

CHAPTER TWO  
THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS AND THE HISTORICAL JESUS

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This subject requires some critical focusing for historical investigation. The Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS) are texts, while Jesus was a person, and almost certainly one who did not read texts. Moving the focus from the scrolls to the community that produced them would be a step in the right direction. But Jesus would be more comparable to the Righteous Teacher mentioned prominently in the scrolls, whereas what would be comparable to the DSS would be the whole variety of early Christian literature from the first two centuries after Jesus.

The discrepancy is equally as severe with the secondary literature on the DSS and Jesus, respectively, over the fifty years since the discovery of the scrolls. According to the prevailing paradigm of New Testament studies, the DSS and the historical Jesus was not a legitimate subject of study. The "New Quest" for the historical Jesus was confined to a group of German Lutheran theologians and paid little attention to the DSS or to any other evidence from the historical context of Jesus. Mainly in the United States and, to a degree, in England and only in the last two decades have a number of New Testament scholars begun "research" on the historical Jesus. Although the production of Jesus-books became a "growth industry" in the last decade, few "Jesus-scholars" devote much attention to precise analysis of Jesus' historical context, and fewer pay any attention to the DSS.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, those who have made

1. For example, John Dominic Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1991), refers to passages from the DSS at only two points, and not in his discussion of Jesus but as illustrations (three) of the scribal use of prophetic texts that may illuminate the development of the passion narrative (369) and as illustrations (two) of the hierarchical gathering at meals in the Qumran community as a contrast with the Lord's Supper focused on Jesus (403). He reproduces the same illustrations of the same points in *Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1994), 143-45, 180-81. Edward P. Sanders, *The Historical Figure of Jesus* (London: Penguin, 1983), makes several comparative references only to the Essenes generally and refers to particular texts in only four endnotes. John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Reconstructing the Historical Jesus* (ABRL; New York: Doubleday, 1991), 1:93-94, dismisses the DSS in a half-page.

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comparisons between the scrolls and Jesus have not had the historical Jesus as their area of scholarly specialization.<sup>2</sup> Although many suggestive essays have appeared, a systematic review of the secondary literature on the DSS and the historical Jesus would not be as fruitful as, say, a review of the more substantive work on the DSS and Paul or John.

Moreover, much of what has been written comparing the DSS and Jesus, like much written about the historical Jesus, has been working with a modern Western understanding of the individual or the "self" ("What was Jesus really like?") and/or a late-nineteenth-century understanding of Jesus as a religious-ethical teacher of everyone in general and no one in particular. The "Jesus" of the Jesus Seminar or of the Society of Biblical Literature Q Seminar sometimes does not seem all that different from the Jesus of liberal theologians such as Hamack or Troeltsch at the turn of the last century. The modernist obsession with the individual person Jesus and the nineteenth- to twentieth-century focus on the teachings of Jesus wrenched from concrete historical as well as literary context are narrow, distorting, and indefensible in terms of historical inquiry. Sayings do not mean anything in isolation from a meaning context. Nothing much is communicated in isolated aphorisms. Jesus cannot possibly be understood except as embedded in both the movement he catalyzed and the broader context of Roman imperial Palestine. I therefore would like to focus the comparison (stated in chaotic form) on Jesus-in-movement as known through the Gospel traditions and the DSS as sources for the Qumran movement as led by the Righteous Teacher. Moreover, I am looking not simply for particular similarities and dissimilarities, but for how the DSS illuminate Jesus-in-movement and how Jesus-in-movement illuminates the Qumran Community and its writings.

Pursuit of an appropriate comparison between Jesus-in-movement and the Qumran movement, moreover, requires some reconceptualization and reformulation of procedural principles in the fields of Jewish history and New Testament studies. For example:

- Since it is impossible to separate religion from political-economic life in antiquity, it makes obvious historical sense to shift from the vague general concept "Judaism" into more precise references to the historical political-economic-religious structures, where particular movements fit.
- Continued use of the broad modern constructs of "Judaism" and "Christianity" sets up unhistorical oppositions and obscures the dominant historical oppositions, such as between the Jerusalem rulers, their Pharisaic

2. For example, most of the contributors to James H. Charlesworth, ed., *Jesus and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ABRL; New York: Doubleday, 1992).

retainers, their Herodian patrons (and later allies/rivals), and their Roman imperial sponsors, on the one hand; and virtually all other Palestinian Israhelie groups and movements, such as the Essenes/Quintanites, Jesus movements, and other popular movements, on the other.

- Since interpretation has focused mainly on ideas, and ideas have been interpreted mainly in terms of modern theological issues and concepts, such as "eschatology" and "apocalypticism," and so on, in order to maximize the possibility of reconstructing an ancient meaning context in which to understand documents, we should begin rather from what we know and can reconstruct of the historical context, such as social relations in which the community may have been involved and historical developments involving the principal actors mentioned in the texts.
- Obviously, how Jesus is constructed and how the DSS are read make a huge difference in how their relationship is understood. We should at least ask the same questions of and use the same interpretive categories on both.
- The DSS provide a good example of the "scripts" (action plans) for leaders and movements that were operative in Judean society at a scribal level, and suggest that we look for the corresponding scripts operative at a popular level in Galilee and Judea.

#### PARALLEL RENEWAL MOVEMENTS

When I first came into the field of "Christian Origins" (i.e., late Second Temple Jewish History and New Testament Studies) twenty years after the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, working under the tutelage of Krister Stendahl, Frank Cross, and John Strugnell, I taught that the primary significance of the scrolls' discovery for Early Christianity was the evidence it provided not so much for parallel apocalyptic motifs and ideas, but for a concrete apocalyptic community parallel to the movements of Jesus' followers. Now, fifty years after the discovery of the DSS and with almost two generations of scholarly study and interpretation of the scrolls, I would focus that more precisely: knowledge of a contemporary Judean protest-and-renewal (of Israel) movement parallel to the early communities of Jesus' followers is the primary significance of the DSS for our understanding of the historical Jesus. This conclusion, however, comes by a rather circuitous route. It arises not out of recent studies on the historical Jesus, which pay little attention to the scrolls, nor out of any systematic critical studies comparing the DSS and the teachings of Jesus, but from recent perspectives on the history of Judea under the Seleucid

and Roman Empires and the rise of renewal movements in response to the imperial impact on (greater) Judea.<sup>3</sup>

The Qumran community is the only priestly-scribal movement and Jesus-and-movement is the only popular movement for which we have any sources beyond brief accounts. To speak of "sectarian Judaism" makes no sense historically since Qumran (the Essenes) is the only movement that the modern sociological concept of "sect" could possibly be made to fit as well as the only concrete movement we know about at the scribal-priestly level of Judean society.<sup>4</sup> The Pharisees (and perhaps also the Sadducees) were apparently more like a political party or interest group among the scribal retainers of the temple-state in Jerusalem.<sup>5</sup> What Josephus calls the "Fourth Philosophy" and the *Stavritai* were apparently even smaller groups of political activists, although the *Stavritai* may have spawned a brief scribal "messianic" movement focused on Menahem in Jerusalem in the summer of 66 C.E.<sup>6</sup> Those connected with writings such as the sections of *I Enoch* and the *Psalms of Solomon* apparently belonged to scribal circles, but they are not discernible social movements. Among the peasantry we know of many concrete movements such as the popular prophetic movements in Judea and Samaria around mid-first century and the popular messianic movements in Galilee and Judea in 4 B.C.E. and 67-70 and 132-136 C.E.<sup>7</sup> The movements that responded to Jesus of Nazareth in Galilee and the closely related figure of John the Baptist, however, were the only ones for which we have more sources than passing references in Josephus. We could also consider the "Maccabean Revolt" as a popular movement, but it is difficult to sort out the initial

<sup>3</sup> See my previous treatment in *Sociology and the Jesus Movement* (New York: Crossroad, 1989), 95, 119, 137; and my more recent *Jesus and Empire* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003), chs. 1-2.

<sup>4</sup> Horsley, *Sociology and the Jesus Movement*, 95; Cf. Albert I. Baumgarten, *The Flourishing of Jewish Sects in the Maccabean Era* (Leiden: Brill, 1997).

<sup>5</sup> See Richard A. Horsley, *Jesus and the Spirit of Wisdom: Rabbinic Jewish Resistance in Roman Palestine* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987), 16-19, 30-31, 62-63; and esp. 68-71; and Anthony J. Saldanha, *Pharisees, Scribes, and Sadducees in Palestinian Society* (Wilmington, DE: Glazier, 1988); rpt., Edith Margalit, T. & T. Clark, 1989; rpt., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), esp. chs. 5 and 12.

<sup>6</sup> See Richard A. Horsley, "The Sicarii: Ancient Jewish Terrorists," *JR* 59 (1979): 435-58; idem, "Menahem in Jerusalem: A Brief Messianic Episode among the Sicarii-Nor Zealot Messianism," *NovT* 27 (1985): 334-48; and idem, *Jesus and the Spirit*, 77-89.

<sup>7</sup> Analyzed according to traditional social form and script in Richard A. Horsley, "Popular Messianic Movements around the Time of Jesus," *CBQ* 46 (1984): 471-95; idem, "Like One of the Prophets of Old": Two Types of Popular Prophets at the Time of Jesus," *CBQ* 47 (1985): 435-63; and idem, "Popular Prophetic Movements at the Time of Jesus: Their Principal Features and Social Origins," *JNSWT* 26 (1986): 3-27.

popular movement from the guerrilla warfare that, after its remarkable success, quickly shifted into the rise of the Hasmonaens as the new high priestly regime that gradually consolidated its power in Judea and expanded its rule in Palestine.

Both the Qumran/Essenes movement and Jesus-and-movement originated as responses to the impact of empire.<sup>8</sup> Once imperial domination became direct, particularly with Seleucid military attacks and Roman conquest and reconquest, scribal-priestly circles dedicated to the traditional Israelite way of life, such as those who formed the Qumran community, and "peasants" rooted in Israelite traditions, such as those who formed the Jesus movement(s), sought (biblically) unprecedented ways of symbolizing the suffering and evil they were experiencing and new initiatives by God to deliver them from oppressive rule. Conquest by alien empire and their own suffering could not possibly be due only to their own sin, their own failure to keep Mosaic commandments. The only satisfactory explanation was that superhuman demonic forces had gained virtual control of the historical situation and/or of their own particular lives. In both the DSS and the Gospel traditions of Jesus, the situation in which the authors/readers live is dominated by demons or caught up into a struggle between superhuman forces. The scribes at Qumran reflected theologically and systematically on the historical situation. Contrary to appearances, God was still ultimately in control. Indeed, God had appointed two Spirits, the Prince of Light/Angel of Truth versus the Angel of Darkness/Beel/Satan, who struggle for control of human life/Israelite society. But God has also ordained an end for falsehood, a time when the evil Spirit and its human forces at the historical-political level (the *Kittim* = the Romans) will be defeated by God's forces and people (Esp. 1QS 3-4; 1QM). The exorcism stories in Mark and the pre-Markan and pre-Q Beelzebub discourses provide evidence of a less systematic and more ad hoc symbolization of a similar situation in which the people are caught in the struggle between divine and demonic forces.<sup>9</sup> Although certain Judean apocalypses offer similar symbolization of the situation under imperial domination, Qumran/the Essenes and Jesus-and-movement are the only two movements we know who were actively

<sup>8</sup> This subject has not been carefully explored in any depth. Some provisional analysis is available in Horsley, *Jesus and the Spirit*, chs. 1-2 and pp. 129-46, 184-90; Richard A. Horsley, *Callers: History, Politics, People* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1995), chs. 1, 3, and 5; and idem, *Jesus and Empire*.

<sup>9</sup> See further, Horsley, *Jesus and the Spirit*, 184-90; and idem, "Hearing the Whole Story: The Politics of Plot in Mark's Gospel" (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 136-148.

engaged in the struggle, on the side of what they saw as the final divine initiative. Indeed, the Qumranites understood themselves as "the Sons of Light" as opposed to "the Sons of Darkness," and it is at least conceivable that the Jesus tradition in Luke 16:8 is a reference to the Essenes (hence, evidence of Jesus-and-movement having knowledge of Qumran). Also striking in both Jesus traditions and DSS is the biblically unprecedented manner of speaking about "the Holy Spirit" as if the being is an agent semiseparate from and semi-independent of God.<sup>10</sup>

Within that situation of foreign domination and struggle between the superhuman divine and demonic forces, both the Qumranites and Jesus-and-movement became convinced that God was about to act decisively and that their very movement was the anticipatory step of God's final deliverance. And both understood this in terms of the fulfillment of history. In the DSS this is expressed nowhere more clearly than in the oft-cited statement in 1QpHab 7:5 that "all the mysteries of the words of his servants the prophets" have been "made known" to the Righteous Teacher. The implication is clear, as widely recognized: all that the prophets spoke of in the past was understood as happening in the Qumranites/Essenes' own historical situation, as God had now disclosed to the Teacher. They understood their own historical situation, moreover, as the preparation for God's final intervention to bring evil to an end and history to fulfillment as a virtual restoration of the divinely intended creation, when God would "punish every deed of mankind with his truth...so that all the glory of Adam shall be theirs" (1QS 4:18-25).

A common pattern in Jesus traditions, in both Q and Mark, is that in Jesus' ministry, something patterned after but historically superior to great figures or events of salvation in Israel's history is now here (e.g., several passages in Mark 4-9; Q/Luke 11:29-32).<sup>11</sup> Not only were (Isaiah's) prophecies of salvation being fulfilled in Jesus' practice, but the kingdom of God he announced and inaugurated surpassed (and brings to fulfillment) any figures and events of (Israel's) history (Q/Luke 7:18-28). Jesus' reference to age-old longings of Israelites, previously articulated in prophecies now included in the book of Isaiah (29:18-19; 35:5-6; 61:1; cf. Ps 146:6-7), as reaching fulfillment in his activity has often been misunderstood as referring precisely and literally to his particular acts of healing, preaching, and so on. Both those prophecies and Jesus' statement in Q/Luke 7:21-22, however, use a stock set of activities

<sup>10</sup> See Frederick F. Bruce, "Holy Spirit in the Qumran Texts," *ALTOS* 6 (1969): 49-55; Arthur E. Sekki, *The Meaning of Ruah at Qumran* (SBLDS 110; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989).

<sup>11</sup> Horsley, *Jesus and the Spirit*, ch. 7.

that symbolized the people's longings for renewal and wholeness. The followers of Jesus believed that these longings, the new age of wholeness, the "kingdom of God," was being fulfilled in the activity of Jesus.<sup>12</sup> A fascinating reference to this same tradition of longings for an age of fulfillment and wholeness has been found also in the DSS. The fragment 4Q521, commonly but inappropriately referred to as the "Resurrection Fragment," refers to both the prophecies included in the book of Isaiah (esp. Isa 61:1) and Ps 146:6-7. The longings that Jesus' followers believed to be fulfilled in his ministry were understood at Qumran as what the Lord or the Lord's spirit (and/or anointed one) will effect among the righteous poor, apparently in the imminent future.

Qumran's most striking parallel to Jesus-and-movement, with regard to the sense of imminent fulfillment and the movement's own participatory participation in that fulfillment, comes in their similar practice of communal meals. Qumran held communal meals in keen anticipation of the presence of the Messiahs of Aaron and Israel (1QS 6; 1Q28a = 1QS\* 2), while Jesus' communities celebrated the Lord's Supper in keen anticipation of the coming (back) of Jesus, who had now been designated as the Messiah in God's vindication of his martyrdom (Mark 14:25; 1 Cor 11:26).<sup>13</sup>

In the central way of expressing the fulfillment of Israel's history now happening, both Qumran and Jesus-and-movement thought of themselves as engaged in a new exodus and renewed Mosaic covenant. In somewhat different ways the two movements saw "Isaiah's" prophecy as now being fulfilled. The Qumranites in the wilderness were "preparing the way of the Lord" (1QS 8.13-14). For Jesus-and-movement John the Baptist was the voice crying in the wilderness to "prepare the way . . ." (Mark 1:3; Mat 3:3). The Righteous Teacher was, in effect, a new Moses. The whole community went on an exodus into the wilderness, where they formed the new (or renewed) covenant community. In the DSS this is so explicit that 1QS opens with a covenant renewal ceremony and continues with a full-fledged covenant form, patterned directly on the Mosaic covenant of ancient Israel (cf. Exodus 20; Joshua 24, etc.).<sup>14</sup> The

<sup>12</sup> See further Richard A. Horstley, "The Kingdom of God as the Renewal of Israel" in *Whoever Hears You Hears Me: Prophecy, Performance, and Tradition in Q* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1999), 263-65.

<sup>13</sup> See further Karl Georg Kuhn, "The Lord's Supper and the Communal Meal at Qumran," in *The Scrolls and the New Testament* (ed. K. Stendahl; New York: Harper, 1957), 65-93; and Horstley, *Jesus and the Spirit*, 178-81.

<sup>14</sup> Further analysis in Klaus Balzer, *The Covenant Formula* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971), 99-107; and Horstley and Draper, in *Whoever Hears You Hears Me*, 206-9.

Qumran community understood itself most prominently in covenantal terms, indeed as itself constituting "God's covenant" (see, e.g., 1QpHab 2.4; 1QS 3.11; 4.22; 5.5-6, 8; 10.10; CD 6.1.9; 8.21 = 19.33b-34).

In the Synoptic Gospel traditions of Jesus, the new exodus and new or renewed covenant are less explicitly stated in terms of direct relations, but unmistakably narrated or enacted in Jesus' actions and speeches. In the miracle cycles that Mark used in chapters 4-8 (cf. parallels in John), Jesus performs miraculous sea crossings, healings, and feedings in the wilderness as the new Moses and new Elijah. In *Q*/Luke 6:20-49, developed more explicitly in Matthew 5, Jesus presents an adapted Mosaic covenant to the people, beginning with covenantal blessings to the poor, hungry, and so on, offering them "a new lease on life" in the covenant that they assumed they had broken, and for that reason were cursed with poverty, hunger, and sorrow.<sup>15</sup> The discourse in Mark 10 covers the familial, economic, and political aspects of the people's collective life that implicitly or explicitly renews the traditional Mosaic covenantal principles of egalitarian reciprocity and social relations. The cup in the "Lord's Supper" finally, was understood explicitly as "my blood of the [new] covenant" (Mark 14:24; cf. 1 Cor 11:25; although contrast *Did.* 9-10).

In the particular application of their renewal of Mosaic covenant, both the Qumran movement and the Jesus movement(s) combined the sense that in God's decisive new action a new age is at hand or imminent, with a renewed dedication to covenant law as the norm for community (or even societal) life. It has long been noted that passages in the scrolls, CD 4.13-21 and 11QT 57, parallel Jesus' apparent prohibition of divorce in *Q*/Luke 16:18 and Mark 10:2-9, seeming to reject or at least bypass Deut 24:1-4.<sup>16</sup> In articulating this prohibition of divorce, moreover, both movements appear to oppose the dominant tradition of interpretation articulated by the Pharisees and/or the incumbent high-priestly regime.

<sup>15</sup> Much of recent study of *Q* is so focused on individual sayings and is so convinced that those sayings should be classified as "sapiential" that they miss the broader covenantal form of the discourse as a whole as well as covenantal substance of many of the sayings within it. But *Q*, the non-Markan material shared by Matthew and Luke, is a sequence of discourses, not a collection of sayings. Review of the principal Mosaic covenantal texts in the Hebrew Bible as well as the secondary literature such as Mendenhall and Balzer, should clarify the issue, as explored at length in Horstley, "The Covenant Renewal Discourse: *Q* 6:20-49," in *Whoever Hears You Hears Me*, (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1999), 193-227.

<sup>16</sup> On this issue see James R. Mardler, "The Temple Scroll and the Gospel Divorce Texts," *RevQ* 10 (1980): 247-56; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "The Marthan Divorce Texts and Some New Palestinian Evidence," *To Advance the Gospel: New Testament Studies* (New York: Crossroad, 1981), 79-111; and Horstley, "Judaic Traditions in *Q*," in *Whoever Hears You Hears Me* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1999), 116-17.

There is also a dramatic difference between the scrolls and Jesus-in-movement insofar as the Qumran scribal authors cite a text from either the Torah or the Prophets on every other line of the scroll in CD 4.13-21, whereas the prophet Jesus merely delivers his prohibition of divorce and remarriage in a simple legal formulation in *Q*/Luke 16:18 ("everyone who").

#### OPPOSITION TO TEMPLE AND HIGH PRIESTHOOD

We simply cannot pretend that the Jerusalem temple and high priesthood and the Qumran community's and Jesus' stances toward them were merely issues of religion, that these ruling institutions enjoyed widespread support either in scribal circles or among the peasantry, or that there was a standard expectation of a rebuilt eschatological temple.<sup>17</sup> The temple and high priesthood stood at the center of a Judean politics (or political economy) that was highly charged and at times volatile under declining Seleucid domination and then expanding Roman imperial domination. The Hasmoneans had usurped the high priesthood and then launched two generations of military expansion in which they took over Samaria, Idumea, and Galilee, as well as several of the surrounding Hellenistic cities. Alexander Jannaeus fought a virtual civil war with the Pharisees and others, after which the Pharisees, placed in power by his wife and successor, Alexandra Salome, wrought vengeance on their enemies who had served in high positions under Jannaeus.

Once appointed by the Romans as their client "King of Judea" to replace the declining Hasmonean rulers, Herod the Great simply used the temple and high priesthood as important instruments of a shrewd statecraft oriented to the Roman Empire and Jewish Diaspora communities more than to his Judean kingdom. He brought in new high-priestly families, including one from Egypt and another from Babylon, and then rebuilt the temple in grand Hellenistic scale and style as one of the "wonders of the world" and a goal of pilgrimage for Diaspora Jews. Sometime during the Hasmonean and Herodian periods, the "temple tax" was instituted, an innovation to finance the temple not mentioned in the Torah. After the deposition of Herod's incompetent son Archelaus as ruler of Judea proper and Samaria, the four dominant high-priestly families who remained as the ruling aristocracy became increasingly exploitative and

even predatory, according to both Josephus and rabbinic traditions.<sup>18</sup> As evident from archaeological explorations in Jerusalem, by the early first century B.C.E., the high priestly families and other wealthy and powerful families had come to dominate the city from their mansions in the New City, overlooking the temple from the West.

It is difficult to imagine that the temple and high priesthood could have retained much legitimacy and influence during these generations of turmoil either among the peasantry, whose tithes and offerings formed the economic basis of the ruling institutions, or even among scribal circles, who were economically dependent on them. Except for a few explicitly pro-Hasmonean documents, literature of this period produced by Judean scribal circles is sharply critical of the temple and high priesthood. It is difficult to find more than one or two texts (e.g., *Tob* 14:5-6) that attest a rebuilt temple in the future (contrast *1 En.* 89-90; *Taanit* of *Moses*; and *Rebels of Solomon*). It is understandable that Judean peasants, many of whose ancestors had participated in the Maccabean struggles against imperial profanation of the temple, would have been strongly attached to the temple, even if they became disillusioned with the Hasmonean incumbents and/or Herod's manipulation of both temple and high priesthood.<sup>19</sup> It is unclear, however, just what grounds Galileans would have had for attachment to the temple and high priesthood. Assuming that they were descendants of the northern Israelites who had rebelled against Jerusalem rule over nine centuries earlier, their cultural traditions would have included criticisms of previous domination by Jerusalem rulers. Galileans came under Jerusalem rule again only about a hundred years before the birth of Jesus and, according to Josephus, had been forced to live according to the "laws of the Judeans," which presumably included obligations of the temple tax and other tithes, offerings, and sacrifices.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>18</sup> See Martin Goodman, *The Ruling Class of Judaea* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); and Richard A. Horsley, "High Priests and the Politics of Roman Palestine," *JSTJ* 17 (1986): 23-55.

<sup>19</sup> The coalition of fugitive Judean peasants who became known as the "Zealots," emerging in 67-68 C.E., in the middle of the great revolt, elected by lot as "High Priest" a rustic with supposedly true Zadokite credentials. Richard A. Horsley analyzes this episode in "The Zealots: Their Origins, and Relationships, and Importance in the Jewish Revolt," *NovT* 27 (1996): 159-92.

<sup>20</sup> Fuller discussion in Horsley, *Galilee*, esp. chs 2 and 6.

*Qumran Opposition to the Temple and High Priests in Jerusalem*

The *Habakkuk Pesher*, in particular, articulates a vitriolic attack on the "Wicked Priest," presumably (one of the first) Hasmonean high priest(s) who usurped the proper Zadokite incumbents in mid-second century B.C.E. (1QPHab 1.3; 8.9-11; 9.5-12; 11.4). The attack includes indictments for robbing the people, especially the poor; to enhance their own wealth (1QPHab 8.8-12; 9.4-5; 10.1; 12.6-10; cf. CD 4.18; 6.6; 11, 15-16; 8.4, 7; 20.23; 4QPNah 1.11; cf. 1 En. 92-104). Among the more recently available scrolls, 4Q390 mentions high-priestly violence and oppression as part of a review of Israel's history. Similar indictments can be found in other late Second Temple/Judean Literature (see esp. *Rx. Sol.* 2.3; 8.12; *T. Levi* 16:1-2; 17:11; *T. Mos.* 5:4; 7:3-10) and in early rabbinic literature (*m. Ker.* 1:7; *t. Menah.* 13:18-21; *t. Zebah.* 11:16-17; *b. Pesah.* 57a), and Josephus provides accounts of high-priestly violence and oppression for the mid-first century B.C.E. (e.g., *Jnt.* 20.179-81; 20.205-7; 20.213).

Although Josephus reported that the Essenes offered sacrifices among themselves (*Jnt.* 18.19), Philo understood that they did not offer animal sacrifices (*Prob.* 75). Archaeological probes to date have produced no altar at Qumran. We should thus take seriously the references in the *Rule of the Community* claiming that the Qumranites' own righteousness and "perfection of way" constituted their offerings, oblations, and "expiation for the earth" (1QS 8.10; 9.3-5). Indeed, there is considerable evidence in the scrolls that the Qumranites understood their community as the true temple, the social-ethical replacement for the Jerusalem temple, now utterly corrupted and defiled by their usurpers. The community itself was "an everlasting planting, a house of holiness for Israel, as assembly of supreme holiness for Aaron...who shall atone for the land...the precious cornerstone" (Isa 28:16) (1QS 8.5-7). The "sanctuary" that the Lord established in the Song of Miriam (Exod 15:17-18) was understood as "a sanctuary of men, that there they may send up, like the smoke of incense, the works of the Law" (4Q174 = 4QFlor 1.2-7). That the purity code intended originally for the priests in the temple was extended to all members of the Qumran community fits precisely such a conception of the community itself as constituting the sanctuary of God. This also fits the dominant picture of the Qumran community as having modeled itself on the exodus and covenant, despite its origin in priestly and scribal circles formerly based in the temple.

If we attempt to reconcile this view of the community as the (current and eschatological) (replacement for the) Jerusalem temple with the *Temple Scroll*, which appears to speak of a concrete temple building, then perhaps we must conclude that the Qumranites were still hoping to be restored to power in Jerusalem, where they would again preside at the temple sacrifices. The key passages in *Rule of the Community* (1QS) and *Florilegium* (4QFlor), and so forth, give the impression of an anticipated continuity between the Qumran community itself as the true/spiritual temple in the present and the eschatological community as God's ultimate sanctuary.

*Jesus' Prophecies Against the Temple and High Priesthood*

Anachronistic reading of Acts 2:46 has skewed modern Christian understanding of Jesus and his followers' stance toward the temple. Apparently on the model of European and American "attending church (or synagogue)" Acts 2:46 has been taken to mean that the disciples and others in "the first church" in Jerusalem were "day by day, attending the temple together" (RSV). Scholars then made the simple argument that if Jesus' first followers were thus praying and sacrificing in the temple, surely Jesus himself must have been committed to the temple, so much so that he had performed a "cleansing" of the temple so that it might be prepared for its function as a "house of prayer for all peoples [Gentiles]" in the eschatological fulfillment (Mark 11:17). The typical Lukan terms *προσκύπτειν* ("attend to") and *εὐφροσύνη* ("with one accord") in Acts 2:46 hardly suggest regular sacrificing and prayers. As Luke was aware, the temple courtyard was the principal public space in Jerusalem and hence the obvious place where the disciples of Jesus would have been busy expanding their movement by spreading the word about the renewal of Israel inaugurated by Jesus, performing healings, and recruiting people for their expanding renewal communities (see also Acts 3:11; 5:12-16).<sup>21</sup>

That Jesus delivered prophetic oracles condemning the temple and (perhaps) announcing the (re-)building of a temple "not made with hands" is deeply rooted in Gospel traditions and is paralleled by his prophetic demonstration in the temple courtyard.<sup>22</sup> The application of the oracle of judgment against the temple to Jesus' own body in John 2:19

<sup>21</sup> *Iidem*, *Jesus and the Spirit*, 291-92.

<sup>22</sup> On the following, see further *ibid.*, 292-306.

places in stark relief just how concretely the Synoptic tradition of the oracle was understood as directed against the actual temple (Mark 13:1-2; 14:58; 15:29-30; cf. Acts 6:13-14). In recent discussions of Jesus, the Synoptic accounts of his action in the temple have been taken seriously as attesting what must have been a prophetic demonstration against the temple reminiscent of Israelite prophetic demonstrations (e.g., those of Jeremiah in chs. 19; 27-28; Jeremiah's oracle against Solomon's temple, of course, is recited in Mark 11:15-17 et par.). Jesus' prophetic lament over Jerusalem in *Q/Luke* 13:34-35—in which, with its allusion to the Song of Moses in Deut 32:11, the "Y" is surely God—was an indictment of the Jerusalem ruling "house," the temple's high priesthood, which prevents God from gathering the villages of Israel under God's wings and even kills the prophets God sends. Josephus's account in *JW* 6.301-6 of the prophetic lament over Jerusalem by another popular prophet named Jesus, son of Hananiah, provides a close parallel from roughly a generation later. The Synoptic Gospels, moreover, make explicit that the parasite of the wicked tenants was directed against the high priestly rulers. Among many recent books on Jesus and articles on his pronouncements and demonstration against the temple, there is a virtual consensus that the arrest and execution of Jesus had something to do with his prophetic pronouncements and/or demonstration against the temple (and the high priesthood).<sup>23</sup>

Jesus' popular-prophetic condemnation of the temple and high priesthood thus parallels the scribal-priestly condemnation found in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Their parallel lines of criticism and condemnation appear to be closely coordinate on two points on which each illuminates and confirms the other. According to the instructions in *4Q159* 2.6-8, Qumranites were to pay the yearly half-shekel temple tax only once in a lifetime—clearly a polemical stance of active resistance to the temple establishment. Depending on how one coordinates "the kings of the earth" and "the sons" in Jesus' saying in Matt 17:24-27, "the sons are free" would indicate fairly bluntly that the children of Israel are free from half-shekel temple tax—a declaration of independence at least in principle, coupled after all with an unrealistic way of raising and paying the temple tax in the anecdote. That the Qumranites understood their own community as the new or true "temple" of God, moreover, suggests that the "temple not made with hands" that Jesus was accused of promising to build (Mark 14:58; 15:29-30) meant the community or renewed people

(Israel) that he and his movement were catalyzing.<sup>24</sup> It would appear that both the Qumran community (evident in the DSS) and Jesus and the Jesus movement(s) (evident in the Synoptic Gospel tradition) were movements dedicated to the renewal of Israel over against the temple and high priesthood. They had rejected the temple at different points in Second Temple history and from different social locations. Neither movement needed the temple and its sacrificial cult for expiation and forgiveness of sins. The major difference, of course, is that the priestly-scribal community at Qumran, if anything, intensified their concern for the purity of the community, whereas the Palestinian Jesus movement, based in villages and town communities, actively resisted the purity system that reverberated to their disadvantage economically.

#### PARALLEL LEADERS AND MOVEMENTS IN DIFFERENT SOCIAL LOCATIONS

Corresponding to their mutual condemnation of the temple and high priesthood, both Qumran and Jesus-in-movement understood their own movement and communities as constituting the renewed Israel now underway or in preparation. Not surprisingly, these parallel movements have certain features in common. For example, they both involved several communities, which involved communication among them. Both Mark (6:7-13) and *Q* (*Luke* 10:2-16) feature Jesus' "mission discourse," commissioning and regulating the work of traveling preachers-healers-organizers who were taken into and supported by households from village to village. The Essenes apparently had a similar provision for travel between and mutual support of envoys and reciprocal visitations. Josephus reports that, on the arrival of travelers, "all the resources of the community are put at their disposal; and they enter the houses of men whom they have never seen before as though they were their most intimate friends; consequently they carry nothing with them on their journeys" (*JW*, 2.124-25). Both Jesus' covenantal exhortations and exhortations in the scrolls insist on solidarity among members of the movement and its communities. The former focuses on overcoming local tensions and the practice of mutual reciprocity among members of village communities, in which Jesus-and-movement were based (*Q/Luke* 6:27-36; 12:52-31; Mark 10:17-31).<sup>25</sup> Since Essene communities apparently involved the

<sup>23</sup> For example, Edward P. Sanders, *Jesus and the Tradition* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985).

<sup>24</sup> Horsley, *Jesus and the Spirit*, 294-95.  
<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. 9.

members physically moving to a community location, their reciprocity took the form of sharing goods in common (1QS 6.22; Josephus, *J.W.* 2.122; cf. Luke's portrayal of the "Jerusalem community" in Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-37; 5:1-11). Jesus emphasized love, even of one's "enemies" in the local community, while the Essenes showed a strong attachment to one another (Q/Luke 6:27-36; *J.W.* 2.119).

To many interpreters, however, the differences between Jesus-in-movement and the Qumran community have been far more important than the similarities. These differences may be more susceptible to intelligible discussion and less susceptible to distortion from Christian ideology of anti-Judaism if we factor in the clear difference in social location, social circumstances, and social interests. Jesus was apparently working in Galilean and other peasant villages, whereas dissident priests and retainers from Jerusalem formed the Qumran community. Jesus was thus addressing, healing, and organizing people embedded in long-standing families (lineages) and communities that were disintegrating under the pressures of multiple layers of rulers (high priestly, Herodian, and Roman) and their economic demands. Their principal problems were integrally related to their rulers' intensified exploitation of their productivity, which had left them poor, hungry, despairing, divided against themselves, and even "possessed" by demonic forces. Jesus' program of hope, healing, and restored covenantal relations meant renewal of village communities, which had always constituted the principal social form of Israel. The priests and scribes at Qumran had been economically dependent on the temple and high priesthood but had chosen to abandon their former lives completely and to join the new-exodus, new-covenant community in the Dead Sea wilderness.

It has been claimed that Jesus was open and public, whereas the Qumran/Essene community was closed and private.<sup>26</sup> That generalization, however, is not quite true once we factor in the historical social dynamics of Seleucid and Hasmonean Judea and Roman Judea and Galilee. Jesus-in-movement was not simply open to but also aggressively expanded into the villages of the areas surrounding Galilee, such as "the regions of Tyre" and "the villages of Caesarea Philippi" and of the Decapolis. The focus was upon the renewal of "the lost sheep of the house of" Israel, but there was little concern about maintaining boundaries over against other peasants in nearby village communities, who shared the interests and concerns of Galilean peasants.

<sup>26</sup> James H. Charlesworth, "The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Historical Jesus," in *Jesus and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 22-23.

Jesus-in-movement, however, was hardly open to the wealthy and powerful (rulers) who had systematically "defrauded" the poor in violation of the Mosaic covenantal commandments, for whom it would be impossible "to enter the kingdom of God" (Mark 10:17-25). Nor, so far as we can imagine, did Jesus and his disciples walk boldly into the agoras of Herod Antipas's newly constructed capital cities, Sepphoris and Tiberias, to discourse with Herodians about how they could inherit eternal life. His march directly into Jerusalem and the temple courtyard must have constituted a final prophetic face-off with the rulers and ruling institutions. Having finally gone "public" in the ruling city, Jesus-in-movement became subject to severe repression by the Jerusalem and other rulers.

The Qumran community, on the other hand, defined itself from the beginning as the true, righteous community of Israel over against the unrighteous usurpers of their positions and prerogatives. As priests and scribes whose whole heritage consisted of serving and interpreting the temple and priesthood, moreover, the Qumranites carried over their priestly orientation and concerns into their new-covenant community/movement. One of the principal features of priestly ideology, of course, was the strict separation of priests from ordinary Israelites by special rules governing marriage and cultic purity. The intensification of the imperial situation in the Seleucid attacks and Roman conquests and imposition of Herodian client kings only intensified the priestly and scribal concern for maintaining the boundaries between the priests and ordinary Israelites as well as the boundaries between Israel and aliens. The Essenes/Qumranites simply carried such concerns over into their erection of boundaries around their tiny and quite vulnerable community, as the only righteous ones, under the Spirit of Truth, amid a wider sea of wickedness, dominated by the Prince of Darkness. Since the usurpers had blatantly defiled cult and society, it was all the more important for the righteous remnant, on whom God's as well as Israel's future depended, to maintain an absolute level of purity.

Their program included but went far beyond concern to maintain the Mosaic covenant and its stipulations, such as Sabbath observance, far more strictly than that of the Pharisees (e.g., CD 10-11).<sup>27</sup> They thus generated elaborate and strict purity codes to protect themselves from impurity and to punish any intentional or accidental offenders in their midst (scrolls concerned heavily with purity are numerous: 1QS; 1QH; CD; 4Q394-399 [= 4QMMT]; 4Q159; 4Q181; 4Q512; 4Q513-514;

<sup>27</sup> Lawrence H. Schiffman, *The Halakhah at Qumran* (Leiden: Brill, 1975), 77-133.

Righteous Teacher and his followers not only launched an exodus into the wilderness but also founded a new covenant community. That the community is headed by a council consisting of three priests, as well as twelve men (1QS 8.1-4), suggests that it was a distinctively priestly version of the renewed covenant of Israel. Aside from the priestly component, the renewed covenant community led by the Teacher suggests that the new Moses script must have included the renewed covenant as well as the new exodus. The Dead Sea Scrolls thus add a new or renewed covenant component to the Mosaic-prophetic script that simply does not appear in any of Josephus's brief accounts of popular prophetic movements.

The renewed covenant community at Qumran, moreover, is a reconstruction of Israel. Some interpreters have suggested that the restoration of Israel was a "militant messiah's" mission separate in Judean literature from the renewal of justice and holiness among the people by a "prophet like Moses."<sup>41</sup> But that appears to be a misreading of the scrolls as well as *Psalm of Solomon* 17. The Qumran Community led by the Righteous Teacher was both; it was a restoration of Israel (albeit provisional and by anticipation) precisely in a life of holiness and justice.<sup>42</sup>

If we can combine the new Moses as reconstituting the covenantal people (as leader of the new exodus) evident in the Righteous Teacher of the Qumran Movement with the new Moses as leader of the new exodus evident in the popular prophetic movements, then we have a more complete sense of the popular prophet script that may have been followed by the historical Jesus. Studies of the historical Jesus based heavily on his sayings isolated from literary and historical context depend heavily on the modern scholar for construction of a meaning context in which the isolated sayings can be understood in some coherent fashion. Recently, for example, some have suggested that Jesus must have resembled the Cynics, vagabond countercultural philosophers active in Hellenistic cities. But that takes us far afield from the concrete social-religious power-relations of ancient Judea and Galilee. Instead, we can investigate further the popular prophetic script, the traditional social role that Judean prophets around the time of Jesus actually performed, as the possible script, role, or "office" that Jesus performed and was understood as performing. That script or role was situated directly

41. Collins, *Sepher and the Star*, 122.

42. So also *R. Scl. 17*, the principal text still cited as assigning a "militant messiah," portrays a restoration of (the twelve tribes of) Israel in holiness and justice, only by a messiah whose militance has been transposed into scribal power—a scribal version of the messianic script parallel to the scribal version of the Mosaic-prophetic script in the DSS.

within the particular structure and dynamics of power-relations in ancient Judea and Galilee under Roman rule, and it was part and parcel of the historical meaning context in which Jesus' actions and sayings can become historically intelligible.

Assuming that this covenantal component is not a distinctively scribal feature, the scrolls thus flesh out the prophetic script of a restored covenantal Israel in a way that gives us greater confidence in identifying many of Jesus' teachings and exhortations (such as those in *Q/Luke* 6:20-49 or *Mark* 10) as part of a new or renewed covenant pattern. We may thus discern suggestive information from careful exploration of the prophetic script evident in the DSS, information that may illuminate the prophetic script that informs portrayals and teachings of Jesus in Gospel traditions—so long as we keep in mind the differences between a scribal-priestly (even Zadokite) circle and its concerns and a popular movement and its concerns. Whereas the Righteous Teacher had revealed all the mysteries of God's wisdom to the wise scribes and priests at Qumran, Jesus (in *Q/Luke* 10:21) thanked "the Lord of heaven and earth" that he had "hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and revealed them to infants."