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Week 6 lecture summary

The connections between John the Baptist and Qumran have been discussed before the discover of the dead sea scrolls. Originally it was a pre dead sea scrolls conversation because of the existence of the Essenes. If anything, the finding of the dead sea scrolls reawakens the conversation. When talking about the dead sea scrolls, people mostly pull from Mark and this is due to a popular theory of Mark being the oldest and if he is the oldest then Mark must have the best material. This is followed by the theory that if Matthew and Luke borrow from Mark then the material must be of different levels of value which leads to problems. This is known as the two-source theory. The biggest issue we run into is which image of John the Baptist do we want to use. There is actually a bit of separation between Jesus and John the Baptist since he uses the word then when he says “then Jesus came” implying a narrative pause of sorts. If this were a movie or something, it would be like the narration speaking of a character and then Jesus showing up. We must remember when reading this when it refers to a wilderness, it doesn’t necessarily mean a dry arid place like we would see in movies or tv shows. Wilderness linguistically instead refers to a place of pasturing. Not exactly a desert, but a deserted place without inhabitants. When Mark speaks about Jesus coming from John the Baptist’s prophecy, it is clear he is speaking about an individual person or expecting a human person. Some scholars suggest that Luke 3 is the actual beginning of the gospel while 1 and 2 were added later. The

reason for this is because it starts like the beginning of a historical narrative or a new stage of sorts. Luke depicting John the Baptist with the word *euangeliso* (yeah idk how that's supposed to be spelled) which means good news or the gospel. This points to the idea that Luke got ahold of some good stuff in his writing that the other gospels didn't have or didn't know about and makes it pretty special. The depiction of the Holy Spirit descending on Jesus is also different in that John was there and there were people on the shore watching all of it happen. This gives the idea that Jesus and John meeting was a later event. To some extent, what John was doing in the water is the same as the ritual immersion done in the Qumran sect when they did ritual immersion and it was believed a spirit came to meet them and after this repentance in immersion, they changed and came back to God to follow his laws.