proved that John the Baptist was associated with the Essenes at Qumran, his circumstances certainly are suggestive. William H. Brownlee was among the first to propose that John the Baptist may well have been raised by the Essenes at Qumran, who, says Josephus, adopted the young children of others and taught them their principles.²⁴

21. See C. Marvin Pate, *Communities of the Last Days* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2000), 81. Compare, for example, Luke 3:1–20 with 1QS III–IV (see Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 100–103).

22. *Community Rule* III, in Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 100–101.

23. *Community Rule* IV, in Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 104.

24. Josephus, *Jewish War* 2.120; see William H. Brownlee, “John the Baptist in the New Light of Ancient Scrolls,” in *The Scrolls and the New Testament*, ed. Krister Stendahl (New York: Crossroad, 1992), 33–53.

Others have confirmed that “no other person in the NT [New Testament] is as likely a candidate for being connected with the Qumran community as John the Baptist.”²⁵ The parallels between John the Baptist and the Qumran community, as we have seen, are quite remarkable (geography, association with Isaiah 40:3, eschatological fervency of messages, and ritual-cleansing practices). But the final point is also the most significant. In the end, John did not associate himself with the messianic expectation at Qumran, but the messianic expectation centered in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. At Qumran “there was the expectancy of three great eschatological figures who would inaugurate the Messianic age: a prophetic forerunner, an anointed [messianic] priest, and an anointed [messianic] king.”²⁶ John identified Jesus as the sole Messiah (John 1:1–29) and chose to answer the call to serve as the latter’s prophet-priest forerunner.

Theology and Language

It has been argued that concepts and language from Qumran texts were specifically appropriated by New Testament authors and edited into their texts. For example, 2 Corinthians 6:14–15 and 17 reads: “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? . . . Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.”

This passage sounds very much like Qumran phraseology with its light-darkness dualism, opposition to unbelief and impurity, and its mention of Belial, identified in Qumran texts as “the Prince of Darkness.”²⁷ In the New Testament, the term *Belial* occurs only in 2 Corinthians 6:15, but is plentiful at Qumran in several texts, especially the *Hymns Scroll*. In fact, the *Damascus Document* refers to “the Prince of Lights and Belial,” which, again, reflects the

25. Pate, *Communities of the Last Days*, 81.

26. Brownlee, “John the Baptist,” 44.

27. *Testament of Amram*, frg. 2, in Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 572.

light-darkness duality.²⁸ This led one scholar, Pierre Benoit, to call 2 Corinthians 6:14–17 “a meteor fallen from the heaven of Qumran into Paul’s epistle.”²⁹

The idea of a worldview shaped by dualism is an especially striking and poignant parallel between the early Christians and the Dead Sea Scrolls community since in the Old Testament “there is really no predominant dualism.”³⁰ Raymond Brown has stated,

The outstanding resemblance between the Scrolls and the New Testament seems to be the modified dualism which is prevalent in both. By dualism we mean the doctrine that the universe is under the dominion of two opposing principles, one good and the other evil. Modified dualism adds the corrective that these principles are not uncreated, but are both dependent on God the Creator. . . . All men are aligned in two opposing forces, the one of light and truth, the other of darkness and perversion, with each faction ruled by a spirit or prince.³¹

Light-dark dualism is a well-attested theme in the writings of John. In the opening verses of the prologue to his gospel he refers to Jesus as the life which “was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not” (John 1:4–5). John details Jesus’s exchange with Nicodemus in which the theme of light versus darkness plays an important role:

He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither

28. *Damascus Document IV*, in Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 133.

29. Quoted in Freedman and Kuhlken, *What Are the Dead Sea Scrolls?*, 94.

30. Raymond E. Brown, “The Qumran Scrolls and the Johannine Gospel and Epistles,” in *Scrolls and the New Testament*, 184.

31. Brown, “Qumran Scrolls,” 184–85.

cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God. (John 3:18–21)

During the last week of his ministry, John reports Jesus's teachings to the people, which featured light-dark dualism. "Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them" (John 12:35–36).

John's message is clear: Jesus is the light, and rejection of him is darkness. But absent from this construct is the kind of militant categorization seen in the Qumran texts. At Qumran, every person automatically falls into one of two categories: the Children of Light or the Children of Darkness. "Basically, everyone who was not an Essene—a Child or Son of Light—would be purged from existence, destroyed forever by God. And the Essenes—as 'merciful' Children of Light—appeared to relish this thought."³²

Other examples (among many) of New Testament passages that are directly linked to Qumran texts, and thus indicate that New Testament figures either borrowed from Qumran texts or drew from a common fund of truths, may be found in the Sermon on the Mount. First, Matthew 5:3 reports that Jesus used the phrase *poor in spirit* in his first beatitude. This same phrase is found at Qumran in a Cave 1 text, the *War Scroll*, or more properly, the *War of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness* (note again the light-dark dualism). But, impressively, the phrase is found nowhere else. The text from Qumran reads: "Among the poor in spirit [there is power] over the hard of heart, and by the perfect of way all the nations of wickedness have come to an end: not one of their mighty men stands, but we are the remnant [of Thy people.]"³³

Jesus uses the phrase *poor in spirit* to describe the qualities of the exalted—those who inherit the kingdom of heaven. In doing so, he

32. Freedman and Kuhlken, *What Are the Dead Sea Scrolls?*, 47–48.

33. *War Scroll* XIV, 7 (1QM), in Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 180.

also gives to his disciples something of “a revelation of his own character.”³⁴ The intent at Qumran is different, where the overriding concern is power and victory over the sons of darkness (basically, everyone outside the Qumran community). This led Kurt Schubert to state that the “first of the beatitudes . . . indicates a conscious awareness of Essene thought and an intention of Jesus to make clear his stand against their sect. . . . Accordingly, on the basis of the introductory words of the Sermon on the Mount alone, it does not seem improbable that Jesus’s audience consisted of people who might have been familiar with Essene teaching.”³⁵

In support of Schubert’s contention, another passage in the sermon, following the Beatitudes, appears quite striking. In a series of formulaic injunctions (“You have heard it said . . . but, I say unto you . . .”), Jesus seems to be correcting the Qumran doctrine of love. “Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you” (Matthew 5:43–44).

Here Jesus flatly contradicts the idea that people should love their neighbors and hate their enemies. However, hating one’s enemies is precisely what the *Community Rule* advocates in two separate passages: “Love all that He [God] has chosen and hate all that he has rejected,”³⁶ and “These are the rules of conduct for the Master in those times with respect to His loving and hating. Everlasting hatred in a spirit of secrecy for the men of perdition!”³⁷ Of course, men of perdition included basically all who were not part of the Qumran community.

The very form of instruction known as beatitudes has also been found at Qumran. A Cave 4 text, 4Q525, called *Beatitudes*, or the *Blessing of the Wise*, contains beatitudes similar to those found in

34. Harold B. Lee, *Decisions for Successful Living* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1973), 56.

35. Kurt Schubert, “The Sermon on the Mount and the Qumran Texts,” in *Scrolls and the New Testament*, 121–22.

36. *Community Rule* I, 4, in Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 98.

37. *Community Rule* IX, 21–23, in Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 111.

Matthew 5:1–12 or Luke 6:20–23. The word *beatitude* is derived from the Latin *beatus*, meaning “to be happy, fortunate, or blessed,” which is the equivalent of the Greek *makarioi* or the Hebrew *’ashrē*. The expression “Blessed is . . .” or “Blessed are . . .” rests on an ancient Hebrew formula known by Jesus and his followers as well as Qumranites and other Jews; it is found especially in Israel’s psalms. The very first psalm is a case in point: “*Blessed* is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful” (Psalm 1:1).³⁸ So, when Jesus presented his beatitudes, he, like the Qumran inhabitants, was adopting the language of ancient Israel’s great lyric prophet-kings and inspired poets to teach his profound message. Beatitudes, as a didactic form, are also found in intertestamental and rabbinic literature.³⁹ But Jesus put a different twist on them.

A second passage in the Sermon on the Mount for which there is a striking parallel at Qumran concerns the “radical rejection of oaths.”⁴⁰ Jesus said, “Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God’s throne: Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more

38. See the discussion in Andrew C. Skinner, “Israel’s Ancient Psalms: Cornerstone of the Beatitudes,” in *The Sermon on the Mount*, ed. Gaye Strathearn (Provo, UT: BYU Religious Studies Center, 2010), 59–65.

39. Some examples of beatitudes in rabbinic literature include the following: “and R. Johanan b. Zakkai said . . . ‘Happy [blessed] are you, our father Abraham, that Eleazar b. Arakh came forth from your loins’” (T *Ḥagigah* 2:1); “R. Jose the priest went and told what had happened before R. Johanan b. Zakkai, and the latter said, ‘Happy [blessed] are you, happy is she who bore you, happy are my eyes that I have seen this’” (TB *Ḥagigah* 14b); “Happy [blessed] is the king who is praised in his house! Woe to the father who had to banish his children, and woe to the children who had to be banished from the table of their father” (TB *Berakhot* 3a). All of the foregoing are translated in Samuel T. Lachs, *A Rabbinic Commentary on the New Testament* (New York: KTAV, 1987), 70. For examples of beatitudes in intertestamental literature, see *Psalms of Solomon* 5:18; 6:1; 10:1, and Ben Sira 14:1; 25:8, 9.

40. Schubert, “Sermon on the Mount and the Qumran Texts,” 126.

than these cometh of evil” (Matthew 5:33–37). Josephus describes the Essenes’ refusal to swear an oath: “Any word of theirs has more force than an oath; swearing they avoid, regarding it as worse than perjury, for they say that one who is not believed without an appeal to God stands condemned already.”⁴¹ Herod himself excused the Essenes from taking an oath of allegiance.⁴² From the *Damascus Document* we read: “It is forbidden to swear by God’s name El, and by God’s name Adonai.”⁴³

A third passage from the Sermon on the Mount finds Jesus commanding his listeners to “resist not evil,” but to turn the other cheek (Matthew 5:38–39). The principle, if not the exact language, is also found at Qumran in *Community Rule*, where proper conduct for the covenanters is outlined: “I will pay to no man the reward of evil; I will pursue him with goodness. For judgement of all the living is with God and it is He who will render to man his reward.”⁴⁴

This last statement about God’s judgment reflects general Old Testament theology. Isaiah had proclaimed, “The Lord is a God of judgment” (Isaiah 30:18). Jesus and his followers shared with the people of Qumran a belief in God’s absolute sovereignty and right to judge. However, a major difference between Jesus’s disciples and Qumran covenanters was that Jesus’s disciples believed their Master to be that God and Judge. According to Jesus’s own declarations, God the Father “committed all judgment unto the Son” (John 5:22), and, therefore, the words which Jesus spoke “shall judge [humankind] in the last day” (John 12:48). Aside from this major difference, good works and deeds were very important in the teachings of both Jesus and the Qumran covenanters. And both spoke of the wicked as sons or men of perdition.⁴⁵ In Qumran texts as well as in the New Testament, “individuals were held responsible for their choices, the overarching plan of a sovereign God notwithstanding.”⁴⁶

41. Josephus, *Jewish War* 2.135.

42. Josephus, *Antiquities* 15.371.

43. Quoted in Schubert, “Sermon on the Mount and Qumran Texts,” 126.

44. *Community Rule* X, 17–18, in Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 113.

45. Compare *Community Rule* X, 19, with John 17:12.

46. Weston W. Fields, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A Short History* (Boston: Brill, 2006), 90.

The Temple

Unlike the Qumran covenanters, Jesus and his disciples were not a closed body of initiates living in the wilderness, but engaged with the population at large. Yet, both groups regarded the temple as being of paramount importance, a place of supreme sanctity, a place set apart from the world. From start to finish the temple occupies a central place in the New Testament. The story of Jesus's life and ministry begins in the temple with the vision given to Zacharias, John's father (Luke 1:5–22). The book of Revelation ends with John's startling announcement that in the celestial city of Jerusalem he “saw no temple therein” (Revelation 21:22). This is noteworthy precisely because the temple had always played a major role, one way or another, in both Jerusalem's and Israel's history. But in the celestial world, says John, “the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of [celestial Jerusalem]” (Revelation 21:22). During his mortal life, Jesus cleansed the temple twice.⁴⁷ He taught daily in the temple.⁴⁸ The great symbol of the end of the Mosaic dispensation, the end of the Aaronic order of the temple, the end of divinely sanctioned animal sacrifices, and thus the beginning of a new era, was the tearing of the veil of the temple into two pieces.⁴⁹ After his resurrection, Jesus commanded his apostles to stay in Jerusalem, at the temple, until they were endowed with power from on high—which they did (Luke 24:49, 53). Thus, the temple was of no small importance to Jesus and his followers.

The importance of the temple at Qumran is well known. Those who had formed the isolated desert community at Qumran did so because they believed that the Jerusalem temple's priesthood was corrupt, lax in ritual purity, and perpetuating a corrupted ritual calendar in the Holy City. Nevertheless, as the *Temple Scroll* indicates, the idea of a pure and undefiled temple in their midst remained their ideal. They awaited a restored temple at the end of time. In the meantime, they lived as though they were dwelling in the temple at all times,

47. See John 2:14 and Matthew 21:13.

48. See Matthew 26:55 and Luke 21:37.

49. Matthew 27:51; Mark 15:38; and Luke 23:45; see the discussion in Andrew C. Skinner, *Golgotha* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2004), 168–70.

seeking to make their community a large, open-air, virtual temple.⁵⁰ They wore white linen garments to symbolize the level of temple-like purity they sought to attain.⁵¹ They referred to the area where they ate their sacred meals as a holy temple. In fact, the covenanters believed they themselves constituted a temple, with “Israel” (the laymen of the community) as the holy place, and “Aaron” (the priests of the community) as the Holy of Holies.⁵²

When such men as these come to be in Israel, then shall the party of the *Yahad* truly be established, an “eternal planting” (*Jub.* 16:26), a temple for Israel, and—mystery!—a Holy of Holies for Aaron; true witnesses to justice, chosen by God’s will to atone for the land and to recompense the wicked their due. They will be “the tested wall, the precious cornerstone” (*Isa.* 28:16) whose foundations shall neither be shaken nor swayed, a fortress, a Holy of Holies for Aaron, all of them knowing the Covenant of Justice and thereby offering a sweet savor. They shall be a blameless and true house in Israel, upholding the covenant of eternal statutes. They shall be an acceptable sacrifice, atoning for the land and ringing in the verdict against evil, so that perversity ceases to exist.⁵³

Such unusual symbolism parallels the very view expressed by the apostle Paul to the Corinthian saints: “Know ye [Greek plural] not that ye [Greek plural] are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are” (1 Corinthians 3:16–17). Paul is not saying here that each individual member is a repository of the Holy Spirit, although he does mean that very thing in a latter passage (see 1 Corinthians 6:19–20). Rather, like the Qumranites, the group collectively is a sacred entity, and they are to live as though they

50. S. Kent Brown, “The Dead Sea Scrolls: A Mormon Perspective,” *BYU Studies* 23/1 (1983): 57–58.

51. Josephus, *Jewish Wars* 2.126–32.

52. VanderKam and Flint, *Meaning of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 376.

53. 1QS VIII, 4–10, quoted in VanderKam and Flint, *Meaning of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 376.

were continuously dwelling in sacred space. The theme is continued in 2 Corinthians 6:16–17 wherein Paul restates, “for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them,” just as he walks in holy buildings called temples. Furthermore, he says, “come out from among them [unbelievers], and be ye separate”—just as a temple edifice is dedicated and set apart.

When looking at temple-related teachings at Qumran and in early Christianity, we are reminded again that both Jesus and Paul knew Qumran theology. It sprang from the same environment as their theology. Jesus and Paul sometimes used some of the same concepts, and even language, to teach the tenets of their own message.

One of the foundational documents at Qumran was the *Temple Scroll*. Found in Cave 11 in 1956 (though it did not come to light until 1967), the *Temple Scroll* is the longest of the Dead Sea Scrolls—more than 8½ meters (over 28 feet). It is an authoritative reinterpretation of the Torah. It casts the words of God spoken to Moses in the first person (“I say to you”), rather than the third-person form found in the Pentateuch (“the Lord said”).⁵⁴ The *Temple Scroll* not only described the future eschatological temple to be built, but also prescribed acceptable rituals, standards of behavior, and the nature of the true covenant with God at Qumran, all of which were to replace the defiled edifice and impure practices which then existed in Jerusalem.

The *Temple Scroll* links the future temple to the covenant God made with Jacob at Bethel. In one passage God says: “And I will consecrate my Temple by my glory, [the Temple] on which I will settle my glory, until the day of the blessing [or, the day of creation] on which I will create my Temple and establish it for myself for all times, according to the covenant which I have made with Jacob at Bethel.”⁵⁵

Elder Marion G. Romney of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles indicated that the events at Bethel amounted to Jacob’s endowment experience, and said ultimately, “Temples are to us all what Bethel was

54. VanderKam and Flint, *Meaning of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 211.

55. As cited in Yigael Yadin, *The Temple Scroll: The Hidden Law of the Dead Sea Sect* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1985), 113.

to Jacob.”⁵⁶ We do not know if the Qumran covenanters had any conception of an endowment-like ordinance. We do know that the endowment existed during at least part of this period in the early church. President Heber C. Kimball taught that the temple endowment administered in the Church of Jesus Christ today is the same that was found in the ancient church and that Jesus “inducted his Apostles into these ordinances.”⁵⁷ The church historian Eusebius also indicated that Jesus taught the mysteries to the Apostles and the Seventy. Apocryphal sources suggest that Jesus’s forty-day ministry witnessed the establishment of a special, sacred ritual among the disciples.⁵⁸ Luke may be hinting at this when he mentions the Lord’s forty-day, post-resurrection ministry among the disciples as the time when he taught them “by many infallible proofs . . . and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God” (Acts 1:3). The phrase “infallible proofs” was translated by King James scholars from the Greek, *tekmēriois*, which literally means “sure signs or tokens.” Jesus taught his disciple-leaders about “the things pertaining to the kingdom of God” using many sure signs or tokens.

The *Temple Scroll* also sheds light on a key event in Christian history and theology—the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. In the ancient world, a cross usually consisted of two parts, an upright pole (Latin, *stipes*) or stake (Greek, *stauros*) with a transverse beam or crossbar attached (Latin, *patibulum*). Written sources indicate that “the condemned [party] never carried the complete cross. . . . Instead only the crossbar was carried, to the place [where] the upright piece was set in the ground.”⁵⁹

56. Marion G. Romney, “Temples—The Gates to Heaven,” *Ensign*, March 1971, 16.

57. *Journal of Discourses* 10:240–41.

58. See Hugh W. Nibley, “Evangelium quadraginta dierum,” *Vigiliae christianae* 20 (1966): 1–24; reprinted under the title “Evangelium quadraginta dierum: The Forty-Day Mission of Christ—The Forgotten Heritage,” in *Mormonism and Early Christianity* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1987), 10–44; and Hugh W. Nibley, “The Early Christian Prayer Circle,” *BYU Studies* 19/1 (1978): 41–78, reprinted in *Mormonism and Early Christianity*, 45–99; and *Journal of the Book of Mormon and Other Restoration Scripture* 19/2 (2010): 64–95.

59. Joe Zias and Eliezer Sekeles, “The Crucified Man from Giv‘at ha-Mivtar—A Reappraisal,” *Biblical Archaeologist* 48/3 (September 1985): 190.

The weight of biblical evidence infers that the upright piece to which Jesus's *patibulum* was fastened was a tree, whose branches may have been trimmed off. The gospel writers uniformly referred to Jesus's cross as simply *stauros*, literally "stake." However, the apostle Paul says, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Galatians 3:13). He was quoting Deuteronomy 21:23, which ultimately may be viewed as a prophetic reference to Christ's crucifixion. The apostle Peter speaks of the crucifixion of Jesus, "who his own self bare our sins in his own body on a tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Peter 2:24). To Cornelius and his family Peter bore a powerful testimony of Jesus as Messiah: "And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree" (Acts 10:39).

Crucifixion on a "tree" is also described in the *Temple Scroll* as punishment for special offenses against the true community of Israel.

If a man slanders his people and delivers his people to a foreign nation and does evil to his people, you shall hang him on a tree and he shall die. On the testimony of two witnesses and on the testimony of three witnesses he shall be put to death and they shall hang him on the tree. If a man is guilty of a capital crime and flees (abroad) to the nations, and curses his people, the children of Israel, you shall hang him also on the tree, and he shall die. But his body shall not stay overnight on the tree. Indeed you shall bury him on the same day. For he who is hanged on the tree is accursed of God and men. You shall not pollute the ground which I give you to inherit.⁶⁰

From the foregoing evidence it may be inferred that the use of trees in the process of crucifixion in Judea was not an anomaly. We also see some of the crimes for which someone could be crucified among at least one group of Jews living in the Holy Land in Jesus's era. The text also confirms that crucifixion was more than an exclusively

60. 11Q Temple LXIV, 6–13, in Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 218.

Roman form of punishment in the first centuries BC–AD. Another text, the *Nahum Peshet* from Cave 4, refers to the furious young lion who “hangs men up alive” and to “a man hanged alive on [the] tree.”⁶¹ This action is ascribed to Alexander Janneus’s crucifixion of 800 Jewish rebels, most of whom were Pharisees.⁶²

Structure and Practices

It is sometimes pointed out that the Qumran community at some point functioned under the direction of a council composed of twelve men and three priests. No distinctive name designates this group; it is usually referred to simply as the council of the community. The *Community Rule* briefly outlines the organization:

In the Council of the Community there shall be twelve men and three Priests, perfectly versed in all that is revealed of the Law, whose works shall be truth, righteousness, justice, loving-kindness and humility. They shall preserve the faith in the Land with steadfastness and meekness and shall atone for sin by the practice of justice and by suffering the sorrows of affliction. They shall walk with all men according to the standard of truth and the rule of the time.

When these are in Israel, the Council of the Community shall be established in truth. It shall be an Everlasting Plantation, a House of Holiness for Israel, an Assembly of Supreme Holiness for Aaron. They shall be witnesses to the truth at the Judgement.⁶³

The Council of the Twelve Apostles immediately comes to mind as the early Christian analog. The Twelve chosen by Jesus were also commissioned to be “witnesses,” not just of the “truth at the

61. 4QpNah (4Q169) I, 6–7, in Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 505.

62. Joe Zias and James H. Charlesworth, “Crucifixion: Archaeology, Jesus, and the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in *Jesus and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 277–78.

63. *Community Rule* VIII, 1–5, in Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 108–9.

Judgment,” but more importantly, of his resurrection.⁶⁴ They were also to teach, set in order church affairs, and administer the ordinances of the gospel.⁶⁵ Though not a separate group as at Qumran, during Jesus’s ministry an inner circle of three, from among the Twelve, were singled out and given special training. These three functioned as the First Presidency of the early church.⁶⁶ Beyond this comparison, however, the organizational picture at Qumran is unclear. The *Damascus Document* speaks of “the Priest,” who was apparently above the other priests at Qumran,⁶⁷ and the *War Scroll* mentions the “chief priest and his second,” and after them the twelve “Chiefs of the priests.”⁶⁸ There is also the “Guardian of all the camps,”⁶⁹ as well as special judges.⁷⁰ This Guardian, translated from the Hebrew *mebaqqer*, had a special supervisory role in the community and may be the equivalent of *episkopos* (Greek bishop/overseer), mentioned several times in the New Testament (Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:1–7; Titus 1:7).⁷¹

Perhaps the most instructive point to be made is that the importance of the twelve tribes of Israel seems to underlie the idea of having twelve leaders in both the Christian and Qumran communities.

In Qumran the chiefs of the tribes are expressly mentioned in connection with the convocation of the Assembly (1QSa 1:28–29). Twelve chiefs of the Levites are mentioned, “one per tribe” (1QM 2:2–3). Likewise, Jesus definitely associated the twelve apostolic offices with the twelve tribes (Matt. 19:28; cf. Luke 22:30, clearly an independent tradition). In the Book of Revelation, the Twelve Tribes and the Twelve Apostles are joined in the imagery of the Holy City (Rev. 21:12–14).⁷²

64. See Luke 24:48; Acts 1:8; 2:32; 3:15; 4:20; 5:32, etc.

65. See Matthew 28:18–20 and Acts 6:1–6.

66. Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966), 571.

67. CD XIV, 6–8, in Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 145.

68. 1QM II, 1–2; Vermes translates the phrases as “High Priest and his vicar,” and “the twelve chief priests,” in *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 166.

69. CD XIV, 9, in Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 145.

70. See the discussion in William Sanford LaSor, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1979), 54–58, 159–62.

71. VanderKam, “Scrolls and Early Christianity,” 68.

72. LaSor, *Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament*, 161.

A distinctive practice found at Qumran has a close parallel in the early church: the sharing of property among those who become members of the community. As Luke attests:

And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. . . . Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. (Acts 4:32, 34–35)

The *Community Rule* makes reference to the merging of a new member's property. When a candidate has completed one year in the process of admission to the community, and if he is destined to remain, "his property and earnings shall be handed over to the Bursar of the Congregation."⁷³ After an additional year of probation, if he passes the review of the congregation to enter the community, "then he shall be inscribed among his brethren in the order of his rank for the Law, and for justice, and for the pure Meal; his property shall be merged and he shall offer his counsel and judgement to the Community."⁷⁴ Thus, when fully initiated, the community member gave all his possessions to the communal order.

Jesus gave instruction at times advocating a similar behavior: "And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? . . . Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me" (Mark 10:17, 21). Other religious communities embraced the social and economic order of having all things in common; Enoch's was one (Moses 7:18), Nephi's was another (4 Nephi 1:3), the Church of Jesus Christ in this

73. *Community Rule* VI, 19–20, in Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 106.

74. *Community Rule* VI, 22, in Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 106–7.

dispensation was yet one more (D&C 82:17–21). All these are manifestations of the implementation of the law of the celestial kingdom on earth (D&C 105:3–5).

Both the early church and the Qumran community imposed penalties for lying about (secretly withholding) personal property from their respective communities. The penalty at Qumran was much less severe than in the early church. From the *Community Rule* we read, “If one of them has lied deliberately in matters of property, he shall be excluded from the pure Meal of the Congregation for one year and shall do penance with respect to one quarter of his food.”⁷⁵ In contrast, Acts 5:1–11 reports the case of Ananias and Sapphira, husband and wife, who “sold a possession” but “kept back part of the price . . . and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles’ feet” (Acts 5:1–2).

For openly lying to Peter and to God, both died. Latter-day revelation helps to explain the severity of Ananias’s and Sapphira’s punishment as the breaking of a higher law and covenant, instituted by God to ensure economic equality, to help every man seek the interest of his neighbor and do all things with an eye single to the glory of God. For, said the Lord, “This order I have appointed to be an everlasting order. . . . And the soul that sins against this covenant, and hardeneth his heart against it, shall be dealt with according to the laws of my church, and shall be delivered over to the buffetings of Satan until the day of redemption” (D&C 82:17–21, especially 20–21). Presumably it is this covenant, instituted in many dispensations, that Ananias and Sapphira willfully broke.

In terms of ritual eating, a “sacred meal with eschatological significance also seems to be something that the Qumran covenanters and the early Christians shared.”⁷⁶ During the Jewish Passover (or seder) meal, bread and wine play a special role. Jesus changed the Passover into the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, emphasizing the symbolic significance of the bread and wine: “And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks,

75. *Community Rule* VI, 25, in Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 107.

76. VanderKam, “Scrolls and Early Christianity,” 74.

and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Matthew 26:26–29).⁷⁷

Certain Qumran texts describe a special religious meal involving bread and wine as central elements, different from the regular meals of the community. Of the latter, the *Community Rule* states: "And when the table has been prepared for eating, and the new wine for drinking, the Priest shall be the first to stretch out his hand to bless the firstfruits of the bread and new wine."⁷⁸ According to Professor James VanderKam, this regular meal is not the same as "the pure Meal" mentioned later in the same text. The "pure Meal" is also described in a separate text called the *Rule of the Congregation* (VanderKam's designation), or the *Messianic Rule* (Vermes's designation).⁷⁹ VanderKam's translation reads:

The session of the men of renown, invited to the feast for the council of the community when at the end (of days) the messiah shall assemble with them. The priest shall enter at the head of all the congregation of Israel, and all his brethren the sons of Aaron, the priests, who are invited to the feast, the men of renown, and they shall sit before him, each according to his importance. Afterwards the messiah of Israel shall enter and the heads of the thousands of Israel shall sit before him each according to his importance, according to his station in their encampments and their journeys. And all of the heads of the households of the congregation, their sages and wise men, shall sit before them, each according to his importance. When they meet at the communal table, to set out bread and wine, and the communal table is arranged to eat and to drink wine no one shall extend his hand to the first (portion) of the bread and the wine before the priest. For he shall bless the

77. See Mark 14:22–25 and Luke 22:17–20.

78. *Community Rule* VI, 4–6, in Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 105.

79. Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 159.

first (portion) of the bread and the wine and shall extend his hand to the bread first. Afterwards, the messiah of Israel shall extend his hands to the bread. Afterwards, all of the congregation of the community shall bless, each according to his importance. They shall act according to this statute whenever (the meal) is arranged when as many as ten meet together.⁸⁰

This meal at Qumran, with its messianic quality or aura, its use of bread and wine, and its eschatological associations, clearly reminds one of the sacrament instituted by the true and living Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, before his suffering. Latter-day Saints await the fulfillment of the future sacramental banquet promised by Jesus when he was in the Upper Room (Matthew 26:29), which will involve prophets and patriarchs from former dispensations, and “all those whom my Father hath given me out of the world,” as described in a revelation given to the Prophet Joseph Smith (D&C 27:5–14).

The Messiah

The last idea that must be mentioned in our brief survey is the concept of a messiah—so central to both the Qumran and early Christian communities. Both communities possessed an eschatological outlook—the belief that the last days and end of the present world were coming soon. Both communities expected that the end of time would be ushered in by messianic figures. The age of Jesus and Qumran was a period of intense messianic fervor—in Galilee, Jerusalem, and the Judean desert. However, the two groups had different messianic expectations.

Qumran covenanters believed the last days would bring two messiahs: the messiah of Aaron, or priestly messiah, and the messiah of Israel, a lower-ranking lay messiah. From the *Community Rule* we read: “They [the men of holiness] shall depart from none of the counsels of the Law to walk in all the stubbornness of their hearts, but shall be ruled by the primitive precepts in which the men of the

80. Quoted in VanderKam, “Scrolls and Early Christianity,” 74–75; brackets and lacunae have been omitted for readability.

Community were first instructed until there shall come the Prophet and the Messiahs of Aaron and Israel.⁸¹

The two messiahs would be preceded by a prophet forerunner, but other than presiding over the messianic banquet, it is not clear what the function of the messiahs would be. No text from Qumran speaks of an anointed one who would atone for the sins of others.⁸² This fits with the general world of Jewish belief wherein there is no recognized need for an external redeemer to remove sin, to reconcile to God, and to restore holiness to the people.

On the other hand, the Christian messiah, in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, is almost entirely about a vicarious redeemer, a substitute who suffers for the sins of others (2 Corinthians 5:21). Furthermore, the Christian messiah, who comes at the end of times, is the same person who was here on earth before, who was born as the Son of God, performed a ministry of miracles, healed the sick, raised the dead, gave sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, cleansed lepers, suffered for the sins of others, was crucified and resurrected, and who will return to earth as God to begin his millennial reign.⁸³ This is quite a different messiah than the ones anticipated at Qumran. But even here we are not without a precedent among the scrolls. One of the most important non-biblical texts at Qumran for understanding Jesus and his ministry was found in Cave 4—the *Messianic Apocalypse* (4Q521). It reads in part:

the heavens and the earth will listen to His Messiah, and none therein will stray from the commandments of the holy ones [saints]. . . . Over the poor [humble] His spirit will hover and will renew the faithful with His power. And He will glorify the pious on the throne of the eternal Kingdom. He who liberates the captives, restores sight to the blind, straightens the bent [or lifts up those who are oppressed]. . . . For He will heal the wounded, and revive [raise] the dead and bring good

81. *Community Rule IX*, 9–11, in Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 110.

82. So says VanderKam, “Scrolls and Early Christianity,” 76.

83. Matthew 16:27; 1 Corinthians 15:20–23; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Revelation 19:11–16; Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:1–55.

news to the poor. . . . He will lead the uprooted and make the hungry rich.⁸⁴

Believed to have been copied in the first century BC, this document contains some arresting similarities to Isaiah 61:1–2, as read by Jesus in the Nazareth synagogue:

And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. (Luke 4:17–21)

The *Messianic Apocalypse* also presents a list of characteristics or activities that were expected to accompany the figure it describes. Luke 4:16–21 (which contains portions of Isaiah 61:1–2 and Isaiah 58:6) reveals some common elements: the bringing of good news (the definition of “gospel”) to the poor, the giving of sight to the blind, release to the captives, and freedom to the oppressed. Those other features found in 4Q521 not mentioned in Luke 4:16–21 are found in Luke 7:20–22 (Matthew 11:4–5).

Thus there is a remarkable correspondence in form and content between certain New Testament passages⁸⁵ that describe the characteristics of the Messiah as prophesied in the Old Testament, and messianic characteristics listed in the *Messianic Apocalypse*, composed years before the synoptic gospels. Did the synoptic authors copy from 4Q521? Did they borrow from a common fund of knowledge, well

84. 4Q521 II, 1–13, in Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 412–13. I have supplied alternate translations in brackets.

85. See Luke 4:16–21; 7:21–22, and Matthew 11:4–5.

known in that age of messianic expectation and fervor? Or, are these questions not so important for our understanding of Jesus and his world as the issue raised by Craig Evans, namely, that “4Q521 significantly supports the traditional view that Jesus did indeed see himself as Israel’s Messiah,” thus putting to rest the errant views of scholars who claim that Jesus did not know who he was or did not see or proclaim himself to be God’s Anointed One.⁸⁶

If 4Q521 was a well-known text at the time, it could further help to explain why there was such astonishment and then anger at Jesus’s recitation of scripture in his hometown synagogue. He was not only declaring himself to be the fulfillment of prophetic expectation, he would also have been seen as a messenger of the Essenes.

One other Qumran fragment illuminates a portion of Luke’s gospel. Found in Cave 4, and written in Aramaic, it has been named the *Apocryphon of Daniel*, though it is sometimes referred to as the *Son of God Scroll* (4Q246) because it contains the phrases “Son of the Most High” and “Son of God.” This immediately recalls the account of annunciation in Luke 1:30–35:

And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

The Qumran text reads, in part:

86. Craig A. Evans, quoted in VanderKam and Flint, *Meaning of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 334.

[. . .] will be called great, and be designated by his name ‘Son of God’ he shall be called, and they will name him ‘Son of the Most High.’ . . . His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and all his ways truth. He will judge the earth with truth and all will make peace. The sword will cease from the earth, and all cities will pay him homage. The great God will be his strength. . . . His sovereignty is everlasting sovereignty and all the depths of the earth are His.⁸⁷

There is debate among scholars regarding who is being referred to in this text. Opinions vary widely, from Alexander Balas, to the Antichrist, to Melchizedek or Michael. However, such scholars as Émile Puech and John Collins understand the name-titles in the text to be references “to a messianic figure at the end times.”⁸⁸ What does this mean for our study of the New Testament? As VanderKam explains, the language of 4Q246 does not mean Jesus is found in the Dead Sea Scrolls. “It does indicate, however, that some sectarian Jews were already using the title ‘son of God’ to refer to an exalted messiah to come.”⁸⁹

Conclusion

The Dead Sea Scrolls are invaluable for many reasons, not the least of which is they illuminate the Jewish world in the age of Jesus. They provide the earliest extant copies of the Hebrew Bible, one thousand years older than previous “earliest copies.” They are of great worth to Old Testament textual critics. They show that sometimes two or three versions of the same biblical book existed side by side in the time of Jesus. Thus, not only have the scrolls “opened a window on the extraordinary pluralism of early Judaism,”⁹⁰ but they have opened a window on the extraordinary textual pluralism of the age of Jesus.

87. 4Q246 I, 9–II, 10; translation taken and adapted from John J. Collins, *The Scepter and the Star: The Messiahs of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Ancient Literature* (New York: Doubleday, 1995), 155.

88. VanderKam and Flint, *Meaning of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 335.

89. VanderKam, “Scrolls and Early Christianity,” 75.

90. Chilton, “Jesus, A Galilean Rabbi,” 156.

According to the scrolls themselves, the community of covenanters was established by the Teacher of Righteousness, who revealed the true interpretation of scripture. Some scholars and writers have asserted that not only do the scrolls portray the Teacher of Righteousness “as a slain and resurrected Messiah, but even that he and Jesus were the same person.”⁹¹ However, such cannot be the case (most of the scrolls predate the first century AD). We have seen, though, that many concepts and expressions in the gospels and writings of Paul have parallels in the Dead Sea Scrolls that illuminate the teachings and texts of the New Testament and clearly demonstrate the Jewish roots of both the early church and the Qumran community. As VanderKam stated, “the Christians who wrote the Gospels drew on imagery and language from earlier Jewish messianic literature.”⁹² Qumran and the early church constitute two distinctive developments within intertestamental Judaism that drew upon a “common intellectual and theological background.”⁹³

This should not surprise Latter-day Saints for several reasons. First of all, God’s Son came to earth at a time of great messianic anticipation. Matthew captures some of this feeling when he reports that crowds followed Jesus at his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest. And . . . all the city was moved” (Matthew 21:9–10). Both the Qumran community and the early church possessed this eschatological outlook. Both communities “are rooted in Jewish apocalypticism and therefore share a common legacy of ideas.”⁹⁴ Thus, both the Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament “utilize apocalypticism to tell the story of Israel, which unfolds in the topics of sin, exile and restoration, though each set of documents tells the story from its respective point of view.”⁹⁵

91. J. R. Porter, *Jesus Christ: The Jesus of History, the Christ of Faith* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 37.

92. VanderKam, “Scrolls and Early Christianity,” 75.

93. Porter, *Jesus Christ*, 37.

94. Pate, *Communities of the Last Days*, 18.

95. Pate, *Communities of the Last Days*, 18.

The word *apocalypticism* derives from the Greek *apocalypse*, which means an “uncovering” or “revelation” about the future. Like eschatology, apocalypticism centers on events leading up to a future age. “Apocalypticism was at a fever pitch during the period of the DSS [Dead Sea Scrolls] and the NT [New Testament]. Many Jews firmly believed that the age to come, or the kingdom of God, was poised to descend to earth from heaven.”⁹⁶ Jewish apocalypticism was made up of some fundamental components: the belief that certain extraordinary events would precede the coming of the kingdom of God, including apostasy, great tribulation, and the arrival of the messiah(s); judgment of the wicked, and cosmic renewal or a new creation. Both the Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament corpus contain works that are explicitly apocalyptic in nature: the *War Scroll* and the *Community Rule* among the scrolls, and the Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24), 2 Thessalonians, and the book of Revelation, also known as the Apocalypse of John in the New Testament.⁹⁷ To reiterate, both the Qumran community and the early church were greatly impacted by apocalypticism.

Second, the gospel of Jesus Christ is eternal. It was first revealed to Adam, including the doctrine that Jesus would come in the meridian of time (Moses 5:57–58). Ideas and doctrines first revealed to Adam and Eve filtered down through the generations. In addition, many Old Testament prophecies pointed to that first coming of God in the flesh; all the prophets foretold it.⁹⁸ It is only natural that messianic ideas, prophetically foretold aspects, and actual sayings of the Messiah’s mortal ministry would become part of the theology of two groups, Qumran and the Church of Jesus Christ, both of which anticipated divine favor.

Third, both Qumran and the early church were restorationist groups. They sought to reestablish and renew things that had been lost over the centuries through wickedness and carelessness. We know that Jesus was, in fact, the Elias of restoration in his day (John 1:26–28 JST). Qumran saw itself as the “Community of the Renewed [or

96. Pate, *Communities of the Last Days*, 237 n. 4.

97. Pate, *Communities of the Last Days*, 238 n. 4.

98. See Jacob 4:4; Mosiah 13:33; and Luke 24:27.

restored] Covenant.” They saw their own roots stretching all the way back to Adam. As Professor Shemaryahu Talmon has said,

They view[ed] their community as the youngest link in a chain of sequential reaffirmations of the covenant, to which the Bible gives witness (CD II, 14–III, 20). God had originally established his covenant with Adam. He renewed it after each critical juncture in the history of the world, and of Israel; after the flood, with Noah, the “second Adam”; then with the patriarchs; again with all Israel at Sinai; with the priestly house of Aaron; and ensuingly with the royal house of David, after the monarchical system had taken root in Israel. In the present generation . . . “he raised for himself” from among all the evildoers “men called by name, that a remnant be left in the land, and that the earth be filled with their offspring” (CD II, 11–12). The thread of Israel’s historical past, which snapped when Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed, is retied with the foundation of the *yahad*’s “renewed covenant.”⁹⁹

Thus, the influence of the holy spirit, reverence for prophets, belief in divine revelation, the faith and action necessary to reacquire lost truths, practices, and purity—all these were emphasized among early Christians and Qumran covenanters. By contrast, as Talmon points out, rabbinic Judaism, which developed alongside these other two branches of Judaism, progressively moved away from prophets, ongoing revelation, and “the spirit,” and developed a rationalist stance. According to rabbinic tradition, after the demise of the last biblical prophets—Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi—“the holy spirit departed from Israel,” and from then on Israel was enjoined to incline her ear and “listen to the instructions of the [rabbinic] Sages.”¹⁰⁰

What a different picture is portrayed in the scrolls and the New Testament. The Qumran community saw in the proclamations of

99. Shemaryahu Talmon, *The “Dead Sea Scrolls” or “The Community of the Renewed Covenant”* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1993), 17–18.

100. Quotations are from *M Sotah* 48b, *Sanhedrin* 11a, and *Seder ‘Olam Rabbah* 6, as cited in Talmon, “*Dead Sea Scrolls*,” 16.

the prophets “an implied promise of restoration, and claim[ed] this promise for themselves.”¹⁰¹ So did the early Christians. The Qumran community saw itself “as the sole legitimate representative of biblical Israel.”¹⁰² So did the early Christians. Jesus, Stephen, Apollos, and others referenced the biblical history of Israel as implicit and explicit evidence that their movement was the fulfillment of prophetic anticipation (see Matthew 13:17; Luke 10:24; Acts 7; 18:28). The Qumran covenanters were attempting to restore what had been lost or corrupted. So were Jesus and his disciples.

However, after AD 70 only one restoration group survived (though it too changed again through apostasy). But the other has come back to life through their treasury of documents now known as the Dead Sea Scrolls. By examining these documents, we are given an extraordinary window into the religious climate that spawned Christianity, normative or Pharisaic Judaism, as well as the Qumran community. But perhaps the most exciting thing about the Dead Sea Scrolls is that continual study of their varied and various texts, alongside the New Testament, will yield insights that will illuminate the world of Jesus for a long time to come. And, of course, as Latter-day Saints compare and contrast their own ideas and practices with those described in the Dead Sea Scrolls as well as the New Testament, they will see with greater clarity how concepts found in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are perfectly at home in that ancient cultural milieu that had not yet been discovered in the nineteenth century.

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101. Talmon, “Dead Sea Scrolls,” 17.

102. Talmon, “Dead Sea Scrolls,” 15.

FROM THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS (1QS)

Hugh Nibley

with an introduction by Stephen D. Ricks

Introduction

It is interesting that Hugh Nibley, late professor of ancient history and religion at Brigham Young University and one of the foremost scholars of the ancient world in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, discussed the *Rule of the Community* in an appendix to his 1975 book *The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri*. The Joseph Smith Papyri is an initiatory text; the *Rule of the Community* is both an initiatory text, enumerating details for entrance into the Essene community at Qumran,¹ and a covenant document, listing elements in the covenant made between God and individuals entering the Essene community at Qumran.² Nibley originally referred to the text as the *Manual of Discipline*, following the title given to it by William H. Brownlee, who named it after eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Protestant handbooks of church discipline. Since Nibley first wrote about this Dead Sea Scrolls text it has more recently become known as the *Rule of the Community* or *Community Rule* (based on the first words of the text, *serekh ha-yahad*, “rule of the community”).

1. See Wolf Dietrich Berner, “Initiationsriten in Mysterienreligionen, im Gnostizismus und im antiken Judentum” (PhD diss., Georg-August-Universität, Göttingen, 1972), 192–212.

2. See Klaus Baltzer, *The Covenant Formulary in Old Testament, Jewish, and Early Christian Writings* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971), 99–112.

Strikingly, Nibley sees the Dead Sea Scrolls community as having strong messianic expectations and of being a church of “anticipation,” to borrow a phrase from Frank Moore Cross. Georg Molin (Nibley notes) observes that this Messianic “church of anticipation” could have called itself “Latter-day Saints” if that name hadn’t already been preempted by a “so-called Christian church.” Nibley, who was quite capable of translating Dead Sea Scrolls Hebrew, chose to follow Eduard Lohse’s German translation of the text so as to defend himself against the charge of special pleading, though the clarity and simplicity of Nibley’s translation of Lohse’s rendering does stand the test of time.

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Description of the *Rule of the Community*

The *Rule of the Community* (1QS), from the Dead Sea Scrolls, sets forth the beliefs and activities of a community of pious sectaries at Qumran in the desert just before the Christian era—what Professor Frank Cross has called a sect (church) of “anticipation.”¹ Everything is by way of preparation “for the eternal planting of a holy temple for Israel, and the mysteries (secret ordinances) of a holy of holies for Aaron” (1QS VIII, 5–6). Preparation is the theme; hence, it is not surprising that the specific ordinances referred to are the *initiatory* rites. But at the same time the scroll makes clear the ultimate objective of its whole operation—exaltation and eternal lives for the members—while plainly indicating the general nature of the temple activities to which it looks forward with such eager anticipation.

The whole theme of religion is eternal life. But beings who would live forever must be prepared to do so—they must be perfect. Nothing but perfection will do for an order of existence that is to last forever and ever. The striving for perfection is the theme of the *Rule of the Community*. The sectaries of Qumran knew that the greatest of all prizes was not to be cheaply bought, that there could be no cheating or cutting of corners; to prepare for eternity, one must be willing to go all the way. Whatever may have been their human failings, these people, as the Roman Catholic scholar Georg Molin observed, must be taken seriously and viewed with great respect. The proper title for them, the name they gave themselves, he maintains, is “Latter-day Saints”—and he deplores the preemption of that name at the present time by a “so-called Christian sect.”² A careful reading of the *Rule of the Community* will show that it has a great deal in common with the Book of Breathings.

Originally published as appendix 1 in Hugh Nibley, *Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri: An Egyptian Endowment* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1975), 255–62; reprinted in the 2nd ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 2005), 461–75.

1. Frank Moore Cross Jr., “The Scrolls and the New Testament,” *Christian Century* 72 (1955): 969–70.

2. Georg Molin, *Die Söhne des Lichtes* (Vienna: Herold, 1954), 146.

Roman numerals indicate columns in the original text; numbers following indicate the lines. Passages in brackets are my summaries or paraphrases. Following is a translation from Eduard Lohse's German text.³ Not all lines are included in each section.

Return to the Ancient Order

The whole first section of the text (I, 1–9) closely resembles the first section of the Doctrine and Covenants and also the prologue to the New Testament in Luke 1. Thus, in Luke 1:6: "And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless," the expressions "righteous before God," "*walking* in all the commandments," and "blameless (perfect) in all," as well as the pleonasm "commandments and ordinances," though all quite un-Greek, are strictly in the idiom of the Qumran sectaries, among whom (or among whose neighbors) the parents of John the Baptist may very well have mingled.

- I, 2. [to] do what is good and proper (upright) in his [God's] sight (before him) even as
3. he has commanded by the hand of Moses and by the hand of all his servants the prophets . . .
6. and never to walk again (any more) in the ways of a guilty heart and lustful eyes.
7. To love all who take upon themselves to keep the laws of God
8. by covenant in righteousness (*or* in the covenant of grace); to enter into (*lit.* be made one with) the deliberations (*lit.* counsel; *Eduard Lohse translates this as* Ratsversammlung)⁴ of God; and to walk before him perfect (in) all
9. that has been revealed regarding the performance [in proper time and place] of their appointed duties (*or* ordinances).

3. Eduard Lohse, ed., *Die Texte aus Qumran* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1964).

4. Lohse, *Texte aus Qumran*, 5.

Complete Commitment Required

Here (I, 9–18) and in line 8, the candidates take on themselves by covenant the law of God to keep all his commandments even at the peril of their lives. With this goes a law of consecration. The society calls itself a *yahad*, meaning oneness or unity, thereby identifying itself with the model church, the Zion of Enoch (the oldest known fragments of any book of Enoch have been discovered among the Dead Sea Scrolls), who were “of *one* heart and *one* mind” in both spiritual and temporal things (Moses 7:18; cf. John 17:11, 21–24; D&C 38:25–39).⁵

- I, 11. [All candidates] shall bring with them all their understanding (or education, including both knowledge and intelligence) and physical strength
- 12–13. and earthly possessions into the church of God. [These three things are now put on a higher level: Their minds are purified by a true understanding of God’s laws, their bodily strength is put to the test and refined like pure gold in ways prescribed by God, and their property is administered according to his just and holy principles.]
14. [They are to be neither impatient for advancement (or the fulfilling of God’s promised times) nor apathetic to such.]
16. And all who enter into the order of the church shall do so (*lit.* go over) by covenant before God to do
17. all which he has commanded and not to depart (*lit.* return) from his way (*lit.* from after him) out of any fear or dread of the burning
18. in the dominion of Belial.

Preliminary Meeting

At a preliminary meeting, the candidates formally renounce the world and declare their willingness to enter into the order (I, 18–II, 10). The first step is repentance:

5. On Qumran as a society of Enoch, see Cent Pieter van Andel, *De Structuur van de Henoeh-Traditie in het Nieuwe Testament* (Utrecht: Kemink, 1955), 51–66.

- I, 21. And the priests shall read the righteous dealing of God . . .
22. and cause them to hear all the merciful deeds of kindness upon
Israel. And the Levites shall read (of)
23. the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their guilty trans-
gressions. . . .
24. The candidates shall confess after them, saying: We have sinned,
25. [. . .] we and our [fathers] before us
II, 10. And all entering the covenant shall say after both the blessers
and the cursers, Amen! Amen!

With every blessing goes a cursing—a *penalty* clause with every oath and covenant.

Conditions of Admission

All who have mental reservations or who backslide or fail to live up to every covenant will be delivered over to the power of Satan, for God is not deceived (II, 11–18).

- II, 13. [whoever] when he hears the words of this covenant assures
(*lit.* blesses) himself in his heart, saying: I will have peace,
14. and in the way of mine own heart I will walk . . . ;
15. the wrath of God and the recompense (zeal, fulness) of his judg-
ments shall burn him in eternal destruction, and to him shall
cling all
16. the curses of this covenant. And God shall set him apart for evil;
17. his portion (lot) shall be among those who are forever accursed.
18. And all who come into the covenant shall answer and say after
them, Amen! Amen!

Going Over to the Next Phase

After the preliminary meeting, the entire company is described as “going over” from one state to another (II, 19–25).

- II, 19. Thus shall they do year by year all the days of the rule of
Belial. The priests shall pass over (*γαΰνδρῦ*, pass on or through,
proceed, “pass in review”?)

20. first of all, in order according to their spiritual standing one after the other, and the Levites shall pass over after them.
21. And all the people shall pass over in third place one after the other,
22. that each man of Israel may be distinguished by his proper thousand, hundred, fifty, and ten. . . .
24. But in the true church the entire membership shall (must) be of proper (good) humility, charity loving (forbearing), and fair judging (righteous in reckoning).

The verb *ya'avôru*, "they go over," appears in lines 19, 20, and 21 and must signify more than to "enter" the society or join the church, for up to this point and as recently as line 18, the latter idea is expressed by another verb. The "passing over" is a repeated occurrence, whereas the oaths and covenants are taken once for all, the refrain at the swearing-in meeting being "forever and ever." There can be no thought of an annual renewal of initiation rites, though such rites might have been held yearly like the early Christian baptism, which could take place properly only at Easter. After the priests pass along "one by one" (line 20), all the congregation follow, also "one by one" (line 21). But the Amen! Amen! of the swearing-in was taken by the entire body in unison. In the "passing along," emphasis is laid on putting each in his proper place or position, citing the example of the hosts of ancient Israel (there could hardly have been "thousands" at an initiation session at Qumran); at the same time there must be no sense of rank or superiority (line 24). All of this suggests that we are dealing here not with positions in the church, but the actual progression of the company from one place to another. Throughout 1QS everyone is constantly referred to as "walking" and being "on the way" or "road" (*derek*). This is the familiar imagery of the initiation. It is not too much to see in the verb *avar* an idea of passage from one state to another as well as from one place to another. The peculiar allure of the language of the Dead Sea Scrolls is that partial effacing of boundaries of time, place, and even personality in which all things fuse into one, along with a sense of constant motion and activity.

Admonition against Backsliding

Again appears the admonition that they who do not have the proper spirit cannot be benefited by the ordinances, the exalted nature of which is here pointed out (II, 25–III, 14).

- III, 3. And he beholds only darkness in the ways of light. In the eye of the perfect ones [initiates]
4. he is not held worthy. He shall not be cleansed by the atoning rites nor shall he be purified by the waters of *niddāh*, nor sanctified by any waters
 5. or streams, nor made clean by any waters of washing. Unclean, unclean shall he be as long as he rejects the statutes (*mishpaṭîm*, ordinances, judgments)
 6. of God! . . . For in the spirit of the true counsel of God are the ways of a man whose sins have all been atoned for,
 7. to see clearly by light of life and by the Holy Ghost (which leads) the church (*lit.* is for the church) in his (*or* its) truth. He is cleared of (*lit.* cleansed from) all
 8. his transgressions, and by an upright and humble spirit the price of his sins is paid. And by the submission of his soul to all the ordinances (*or* laws, commandments, *ḥuqqîm*) of God,
 9. his flesh is purified for (*or* preparatory to) being sprinkled with the waters of *niddāh* and sanctified in the waters of his *dōk*. And he shall direct his steps to walk perfectly
 10. in all the ways of God. . . .
 11. Then will he be qualified (pleasing) . . . for the covenant
 12. of the church eternal.

The unworthy who fails to make the grade is contrasted with the “perfect ones” *tāmîm*, the equivalent of the *teleioi* of the Christian and Greek mysteries, a “perfect one” being one who has learned all that is required in any phase of initiation and passed the tests. *Niddāh* can mean an impurity or the removal of impurity; it has a moral sense of payment for sin—as water, it is a removal of pollution (Numbers 19:21). *Dōk* means to tread or stamp on, to crush or pound—i.e., to

push down on; it can also mean to extinguish a fire and to set apart.⁶ Why is this peculiar word used here? Irresistibly the German sect of Dunkers comes to mind: their terms *tunken*, *tauchen*, and *dunk* all convey the idea of immersion. The Arabic root is rich in expressions. Whenever the water rites are mentioned, a plurality of ordinances is evident, for the waterwork appointments (facilities) at Qumran plainly show that there is more than one rite of cleansing by water.

Instructions to the Guide: The Creation Motif

Next come directions for the instructor or leader of the group to introduce them to the creation theme. This is the clearest indication that 1QS is meant not only as a book of rules and table of organization but primarily as a guide to initiatory ordinances (III, 13–IV, 1).

- III, 13. To the instructor, for demonstrating (making plain) and for teaching all the Sons of Light concerning the origin (*tôlēdôt*, birth, fundamental nature, family history) of mankind (the sons of man);
14. for (knowing) every type of their spirits by their tokens, and of their deeds by their history (generations).
15. From God is the knowledge of all that exists and that will (yet) be brought into existence. And before they existed he prepared their whole plan,
16. and when they exist according to schedule (*lit.* their appointment) they are to carry out (fill) all their activities according to his glorious plan without any changes.
17. All decisions rest with him (*lit.* in his hand), but he will sustain them in all their righteous desires. For he created man to have dominion (to rule, govern) over
18. this earth. And he appointed (*lit.* placed) for him two spirits by which he should walk until the time of his visitation (*or* judgment). They are the spirits

6. See Marcus Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* (New York: Pardes, 1950), 1:285.

19. of truth and of twisting (*ʿāwēl*, perversity), a fountain (*maʿyan*) of light, . . . and a wellspring (*māqôr*) of darkness.
20. In the hand of the Prince of Lights is the rule of all the Sons of Righteousness; upon the ways of light they walk. But in the hand of the Angel
21. of Darkness is the rule of Sons of Deception (*ʿāwēl*). . . . And by (because of, in) the Angel of Darkness
22. all the Sons of Righteousness went astray, so that all their sins and transgressions and guilt and the trespasses of their ways are in his power,
23. according to the deep designs of God, until his appointed end.
 . . .
24. And all the spirits that follow him (of his lot or portion) attempt to overthrow (cause to stumble) the Sons of Light, while the God of Israel and his faithful angel (the angel of his truth) assist all
25. the Sons of Light. It was he who created the spirits of light and darkness; and upon them is founded the whole operation
26. [. . .] all work, and upon their ways [. . .]

The creation story is here summarized in a few lines, but all the main elements are present: first the plan laid down in heaven before the foundations of the earth (III, 15–16); then the creation of man (III, 17–18); and finally an introduction of the evil one into the scene (III, 19–21), by whom the human race is led astray (III, 21–23) in order to be tested by the law of opposition in all things (III, 23–25).

The Way Back: A Rigorous and Dangerous Passage

What follows is man’s way on earth, specifically his way back to the presence of God. The road is dangerous, and the candidates are charged to avoid all frivolity and improper and lascivious behavior and to be most discreet in guarding the secrets. The ultimate objectives of the whole discipline, both here and hereafter, are set forth (IV, 2–26).

IV, 2. And these are their ways upon the earth . . . ,

4. a spirit of understanding in the planning of every undertaking, anxious to judge rightly and act
5. in holiness constantly (firmly), active (creative), with increase of charity to all the Sons of Truth; and perfect (glorious) purity, loathing all the impure idols, with modest deportment (gait, going)
6. being discreet in all things while hiding the truth of (concealing faithfully) the secret teachings (*or* secrets of knowledge). These are the confidential instructions (*or* secrets) of the Spirit for the Sons of Truth [while on] earth. . . . For healing
7. and increase of peace in length of days, to be fruitful and multiply (*lit.* fertility of seed), with all the blessings of eternity and everlasting joy (joy of the eternities), in eternal live(s) [*can also be read nētzaḥ*, victorious, brilliant, triumphant], with a crown of glory
8. along with a garment of splendor in eternal light.
- 9–14. [The fate of the unworthy is described.]
- 13–14. weeping, . . . dark confusion, . . . destruction.
- 15–20. [Everything is determined in the plan of God according to set periods, to give each a time of probation.]
15. Such are the generations of the children of men and in their proper divisions each of their groups receives its inheritance according to their generations . . . ,
16. each individual receiving his inheritance whether great or small.
 . . .
18. And God in his deep designs and glorious wisdom has placed a limit to the existence of wrongdoing . . .
20. (until) the time set for the judgment . . . , at which time God will make clear by his truth all the deeds of mankind and purify for himself certain ones of the children of men, abolishing every spirit of iniquity from among them (him), removing every spirit of iniquity that besets
21. his flesh, and purify him by the Holy Ghost from all his iniquities. And he will pour out upon him a spirit of truth like water, purging away all abominable falsehood . . .

22. to make known (*or* instruct) the righteous by the knowledge of the Most High (*Elyon*) and by (*or* in) the wisdom of the Sons of Heaven, for the enlightenment (*lit.* making intelligent) of those who are perfect in the way. For with them God has chosen to make an eternal covenant.
23. And to them is all the glory of Adam. . . .
25. For God has placed them (good and evil) in equal portions (side by side) until the time is up and there is a new creation.
26. [. . .] and he causes the children of men to inherit, having a knowledge of good and [evil], each [receiving] his portion (lot) according to his spirit. . . .

The insistence on a fixed order for everything is characteristic of the Qumran community and is in direct opposition to that totally unstructured Church of the Spirit which was long held to be the essence of early Christianity. The ultimate goal is described in terms of the millennium and of the heavenly Zion of Enoch. Until then, the rule of the Two Ways was to hold sway. The doctrine of the Two Ways, which predominates in the earliest Christian writings, admonishes every individual that he must choose between the Way of Light and the Way of Darkness every day of his life as long as he is in the flesh. Here it is presented as the doctrine of the Two Spirits.

The Priesthood in Charge

The organization of the society exists only to implement its main purpose, which is the exaltation of the individual. The church is not a service club, fraternal or benevolent society, lodge, or social organization. All activities are under the direction and authority of the priesthood—"the priests . . . keep the covenant" and are hence qualified to serve in the temple when it shall be restored in its purity (V, 1–VI, 14).

- VI, 2. and they shall eat together,
3. and pray together, and take counsel together. And in whatever place ten men of the church organization (council) are met together, a priest shall not be lacking among them;

4. and they shall sit each man according to his proper place (*or* rank, quality). . . . And when they set the table to eat or drink of the new wine (*tîrôsh*, unfermented grape juice)
5. the priest shall put forth his hand first of all to pronounce the blessing of the firstfruits of the bread or wine [as the case may be].

A Sacramental Meal

The separate blessing suggests a sacramental meal, and at the end of the so-called appendix to the 1QS the instructions are more specific (1QSa II, 17–21).

- II, 17. And if they meet (by appointment) for the table of the church or to drink the new wine, the table
18. of the church (congregation) being prepared and the wine [prepared] for drinking, no man shall [put forth] his hand for the first of (*or* to begin)
19. the bread and [the wine,] until the priest; for [it is he who] blesses the firstfruits of the bread
20. and the new wine, and he shall [reach forth] his hand for the bread before the others, and after that the Messiah of Israel shall put forth his hand
21. to the bread [. . .] they shall bless (?) all the meeting of the church [. . .] according to his office (dignity, greatness). And according to this rule shall they do [. . .] as many as ten men meet together.

The mention of firstfruits of the bread and wine implies that the priest speaks a formal set blessing over the bread and wine separately, regardless of the time of year—whenever the meeting takes place. The almost casual mention of the presence of the Messiah is significant since the sacramental meal looks both backward and forward to the visits of the Messiah: “Take, eat . . . in remembrance of me. . . . This cup is the new testament (covenant) in my blood. . . . drink in remembrance of me” (1 Corinthians 11:24–25). “This is my blood of the new testament. . . . I will . . . drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom” (Matthew 26:28–29). Today one purpose of the sacramental meal in the church is “that they may always have his Spirit to be with them” (Moroni 4:3; 5:2; D&C 20:77, 79).

Participation in any rites and activities requires a “recommend” from the “bishop” (IQS VI, 13–27).

VI, 13. And all candidates from Israel

14. shall be examined by the *paqid* (visiting overseer, inspector, having the same meaning as Greek *episkopos*, from which comes our term *bishop*) as to his qualifications and past life. . . .

16–23. [He must undergo periods of probation before earning complete membership.]

Rules of Behavior

The candidate is again charged to observe strict rules of behavior, the violations of which incur set penalties (VI, 24–VII, 1–25).

VI, 24–27. And these are the rules . . . with regard to their (temporal) affairs. . . . The most serious offenses are

VII, 1–9. If he curses or uses strong language [the offender will be punished.]

5–9. [Dishonesty and deceit are not to be tolerated.] . . .

12. [any impure practice] . . . who goes naked before his neighbor

13. who spits during a meeting . . . who puts forth his hand from his garment

14. showing his nakedness. . . . who laughs foolishly and loudly.

15. Who gossips about his neighbor

16. shall be ostracized for one year; but who speaks evilly of others in a meeting of the church shall be banished from among them

17. and never return again. And who murmurs against the leadership of the community shall be permanently excommunicated.

18–25. [Going against the leadership of the church entails the severest penalty of all.]

Preparation for a True Temple

The highest authority resides in a priestly body whose primary qualification is humility and whose real objective is to prepare for the establishment of a temple in its completeness (VIII, 1–21).

- VIII, 1. There shall be in the council of the church twelve men and three priests, perfect in all that is revealed from all
2. the scriptures (Torah), to do truth and righteousness and judgment and love of mercy, each walking humbly with his neighbor. . . .
 5. To establish the true order of government in the church, for the eternal planting of a holy temple for Israel, and the (secret) ordinances of a holy
 6. of holies for Aaron, (to be) true witnesses, for judgment and chosen ones of [God's] pleasure, for the redemption of the earth (land) and for a recompense
 7. to the wicked of their deserts. There will be the tested wall (*or* wall or partition of testing), the precious cornerstone [Isaiah 28:16].
 8. Its foundations shall not shake nor be moved from their place. A house (*mē'ōn*, dwelling place, habitation) of the holy of holies
 9. for Aaron, for the instruction of all of them in (for) the covenant of judgment (righteousness), and for the bringing of an acceptable offering (*lit.* and for the offering of an agreeable odor), and for a perfect and true temple in Israel.
 10. To establish a covenant in accordance with his everlasting principles (laws, commandments). . . . When these have walked perfectly in the way of the church for two years,
 11. they shall be set apart and sanctified [*i.e.*, to prepare all the others], nothing being hidden from them
 13. (then) according to these arrangements they shall be removed from the dwelling of the men of iniquity to go in the desert, to prepare there the road of "He Who Is" [Isaiah 40:3 has the Tetragrammaton YHWH here, which the writer of the scroll avoids by using a substitute].

The Temple Represents the Eternal Order

All look forward to the temple (VIII, 15–IX, 26).

- IX, 3. And when these things shall be in Israel according to all these provisions, for a foundation for the Holy Ghost in truth

4. eternal to atone for the guilt of transgression and sinful action(s), as a greater blessing for the earth than the flesh of burnt offerings, the fattening (of beasts) for slaughter; (rather) a heavenly offering
5. of the lips as prescribed (is) . . . as a free-will offering, pleasing and acceptable. At that time shall the men of the church be set apart (separated),
6. a holy temple for Aaron, to be united in a holy of holies and a single (common) temple (house) for Israel such as walk perfectly.
7. But the Sons of Aaron alone shall rule in matters of law (judgment) and property, and upon them (upon their face) the administration and the portion of the entire government of the members of the church, . . .
11. until there shall come a Prophet and the Messiah of Aaron and Israel.
12. These are the statutes by which the prudent ones walk, the whole rule of life by which they identify themselves in each dispensation (*lit.* time by time), and by which they are judged (weighed) man by man (on an individual basis). . . . [The themes of individuality and discretion are developed in the lines that follow.]
17. [The whole operation is to be kept secret from the world.] . . .
19. That is the time (the time has come) to prepare the way
20. in the wilderness and to prepare their minds for all that awaits doing . . . ,
21. and these are the guidelines (rules of the road) for the instructor in those circumstances (times) regarding both love and hate. . . .

The new temple is contrasted with the old one. For a decade the world has been awaiting the publication (mere photographs would do) of the great *Temple Scroll*,⁷ pending which it is enough to note that the expected temple was no mere abstract edifice of spirit and allegory, as the later Christians would have it.⁸

7. [After the original publication of *Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri* in 1975, the *Temple Scroll* was published in Hebrew as Yigael Yadin, ed., *Megillat-Hammiqdāš* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1977); and in English as Yigael Yadin, ed., *The Temple Scroll* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1983).]

8. See Hugh W. Nibley, "Christian Envy of the Temple," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 50 (1959–60): 99–106; reprinted in *When the Lights Went Out: Three Studies on the Ancient*

The Preexistent Plan

Though by now it is quite obvious that the *Rule of the Community* is no product of rabbinic, halakhic, or “normative” Judaism, it is the last two columns of the text that transport us far beyond the familiar scope of conventional Judaism and Christianity. First we are shown the vast sweep of the plan from its background in the preexistent realm, in which the temple by its appointments and ordinances is seen to represent the eternal and celestial order (X, 1–7).

- X, 1. During the periods (*or* in the regions; *qētz* is a marked-off extent of either time or space) in which [God] was establishing the dominion of light with its cycles, and when he gathered together at his appointed place, at the beginning
2. of the initiation of the supervising bodies (*lit.* night watch) of the darkness (*i.e.*, lights in the firmament); as he opened his treasury and poured its contents upon the earth, and as he cycled them and condensed (gathered) them by virtue of the light, even in the radiance
3. of the illuminators of the holy dwelling, along with those he had assembled to the abode of glory; when the set times emerged according to the days of the month, coordinated (united) in their revolutions (cycles) with
4. the passing of one into the other as they renew themselves, the great M (*i.e.*, the great day, New Year’s Day) stands for the holy of holies and the symbol N for the key of his eternal mercies, for opening (*or* at the beginnings)
5. of the established seasons (*or* festivals) in each period. . . . [More follows on the observance of seasonal festivals—the year-rites.]

Talk of the treasury and the cycles exactly matches those descriptions of the creation found in a number of Coptic Christian texts.⁹

Apostasy (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1970), 93–98; and in Nibley, *Mormonism and Early Christianity* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1987), 392–97.

9. See Hugh W. Nibley, “Treasures in the Heavens: Some Early Christian Insights into the Organizing of Worlds,” *Dialogue* 8/3–4 (1973): 79–80, 84; reprinted in Nibley, *Old Testament and Related Studies* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1986), 177–79, 185–86.

The code writing of the M and the N is intentional, to judge by the Christian parallels.

Hymn of Creation

The text now shifts to the first person in a triumphant conclusion that echoes the *Thanksgiving Hymn* of Qumran and the ancient *Hymn of Creation*. The individual here orients himself in all the dispensations of the world, as well as in the glories of the preexistence and the eternities to come (X, 8–18):

- X, 8. And as long as I live, the law of liberty is on my tongue as fruits of praise and the offering of my lips;
9. I shall sing with understanding, and all my music (is) for the glory of God, and the strings of my harp are for declaring (describing, setting forth) his holiness, and the flute of my lips shall exalt his never-ending skill and judgment.
10. At the coming of day and night (*or* the passing of day into night), I shall enter into the covenant of *‘Ēl*, and with the coming of (*or* at the gates of, as in Psalm 65:9) evening and morning I shall recite his laws. And where they are I shall place
11. my own boundaries, from which I shall not depart. . . .
13. At the beginning (at the creation), stretching forth hands and feet, I praise his name; at the first coming and going,
14. sitting and standing (rising), and lying upon my bed, I sing unto him . . . after the manner of men.
15. And before I lift my hand to cultivate [*lit.* fatten] the delights of the fruits of the earth (*or* before I fatten myself with the pleasures of the earth’s bounty); and at the onset of fear and dread in the place of distress and loneliness (*bûqāh*, emptiness)
16. I will call upon (root *BRK; kneel to, supplicate; *or* bless, praise) him in his manifest wonders and prostrate myself (*or* humble myself; *šahaḥi*) for his mighty deeds; and upon his mercies will I lean continually (all the day). And I know that in his hand is the judging of
17. all that lives, and all his works are true. . . . I shall not return to any man a recompense

18. of evil. With good I shall pursue mankind, for with God is the judgment of all living, and he will repay to man his deserts.

The Initiate as Adam

The identification of the individual with the man Adam is unmistakable. From the creation hymn we move to the creation of man; his cultivating the garden and partaking of the fruit are both conveyed in a single sentence in line X, 15, the key to which is the word for “pleasures,” using the root of “Eden.” This is confirmed by the surprising second half of the line, which abruptly turns off the light and finds the singer “in a place of sorrow and emptiness”—a dreary and lone world—but still calling upon God and receiving his support. Recognizing God’s mercy, forbearance, and sole right to judge, he vows to forgive all beings their trespasses against him.

Combat and Tribulation: A Dreary World

The theme of the lines that follow is combat and trial in a dark and dangerous world—a psalm of tribulation, with the imagery of the courtroom and a Negative Confession (X, 18–XI, 2).

- X, 20. I do not flinch (turn aside) before men of deceit (twisting, false witnesses) and am not satisfied until he has passed judgment. . . .
22. Foolishness, falsehood, iniquity, deceit, and lies will not be found on my lips, but fruits of holiness on my tongue, and abominations
23. shall not be found there. . . .
- XI, 2. But as for me, God will judge me, and in his hand is the perfection (correctness) of my way and the uprightness of my heart.

Divine Guidance to a Glorious Goal

The conclusion that follows is on an entirely positive note, the singer ending his dangerous journey amidst the glorious company in the presence of God (XI, 2–22).

- XI, 2. [God is the guide whose hand leads him safely along the way]

3. and by his righteous (provisions, pl.) he will wipe out my transgression. For from the fountain of his knowledge he has brought forth (opened) his light. And he has caused my eye(s) to behold his marvelous works, and my mind has been enlightened by performance of his mystery (ordinance).¹⁰
4. For the Eternal Being (*or* eternal existence) is the support of my right hand. On a mighty rock is the way of my steps, which nothing can cause to shake. For the truth of God is
5. the rock of my footsteps, and his strength is the support of my right hand; and from the fountain of his righteousness is my judgment. His marvelous mysteries are a light to my mind (heart);
6. my eye has beheld the things of the eternities (*or* by the Eternal One my eye has discerned); special knowledge (*túshiyyāh*, knowledge conveyed in confidence, as in Job 11:6) which is hidden from men of learning, treasures of wisdom hidden from the children of men, a fountain of righteousness and a vessel
7. of power; also a place of glory for the assembly in the flesh of those whom God has chosen. He has established them as an eternal treasure and caused them to be heirs in the portion (lot)
8. of the saints, and with the Sons of Heaven he has associated their society, for the council of the church and the assembly of the holy habitation for an eternal planting along with all past ages (dispensations).

As in the Book of Breathings, the Stone of Truth is here closely associated with the purification in water, and this opens the way to further light and knowledge culminating in the blessed assembly of the saints, which like the Zion of Enoch is a heavenly community duplicated (planted is the technical word) on earth, becoming united in the end with all other such bodies: “and it shall be Zion, which shall come forth out of all the creations which I have made” (Moses 7:64).

10. Zadokite Fragment (CD) III, 18; XVI, 2.

Glorified in the Presence of God

Now comes the great and marvelous paradox that staggers the imagination and baffles credulity. The problem is how God and man can not only share the same universe of discourse but live together forever on terms of intimacy amounting to identity (XI, 9–22):

- XI, 9. And as for me, I am a man (Adam) of evil after the dictates of the wanton flesh; my iniquities, transgression, and sins, along with all the corruption of my mind (heart)
10. belong to the brotherhood (secret society) of the worm and to the ways of darkness. For a man (Adam) goes his way, but no man (Enosh) really determines his steps, for the decision (judgment) is God's, and from his hand is (*i.e.*, he determines, prescribes)
 11. the perfect way, for it is his knowledge that brought all into existence and his plans that guide all things, and nothing happens without him. And even though I
 12. trip, the mercies of God will always be there to help me. And even though I stumble in the perversity of the flesh, my judging rests with God's justice, an assurance forever.
 13. And if he allows (opens) troubles for me, yet from the pit will he rescue (pull up) my soul and guide my footsteps on the road. By his acts of mercy he will cause me to arrive, and by his loving kindnesses provide (bring)
 14. my reward (judgment). And with his true judgment he has judged me, and in his exceeding goodness has forgiven (atoned for) even all of my iniquities. And by his righteous provisions he purifies me from the uncleanness
 15. of men and from the sins of the children of Adam, to praise the justice of God, even the splendor of the Most High God. Blessed art thou, my God, who openest the [way of] knowledge
 16. to thy servant. Guide all his works in righteousness, and raise (him) up for a son of thy truth (accept him as a true son) according as thou art well pleased with the chosen ones of Adam, that they may dwell

17. in thy presence for all eternity. For without thee there is no proper guidance, and nothing is done without thine approval. It is thou who showest forth
18. all knowledge, and all existence depends upon thy good pleasure. And there is none next in order beside thee to challenge (reply to) thy suggestions (counsel) or to give advice (enlighten)
19. in any matter on which thy holiness has decided, or to penetrate into the depths of thy mysteries, or to comprehend all thy wondrous (doings), by thy power
20. of thy might. For who can contain (measure) thy glory? And what also is the son of man (Adam) amid thy marvelous (works)?
21. And he that is born of woman to sit down in thy presence? He being formed of dust; . . . and he is made (formed) only
22. of clay of the destroyer (trashman, one who sweeps aside), and towards dust is his yearning. How does the clay sit down with the potter (hand former), and for counsel how does it qualify (what does it discern)?

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THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS: SELECT PUBLICATIONS BY LATTER-DAY SAINT SCHOLARS

Daniel B. McKinlay and Steven W. Booras

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