

## The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Jewishness of the Gospels

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The Jewishness of the Gospels is seen at many points. Jesus is addressed as “Rabbi” (e.g., Mk 9:5; 11:21; 14:45 and parallels) or “Rabbouni” (Mk 10:51; Jn 20:16); he has followers called “disciples” (e.g., Mk 2:15; 3:7; 4:34 and parallels), some of whom he appoints as “apostles” (e.g., Mk 3:14; 6:30 and parallels), which is a designation in rabbinic literature of Moses and various prophets “sent” by God (e.g., *Exod. Rab.* 3.4 [on Ex 3:12]; 3.14 [on Ex 4:10]);<sup>1</sup> and he engages in debates with scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, and priests regarding Jewish law and the meaning of Jewish scripture (e.g., Mk 2:23–3:6; 7:1–13; 11:27–12:34 and parallels). Moreover, Jesus proclaims the rule of God and speaks of Israel’s redemption (e.g., Mk 1:14–15 and parallels). Israel’s priority over the nations is assumed (Mk 7:24–30), and is sometimes explicitly asserted (e.g., Mt 10:5–6; 15:24). The geography, topography, and demography of the Jesus story are thoroughly Jewish. Jesus is from Nazareth, is headquartered in Capernaum, teaches by and frequently crosses the Sea of Galilee, and travels south to Jericho, Judea, and Jerusalem. Jesus frequents the synagogue, prays, teaches his disciples to pray,<sup>2</sup> and upholds the Jewish law<sup>3</sup> (even if his understanding differs from that of his

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<sup>1</sup> See also *Mekilta deRabbi Shimeon ben Yohai* on Ex 3:10–11; *’Abot deRabbi Nathan* A 1.2; and, from the Samaritan tradition, *Memar Marqa* 4:7; 5:3; 6:3–4. Apostle derives from the Greek noun *apostolos*, which means one who is sent (from the verb *apostellein*, “to send”). Its Hebrew equivalent is *shaliah* or *shaluah*, from the verb *shalah*, “to send.” The idea of Moses or a prophet as “apostle” comes from scriptural passages that speak of them as “sent” by God (e.g., Ex 3:10, “I will send you to Pharaoh”; Isa 61:1, “the Lord . . . has sent me”; Jer 1:7, “to all to whom I send you you shall go”; etc.).

<sup>2</sup> As in Matthew 6:9–13 = Luke 11:2–4, which is manifestly Jesus’ own adaptation of a Jewish prayer that became known as the Qaddish. Jesus’ prayer and the Qaddish both begin with the petitions that God sanctify his name and that his rule be established.

<sup>3</sup> As in Luke 16:17: “It is easier for heaven and earth to pass away, than for one dot of the Law to become void.”

contemporaries<sup>4</sup>). In short, the Jesus of the Gospels is as Jewish as any figure we know of from this period.<sup>5</sup> The parallels between his teachings and activities **and contemporary Judaism** are so numerous that they fill more than 1500 pages in Paul Billerbeck's commentary on the Gospels, a commentary based on comparisons with Talmudic and midrashic literature.<sup>6</sup>

Not only is Jesus, the central figure of the Gospels, thoroughly Jewish, the Gospels themselves are Jewish to the core. We see this in the way the Gospel of Matthew begins: "The book of the genealogy of Jesus Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham" (Mt 1:1; cf. Gen 5:1, "This is the book of the generations of Adam . . ."), followed by a genealogy patterned after those found in scripture (Mt 1:2, "Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob . . ." etc.; cf. Gen 5:3, "Adam . . . became the father of . . . Seth" etc.). Matthew's infancy narrative goes on to tell of Joseph and dreams, reminiscent of another well-known Joseph, to whom God communicated through dreams (cf. Gen 37:5–11; 40:1–19; 41:1–36). Punctuating his narrative with a series of fulfilled prophecies, the Matthean evangelist tells the story of Jesus Messiah's infancy in terms of Moses typology, just as the Lukan evangelist punctuates his version of the infancy with several canticles, whose contents consist mostly of words and phrases drawn from

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<sup>4</sup> As in Matthew 5:20: "I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees . . ."; or Mark 7:9, to the scribes and Pharisees: "You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God, in order to keep your tradition!"

<sup>5</sup> Even the priestly opposition, arrest, and Roman interrogation and flagellation of Jesus correspond to what happened to another Jewish prophet who dared walk about in Jerusalem warning of coming judgment (cf. Josephus, *J.W.* 6.5.3 §300–309, in reference to one "Jesus ben Ananias").

<sup>6</sup> (H. L. Strack) and P. Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch* (6 vols., Munich: C. H. Beck, 1922–28), vols. 1 and 2. One should also see J. Lightfoot, *A Commentary on the New Testament from the Talmud and Hebraica* (4 vols., Peabody: Hendrickson, 1989 [orig. *Horae Hebraicae et Talmudicae*, 1658–74; ET Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1859]), vols. 1, 2, and 3; S. T. Lachs, *A Rabbinic Commentary on the New Testament: The Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke* (Hoboken: Ktav, 1987); C. G. Montefiore, *The Synoptic Gospels: Edited with an Introduction and a Commentary* (2 vols., 2nd ed., London: Macmillan, 1927); D. H. Stern, *Jewish New Testament Commentary* (Clarksville, MD: Jewish New Testament Publications, 1992), 1–214.

scripture. Indeed, it has been observed that Luke's very style of writing consciously imitates the style of the Septuagint, the Greek version of Jewish scripture. It is as though the story of Israel, which had ended on the tragic note of the old kingdom's destruction and the demise of the David dynasty, now continues in Luke's story of the advent of the promised king and savior. Mark's Gospel, made up of a series of vignettes of teaching and miracles, is reminiscent of the stories of Elijah and Elisha, while John's Gospel consciously imitates the language and themes of the wisdom tradition.

The Dead Sea Scrolls have greatly added to our understanding and appreciation of the Gospels as Jewish literature. The Scrolls are Palestinian, early, written in Hebrew and Aramaic, and are unquestionably Jewish. Significant parallels between them and the Christian Gospels should go a long way in confirming the contention here that the Gospels are thoroughly Jewish, even if at points they are at variance with aspects of temple and scribal Judaism as it existed prior to 70 C.E. Relevant examples will be cited for all four Gospels.

### **Matthew**

Given its overtly Jewish character we should expect the largest number of important parallels to be found in Matthew, and this appears to be the case. We may consider four: the first concerns an interpretive approach to scripture, the second a Semitic genre, the third an ethical theme, and the fourth a common understanding of a specific collocation of words and phrases from the prophet Isaiah.

*(1) Peshar interpretation in the Scrolls and in Matthew.* One of the first intriguing features of the newly discovered Dead Sea Scrolls to gain the attention of scholars was peshar interpretation. Happily, one well-preserved peshar ("interpretation" or "commentary") scroll was found in the first cave, discovered in 1947. Line after line of the first two chapters of Habakkuk are quoted and then explained: "Its interpretation concerns" some recent event or some event believed to occur soon. The author of the Habakkuk Peshar systematically equates various events and personages in Habakkuk with various events and personages in the era of the Qumran community. Scholars immediately saw the relevance of this style of interpretation for understanding New Testament use of the Old Testament, e.g., Acts 2:16–17: "But this [the speaking in

tongues] is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ‘And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh . . . ’” (citing Joel 2:28–32).

Throughout Matthew we see specific prophetic texts equated with specific events in the life and ministry of Jesus. We find this five times in the infancy narrative, e.g., “All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: ‘Behold, a virgin shall conceive . . . ’” (Mt 1:22–23 [citing Isa 7:14]; cf. Mt 2:5–6 [citing Mic 5:2]; 2:15 [citing Hos 11:1]; 2:17–18 [citing Jer 31:15]; 2:23 [citing Isa 11:1 and Judg 13:5]). Similar citations punctuate the Matthean narrative. Jesus’ ministry in Galilee is said to be “what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah” (Mt 4:12–16 [citing Isa 9:1–2]). Jesus’ healing of the multitudes is “what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah” (Mt 8:17 [citing Isa 53:4]). Jesus’ style of ministry, particularly his avoidance of clamor and refusing to incite the mob, is the fulfillment of “what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah” (Mt 12:17–20 [citing Isa 42:1–4]). Both of these latter passages encourage readers to equate Jesus with the Lord’s Servant of the prophecies of Isaiah. The Matthean evangelist cites a number of prophecies in reference to Jesus’ ministry in Jerusalem and his Passion. This exegetical procedure closely approximates what we see in the Peshar commentaries of Qumran.<sup>7</sup>

(2) *Beatitudes in the Scrolls and in Matthew*. One of the best-known features in Jesus’ teaching was his stringing together of several beatitudes (Mt 5:3–12 = Lk 6:20–26). Couplets of beatitudes are attested in Israel’s scriptures and in other Jewish writings from late antiquity (e.g., Pss 32:1–2; 84:4–5; 119:1–2; Sir 14:1–2; 25:8–9; Tob 13:13–14), but it was not until the discovery of 4Q525 that we actually had a Jewish text, apart from the Gospels themselves, that preserves a string of beatitudes:

[Blessed is the one who . . . ] with a clean heart and does not slander with his tongue.  
 Blessed are those who hold fast to its statutes and do not hold fast to the ways of injustice.  
 Ble[ssed] are those who rejoice in it, and do not burst forth on paths of folly.  
 Blessed are those who seek it with pure hands, and do not search for it with a deceitful  
 [hea]rt.

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<sup>7</sup> The pioneering study in this field is K. Stendahl, *The School of St. Matthew and Its Use of the Old Testament* (ASNU 20; Lund: Gleerup; Copenhagen: Munksgaard; rev. ed., Philadelphia: Fortress, 1968). Stendahl’s appeal to peshar at Qumran was helpful, even if his suggestion of a Matthean “school” is not followed.

Blessed is the man who attains wisdom, and walks in the law of the Most High . . .<sup>8</sup> (frag. 2 ii + 3:1–10)

Scholars debate how many beatitudes originally made up this list. Obviously, there were at least five (one more than we find in the Lukan collection). It is speculated that there may have been seven. The structural similarity is interesting, to be sure, but what is more interesting are the differences between Jesus' beatitudes and those of 4Q525. The beatitudes of this Scroll fit the typical wisdom pattern, whereas Jesus' beatitudes promise eschatological justice: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. . . . Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Mt 5:3, 8).<sup>9</sup>

(3) *Righteousness in the Scrolls and in Matthew.* The various forms of "righteous" and "righteousness" (including "just" and "justice") occur hundreds of times in the Scrolls. These words also appear frequently in the Gospel of Matthew. Especially interesting are the references to the "teacher of righteousness" who comes in the "last days" (e.g., CD 6:10–11, "the one who teaches righteousness in the last days"; cf. 1QpHab 1:13; 7:4). This authoritative teacher will instruct the **faith faithful?** in the true understanding of the law of God. The parallel with the Matthean presentation of Jesus, especially as we see it in the Sermon on the Mount, is striking. The men of Qumran would certainly concur with Jesus' warning: "I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (Mt 5:20), as well as with his beatitudes: "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied" (Mt 5:6) and "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (5:10).<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Translations of the Dead Sea Scrolls are based on M. O. Wise, M. G. Abegg Jr., and E. M. Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1996). Modifications are sometimes made, usually to offer a more literal rendering.

<sup>9</sup> See B. T. Viviano, "Beatitudes Found among the Dead Sea Scrolls," *BAR* 18/6 (1992), 53–55, 66; É. Puech, "The Collection of Beatitudes in Hebrew and in Greek (4Q525 1–4 and Mt 5,3–12)," in F. Manns and E. Alliata (eds.), *Early Christianity in Context: Monuments and Documents* (SBF 38; Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 1993), 353–68.

<sup>10</sup> See J. Kampen, "'Righteousness' in Matthew and the Legal Texts from Qumran," in M. Bernstein, F. García Martínez, and J. Kampen (eds.), *Legal Texts and Legal Issues: Proceedings*

(4) *Works of the Messiah in the Scrolls and in the Gospels.* One of the most startling parallels between the Scrolls and the Gospels is found in 4Q521. This particular Scroll fragment lends important support to the contention that Jesus did indeed understand himself in messianic terms.<sup>11</sup> In a passage whose authenticity can scarcely be doubted, an imprisoned and discouraged John the Baptizer sends to Jesus, asking, “Are you he who is to come, or do we look for another?” To this question Jesus replies: “Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is he who takes no offense at me” (Mt 11:2–6 = Lk 7:18–23). Jesus’ message for John contains allusions to several words and phrases from the book of Isaiah (e.g., Isa 35:5–6 [blind and lame]; 26:19 [dead]; 61:1–2 [good news]). This material appears in 4Q521: “setting prisoners free, opening the eyes of the blind . . . For he shall heal the wounded, he shall make alive the dead, (and) he shall preach good news to the poor” (frags. 2 + 4 ii 8–12). These remarkable events are described following mention of God’s Messiah, whom heaven and earth will obey (line 1).<sup>12</sup> This Scroll suggests that Jesus’ reply to John was indeed messianic. Indeed, the Matthean evangelist also understood the import of Jesus’ reply, introducing the story with the words, “Now when

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*of the Second Meeting of the International Organization for Qumran Studies Cambridge 1995* (J. M. Baumgarten Festschrift; STDJ 23; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 461–87.

<sup>11</sup> For much of the twentieth century so-called critical scholarship argued, or assumed, that Jesus did not regard himself as the Messiah. Typical is the remark of R. Bultmann, *Jesus* (Berlin: Deutsche Bibliothek, 1926), 12; ET: *Jesus and the Word* (New York: Scribner’s Sons, 1934), 13: “I am personally of the opinion that Jesus did not believe himself to be the Messiah.”

<sup>12</sup> It is not always clear who the subject of the verbs is in the portion of 4Q521 under consideration. The preaching of good news to the poor surely is the activity of the Lord’s Anointed. Perhaps this figure is also the subject of the verbs of healing and raising the dead. However, in an **important sense ????** this is not a pressing question, for if the anointed figure is the agent through whom healing takes place, surely he and all concerned would have understood that it is God himself who is the ultimate source of saving power. The same would have been true in the case of Jesus.

John heard in prison about the deeds of the Messiah...” (Mt 11:2). These are Matthew’s words, for the Lukan evangelist does not introduce his version of the story this way.<sup>13</sup>

### Mark

There are important points of contact between the Jesus story of Mark and the Dead Sea Scrolls. Both involve similar understandings of passages of scripture.

(5) *Isaiah 40 in the Scrolls and in Mark.* Isaiah 40 advances a bold typology whereby the original exodus serves as a model for a new era of salvation. Just as a way was prepared in the wilderness long ago, that God’s people could travel from Egypt to the promised land, so it will happen again – only even better, for there will be no wilderness wanderings, but a highway leading directly from oppression to redemption. The men of Qumran understood Isaiah 40:3 in a similar manner. They too cited this passage and organized a community of covenant renewal in the wilderness of the Dead Sea region: “When such men as these come to be in Israel, conforming to these doctrines, they shall separate from the session of perverse men to go to the wilderness, there to prepare the way of truth, as it is written, ‘In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God’ [Isa 40:3]” (1QS 8:12-14). And again: “He shall save reproof – itself founded on true knowledge and righteous judgment – for those who have chosen the Way, treating each as his spiritual qualities and the precepts of the era require. He shall ground them in knowledge, thereby instructing them in truly wondrous mysteries; if then the secret Way is perfected among the men of the Yahad, each will walk blamelessly with his fellow, guided by what has been revealed to them. That will be the time of ‘preparing the way in the desert’ [Isa 40:3]” (1QS 9:17-20). As seen in the second excerpt, the word “way” (Hebr. *derekh*) became a name for the Qumran community itself, just as it did for the early Christian community: “But this I admit to you, that according to the Way [Greek: *hodos*] which they call a sect I do serve the God of our fathers . . .” (Acts 24:14; cf. Acts 9:2; 19:9, 23; 24:22).

(6) *The Vineyard Parable of Isaiah in the Scrolls and in Jesus.* Jesus’ Parable of the Vineyard (Mk 12:1–9 and parallels) is based on Isaiah’s Song of the Vineyard (cf. Isa

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<sup>13</sup> See É. Puech, “Une Apocalypse Messianique (4Q521),” *RevQ* 15 (1992), 475–519; J. J. Collins, “The Works of the Messiah,” *DSD* 1 (1994), 98–112.

5:1-7). Speaking for the Lord, the prophet Isaiah complained that despite loving care, the vineyard planted and nurtured on the hill produced worthless grapes. The parable is an allegory and it is a juridical parable, that is, a parable that induces the hearers to pass judgment on themselves. The vineyard is Israel, its owner is God, the fruit is the behavior of Israel. Israel has no excuse: “What more could God do for his people?” Therefore, the nation may expect judgment. Jesus’ parable presupposes these allegorical features, but adds tenant farmers to the story and reassigns the guilt: Israel is not at fault, her religious leaders are; and redirects the judgment: the religious leaders will lose their stewardship.

The shift of focus from the nation as a whole to the religious leaders, specifically the ruling priests, was not unique to Jesus. We find this perspective in the Aramaic paraphrase of Isaiah (the Targum), especially in its rendering of Isaiah 5:1–2, 5, where the watch tower becomes “sanctuary” and the wine vat becomes “altar.” (This interpretation is also attested in two places in the Tosefta: *Me’ila* 1.16 and *Sukkah* 3.15.) The antiquity of the tradition is now confirmed at Qumran, where a small scroll fragment (4Q500) alludes to Isaiah’s Song of the Vineyard and clearly links it to the Temple.<sup>14</sup>

### **Luke**

One might not expect distinctly Lukan contacts with Judaism, given the high probability that the Lukan evangelist was a gentile. However, perusal of Luke–Acts indicates that this person was familiar with the synagogue (and he gives us an early description of a synagogue service in 4:16–30), and evidently knew well significant portions of the Greek version of scripture. There are two important points of contact with the Dead Sea Scrolls that can be mentioned briefly.

(7) *The announcement of the coming Son of God.* The angel announces to Mary: “He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end . . . the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God” (Lk 1:32–35). These words echo the promise given David: “I will establish the throne of

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<sup>14</sup> See J. M. Baumgarten, “4Q500 and the Ancient Conception of the Lord’s Vineyard,” *JJS* 40 (1989), 1–6; G. J. Brooke, “4Q500 1 and the Use of Scripture in the Parable of the Vineyard,” *DSD* 2 (1995), 268–94.

his kingdom forever . . . I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me . . . your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever” (2 Sam 7:13-16). They also find a remarkable parallel in an Aramaic text from Qumran: “He shall be called son of the great God, and by his name shall he be named. He shall be called the Son of God, and they shall call him Son of the Most High . . . their kingdom will be an eternal kingdom” (4Q246 1:9–2:5). This parallel, which is probably speaking of the expected Jewish Messiah, demonstrates that in Judaism, in the land of Israel, and in the Aramaic language, before the time of Jesus and Christian proclamation, the Messiah was sometimes called the “Son of God.” Therefore, it is not necessary to conclude, as some critics have in the past, that reference to Jesus as Son of God was due to later Greco-Roman influence as Christianity spread throughout the Roman Empire.<sup>15</sup>

(8) *Fulfilling the Law and inheriting Eternal Life*. On one occasion a legal expert approaches Jesus and asks what he must do to inherit eternal life (Lk 10:25–28). When the man affirms the commandments to love God and to love one’s neighbor, Jesus assures him, “Do this and you will live” (v. 28). Most interpreters recognize the allusion to Leviticus 18:5, where the Law of Moses assures Israelites that if a man does the law, he will live. The problem is that Moses was speaking of life in the land of Israel, not eternal life. So how does Jesus’ allusion to Leviticus 18:5 provide assurance to the legal expert that he will inherit eternal life? The answer is found in observing that Leviticus 18:5 was understood in late antiquity as referring both to prosperous life in the promised land and to life in the world to come. For example, in the Aramaic, Leviticus 18:5 reads: “You shall therefore keep my statutes and my ordinances, by doing which a man shall

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<sup>15</sup> See J. J. Collins, “The Son of God Text from Qumran,” in M. C. De Boer (ed.), *From Jesus to John: Essays on Jesus and New Testament Christology in Honour of Marinus de Jonge* (JSNTSup 84; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 65–82; J. A. Fitzmyer, “4Q246: The ‘Son of God’ Document from Qumran,” *Bib* 74 (1993), 153–74. Some interpreters believe the Son of God figure in 4Q246 is in fact a usurper, who arrogantly and blasphemously applies to himself such exalted language. This interpretation could well be correct, for the lack of context makes it impossible to decide the question with any degree of certainty. In either case, the value of the Son of God language in 4Q246 for interpreting Luke 1 remains, whether a positive figure is in view, who should be called Son of God, or a negative figure is in view, who should not be so called. The important point is the currency of the titles and how they clarify early Christology.

live *in the world to come*: I am the LORD” (*Targ. Onqelos*). The antiquity of this interpretation is seen in the *Damascus Covenant*, one of the Dead Sea Scrolls found in fragments in the Qumran caves and – more than one hundred years ago – in the genizah of the old Cairo synagogue. According to this text: “His holy Sabbaths, His glorious festivals, His righteous laws, His reliable ways. The desires of His will, which *a man should carry out and so have life in them*, He opened up to them . . . and even at this day, those who hold firm to it shall receive eternal life” (CD 3:14-20, italics added to indicate the allusion to Lev 18:5). The author of this text understood Leviticus 18:5 as promising “eternal life,” just as Jesus did.

### **John**

We also find important points of contact in the Gospel of John with several midrashic and targumic interpretations. Perhaps the most dramatic parallel between John and the Dead Sea Scrolls is their use of dualistic terminology.

(9) *Dualism in the Scrolls and in John*. The dualism found in the Rule of the Community has especially drawn scholarly attention. Contrasts between light/darkness, good deeds/evil deeds, and truth/falsehood are found in 1QS 3:13–4:26. A sample of the passage reads as follows: “[God] allotted unto humanity two spirits that he should walk in them until the time of His visitation; they are the spirits of truth and perversity. The origin of truth is in a fountain of light, and the origin of perversity is from a fountain of darkness. Dominion over all the sons of righteousness is in the hand of the Prince of light; they walk in the ways of light. All dominion over the sons of perversity is in the hand of the Angel of darkness; they walk in the ways of darkness” (1QS 3:18–21). Although Johannine and Qumranian dualism is not identical, there is significant similarity. Some of the most important parallels have been presented by James Charlesworth: “Spirit of truth” (Jn 14:17; 15:26; 16:13; 1 Jn 4:6; cf. 1QS 3:18-19; 4:21, 23); “Holy Spirit” (Jn 14:26; 20:22; cf. 1QS 4:21); “sons of light” (Jn 12:36; cf. 1QS 3:13, 24, 25); “eternal life” (Jn 3:15, 16, 36; 4:14, 36; 5:24, etc.; cf. 1QS 4:7); “the light of life” (Jn 8:12; cf. 1QS 3:7); “walk in darkness” (Jn 8:12; 12:35; cf. 1QS 3:21; 4:11); “wrath of God” (Jn 3:36; cf. 1QS 4:12); “eyes of the blind” (Jn 9:39-41; 10:21; cf. 1QS 4:11); “full of grace” (Jn 1:14; cf. 1QS 4:4, 5); “the works of God” (Jn 6:28; 9:3; cf. 1QS 4:4); “men . . . for their works were evil” (Jn 3:19; cf. 1QS 4:10, 20). To these a few

others might be added: “witness of the truth” (Jn 5:33; 18:37; cf. 1QS 8:6); “do [or practice] the truth” (Jn 3:21; 1 Jn 1:6; cf. 1QS 1:5; 5:3; 8:2); “walking in truth” (2 Jn 4; 3 Jn 3; cf. 1QS 4:6, 15); “living water” (Jn 4:14; cf. CD 19:33-34); darkness overcome by light (Jn 1:5; 1 Jn 2:8; cf. 1QMyst 6).<sup>16</sup>

These parallels do not require us to conclude that John has been influenced by Qumran or the Rule of the Community; they do, however, encourage us to interpret Johannine dualism in the Jewish world of late antiquity.<sup>17</sup> Appeals to Gnosticism, for example, are unnecessary and may well be anachronistic.

### **Conclusion**

The Judaic character of the New Testament Gospels is illustrated by the nine important parallels that have been briefly considered. There are many more parallels and points of contact, some linguistic and technical, that could be added to our discussion. But the examples that have been considered should be sufficient for the purposes at hand.

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<sup>16</sup> See J. H. Charlesworth, “A Critical Comparison of the Dualism in 1QS 3:13–4:26 and the ‘Dualism’ Contained in the Gospel of John,” *NTS* 15 (1969), 389–418; repr. in Charlesworth (ed.), *John and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (London: Chapman, 1972; repr. New York: Crossroad, 1990), 76–106.

<sup>17</sup> This is the conclusion reached by R. Bauckham, “The Qumran Community and the Gospel of John,” in L. H. Schiffman, E. Tov, and J. C. VanderKam (eds.), *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Fifty Years after Their Discovery. Proceedings of the Jerusalem Congress, July 20–25, 1997* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society and the Israel Antiquities Authority, 2000), 105–15.