JOHN, QUMRAN, AND THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS
JOHN, QUMRAN, AND THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS: SIXTY YEARS OF DISCOVERY AND DEBATE

Edited by

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The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls has dramatically expanded our knowledge of Late Second Temple Judaism and the early period of Christian origins. The scrolls have given scholars access to biblical manuscripts that are centuries older than the Masoretic Text and have made us aware of previously unknown Jewish documents contemporary with the emerging Christian movement. To date, at least nine hundred manuscripts have been recovered from the Judean desert. With the texts now widely available in their original languages and in translation, the past decade has seen a renewed interest in the many questions raised by the scrolls. Who wrote and/or published these documents? Why were they hidden in the wilderness caves? How are the scrolls related to the ancient complex at nearby Khirbet Qumran and what was the nature and worldview of the community that lived there? What trends do Qumran and the scrolls reflect in the history of Jewish thought? What can they reveal about Christian origins and how can they inform our understanding of the New Testament and the social world of Late Second Temple Judaism?

To commemorate the sixtieth anniversary of the discovery of the scrolls, the 2007 annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in San Diego featured a number of special sessions on recent developments in scrolls research. The essays in this book reflect the deliberations of a session that considered the past and potential impact of the scrolls on Johannine Studies, jointly sponsored by the John, Jesus, and History Group and the Johannine Literature Section. This special session sought to make Johannine scholars aware of recent developments in scrolls research and to open new avenues of exploration, in view of the somewhat surprising fact that the scrolls have played no significant role in discussions of the Johannine literature over the past several decades. Specifically, the many questions noted above have garnered little notice in Johannine circles, despite a growing interest in the historical roots of the Johannine tradition and an emerging reevaluation of the origins and nature of the “Johannine community” and its relationship to mainstream Judaism. The panelists for the special session,
including experts on the scrolls and Johannine scholars, were asked to reflect on the significance of the scrolls in past research and, more significantly, to point to future avenues of inquiry. The results of their work appear in the chapters to follow.

The volume opens with two essays that review recent developments in research on John and the scrolls. First, Eileen Schuller’s essay, a transcript of her remarks that opened the SBL session, offers an informative overview of the past decade of Qumran scholarship. She lists the major documents that have recently become available, noting that “over three hundred of the approximately nine hundred known scrolls have been published in a scholarly *editio princeps* in this past decade [1997–2007]” (p. 6). In some cases, the quantity of material now available has made it possible to compare multiple copies of texts, leading to new questions about the history of their recension. In addition to these new manuscripts, there are also new reference works. New literary and social-scientific methodologies are adding to understandings of the scrolls and the community that produced them. Following Schuller’s observations, Paul Anderson focuses more specifically on the impact of the scrolls on the study of the Gospel of John over the past sixty years. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the provenance of the Fourth Gospel was considered to be Hellenistic, not Jewish; with the discovery of the scrolls, the roots of the Johannine tradition now find their place among other forms of Palestinian Judaism. Anderson’s article helpfully traces some of the major moments in this gradual reversal and highlights ways that the scrolls have influenced the shift in consensus.

These introductory essays are followed by a number of “case studies” that examine instances in which the desert manuscripts may help shed light on expressions, themes, and concepts in the Johannine literature and/or on the history and character of Johannine Christianity. These articles clearly suggest that future scholarship will be interested not only in connections between the Gospel of John and the scrolls but also in Qumran Judaism and Johannine Christianity as parallel religious movements. These chapters forecast the many and diverse avenues of potential future research on John and Qumran.

John Ashton’s essay focuses on a puzzling expression in the scrolls. What is meant by the term הָרָה נְדָר? Does it correspond to any known concept in first-century Judaism or Christianity? Ashton argues that the idea behind this expression is not unique to Qumran but has parallels with contemporary apocalyptic writings in which life is shaped by the revelation of a “mystery” in the process of actualization. Ashton’s work has implications for understanding Johannine eschatology and what the New Testament literature calls the “reign of God.”

For many years, scholars have sought to explain the similarities between the Gospels of John and Luke. George Brooke’s essay revisits one proposal that suggests a Judean provenance for some of the traditions common to both Gospels. Brooke believes that this hypothesis can be strengthened by considering new material from the scrolls. The Qumran literature reflects ideas within Palestinian
Judaism that may have provided a common source of concepts for both Luke and John.

Brian Capper draws on social-science models to discuss the wide-ranging impact of the Essenes on pre-70 C.E. Judean village life. He points out that an overemphasis on celibate Essenes may lead one to overlook a much larger number of married members of the sect who lived communally in Judean villages. His intriguing study proceeds to consider two sites mentioned in the Fourth Gospel—Bethany and the location of Jesus’ final meal in Jerusalem—where the Essenes may have been active. John’s interest in and awareness of these locations may also reflect an awareness of Essene thought and, thus, of the type of thinking preserved in the scrolls.

A number of recent discoveries have shed new light on ancient Jewish purity rituals, the topic of Hannah Harrington’s essay. Within Judaism, water rituals were associated with, and carried out in anticipation of, the gifts of the Holy Spirit and new life. Previous scholarship tended to view the Fourth Gospel’s conceptual connections among water, life, and Spirit as a peculiar development within the Johannine tradition that had no clear precedent in ancient Judaism. The scrolls challenge the notion that John’s outlook was unique and establish a much richer understanding of the broader Jewish theological context from which Johannine thought emerged.

Loren Stuckenbruck considers ancient Jewish prayers for protection from demonic powers. His essay examines not just the Late Second Temple texts themselves but also the brand of piety that lay behind them, a piety that sought divine protection from personified forms of evil. Prayers of this type shed light on Jesus’ final prayer in John 17, in which he notably asks the Father to keep his disciples “from the evil one” (17:15).

Following these focused studies, the volume concludes with reflections by James Charlesworth, a preeminent authority on both the Johannine Literature and the scrolls. Charlesworth’s essay sets a program for future study by noting a number of points at which John and the scrolls speak from a similar, if not common, milieu. He rightly insists that the scrolls must be given consideration in any attempt to re-create the historical Jesus or early Christianity. When read in light of the scrolls, the Fourth Gospel no longer need stand apart from the early traditions that gave shape to the Synoptics, nor does it look to a Hellenistic provenance. The scrolls reveal a Palestinian form of Second Temple Judaism in which the seeds of Johannine Christianity may have first sprouted.

The editors thank all who participated in the “John and the Scrolls” 2007 SBL session, including those whose essays appear in this publication and also

1. Since the SBL special session in 2007, scrolls study has continued to make rapid progress. A 2009 issue of *Dead Sea Discoveries* (16, no. 3) examines questions concerning the communities connected with the scrolls, and John J. Collins’ recent book, *Beyond the Qumran*
Professor Jörg Frey, who graciously served as a discussion panelist. We also thank our colleagues on the steering committee of the John, Jesus, and History Group, whose planning and organization made this session possible—Paul Anderson, Jaime Clark-Soles, Alan Culpepper, Felix Just, and Moody Smith—along with Colleen Conway of the Johannine Literature Section for her helpful advice and support. Finally, we are most grateful to Bob Buller and Billie Jean Collins from the Society of Biblical Literature and to Judith H. Newman, the editor of the Early Judaism and Its Literature Series, for their support, critical comments, and patient assistance, which has made publication of these essays possible.

AB Anchor Bible Commentary
ABRL The Anchor Bible Reference Library
AGSU Arbeiten zur Geschichte des Spätjudentums und Urchristentums
ANRW Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt
ASBT Acadia Studies in Bible and Theology (Baker Books)
AVTRW Aufsätze und Vorträge zur Theologie und Religionswissenschaft
BA Biblical Archaeologist
BAFCS The Book of Acts in Its First-Century Setting (Eerdmans)
BAZ Biblische Archäologie und Zeitgeschichte (Brunnen)
BBB Bonner biblische Beiträge
BBR Bulletin for Biblical Research
BETL Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum lovaniensium
BibSem Biblical Seminar Series (Sheffield Academic)
BIS Biblical Interpretation Series
BJS Brown Judaic Studies
BNTC Black’s New Testament Commentaries
BRLJ Brill Reference Library of Judaism
BSac Bibliotheca sacra
BZNW Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
CB Cultura Bíblica
CBQ Catholic Biblical Quarterly
CQS Companion to the Qumran Scrolls (T&T Clark)
CRAI Comptes rendus de l’Académie des inscriptions et belles lettres
CSCO Corpus scriptorum christianorum orientalium
CTSRR College Theology Society Resources in Religion (University Press of America)
DJD Discoveries in the Judean Desert
DSD Dead Sea Discoveries
DSS Dead Sea Scrolls
DSSCOL The Dead Sea Scrolls and Christian Origins Library (Bibal Press)
EBib Études bibliques
ECDSS Eerdmans Commentaries on the Dead Sea Scrolls
EKKNT Evangelisch-katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
ErIsr Eretz Israel
EstEcl Estudios eclesiásticos
ETL Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses
EvQ Evangelical Quarterly
ExpTim Expository Times
FB Forschung zur Bibel
FRLANT Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
HBS Herders Biblical Studies
HeyJ Heythrop Journal
HTKNT Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
HTS Harvard Theological Studies
IEJ Israel Exploration Journal
IJSSCC International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church
IOS Israel Oriental Society
IRT Issues in Religion and Theology
JB Jerusalem Bible
JBL Journal of Biblical Literature
JJS Journal of Jewish Studies
JSJ Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Period
JSJSup Journal for the Study of Judaism: Supplement Series
JSNTSup Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series
JSOT Journal for the Study of the Old Testament
JSOTSup Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series
JSP Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha
JSPSup Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha: Supplement Series
JSSSSup Journal of Semitic Studies: Supplement Series
JTS Journal of Theological Studies
LNNTS Library of New Testament Studies
LSTS Library of Second Temple Studies
NCBC New Century Bible Commentary
NICNT New International Commentary on the New Testament
NovT Novum Testamentum
NovTSup Novum Testamentum Supplements
NTOA Novum Testamentum et Orbis Antiquus
NTS New Testament Studies
NTTS New Testament Tools and Studies
PTSDSSP Princeton Theological Seminary Dead Sea Scrolls Project
RB Revue Biblique
RBS Readers in Biblical Studies (Brill)
RelSoc Religion and Society
RevQ Revue de Qumran
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>SBAB</td>
<td>Stuttgart biblische Aufsatzbände</td>
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<tr>
<td>SBFLA</td>
<td>Studii biblici Franciscani liber annus</td>
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<td>SBL</td>
<td>Society of Biblical Literature</td>
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<td>SBLABS</td>
<td>Society of Biblical Literature Archaeology and Biblical Studies</td>
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<td>SBLAcB</td>
<td>Society of Biblical Literature Academia Biblica</td>
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<td>SBLDS</td>
<td>Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series</td>
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<td>SBLEJL</td>
<td>Society of Biblical Literature Early Judaism and Its Literature</td>
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<td>SBLMS</td>
<td>Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series</td>
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<td>SBLRBS</td>
<td>Society of Biblical Literature Resources for Biblical Study</td>
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<td>SBT</td>
<td>Studies in Biblical Theology</td>
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<td>SDSSRL</td>
<td>Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature</td>
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<td>SHJ</td>
<td>Studying the Historical Jesus (Eerdmans)</td>
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<td>SJLA</td>
<td>Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity</td>
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<tr>
<td>SNTSMS</td>
<td>Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series</td>
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<td>StBibL</td>
<td>Studies in Biblical Literature Series (Peter Lang)</td>
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<td>STDJ</td>
<td>Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah</td>
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<tr>
<td>StudLit</td>
<td>Studia Liturgica</td>
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<td>SUNT</td>
<td>Studien zur Umwelt des Neuen Testaments</td>
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<td>SVTP</td>
<td>Studia in Veteris Testamenti pseudepigraphica</td>
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<td>TBei</td>
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<td>TJT</td>
<td>Toronto Journal of Theology</td>
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<td>TLZ</td>
<td>Theologische Literaturzeitung</td>
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<td>TRE</td>
<td>Theologische Realencyklopädie</td>
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<td>TRu</td>
<td>Theologische Rundschau</td>
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<td>TTS</td>
<td>Theologische Texte und Studien</td>
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<tr>
<td>VT</td>
<td>Vetus Testamentum</td>
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<tr>
<td>WUNT</td>
<td>Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZNW</td>
<td>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZTK</td>
<td>Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche</td>
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Note on Citations

The following format is used throughout this volume for citations of the Dead Sea Scrolls and related documents. Note that the Dead Sea Scrolls are cited by column and line numbers in the original manuscripts, not by “verses.”

cave number/Q(umran)/manuscript number column.line

Or, in the case of fragments of documents:

cave number/Q/manuscript number “frag.” fragment number column.line

In the case of fragments, a single number following the fragment number refers to the relevant line in the fragment—many smaller fragments do not have distinct “columns.”

Example: “1QS 1.10” refers to line 10 in column 1 of the Community Rule, which is catalogued under the heading “1QS.”

Example: “4Q177 frag. 3 8” refers to line 8 in fragment 3 of 4Q177.

Example: “4Q417 frag. 2 1.11–13” refers to lines 11 through 13 in column 1 of fragment 2 of 4Q417, which is popularly titled “4QInstructionc.”

Example: “4Q163 frags. 4–7 2.10-12” reflects an instance where multiple fragments have been combined to reconstruct the original document. In this case, fragments 4 through 7 of 4Q163 have been combined to reconstruct the original text. The citation here refers to lines 10 through 12 in column 2 of the reconstruction.

Please note that, except where indicated, all citations of the Dead Sea Scrolls reflect the column, line, and fragment numbers indicated in the respective critical editions from the Discoveries in the Judean Desert (DJD) series (Oxford: Clarendon).

The Editors wish to thank Loren Stuckenbruck, Eileen Schuller, and Jeremy Penner for their tireless and patient assistance in the review of citations of the scrolls and the preparation of the index of citations.

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