

Introduction

Whoever would have thought that the retrieval of a lost goat would have led to one of the greatest archaeological discoveries of the twentieth century, namely, the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls? The story has often been told of the goat that strayed away, unwittingly leading its owner, Muhammad El Dibh, past the many caves that dotted the cliff face along the western shore of the Dead Sea. Exploring one of these caves, he found several rolls of leather and brought out seven of them. This was the start of an incredible journey, which took these seven leather scrolls from the Judean wilderness to a Bethlehem market, to St. Mark's Monastery in Jerusalem, the Hebrew University, and finally to the American Schools of Archaeological Research, until they ultimately became known to the world. This initial discovery led to renewed archaeological interest in the caves on the northwestern shores of the Dead Sea, which yielded roughly 850 scrolls from eleven caves. Shrouded in mystery and secrecy for many decades, it wasn't until the early 1990s that all the scrolls came into public domain. The initial discovery of the scrolls themselves led to the production of a vast amount of literature; the publication of the entire collection of scrolls led to renewed literary activity in the world and content of the scrolls. At the closing session of the Jerusalem Congress on the

Dead Sea Scrolls (July 20–25, 1997) H. Stegemann said: “There are already more than ten thousand books and scholarly articles written on Qumran evidence over the last fifty years. The present stage of Qumran research seems to cover almost every topic that could be isolated, with the main findings discussed from every point of view at least several hundred times.”¹

While the early phase of scrolls scholarship was focused on piecing together the fragments and consisted largely of reconstruction and some comparatively general synthetic work, the next phase of research arose from the foundation that these reconstructed texts provided. As a result, there have been countless studies on various themes and concepts arising out of individual texts.² The abundance of research, which has greatly enhanced our understanding of the scrolls and their authors, testifies to this. In this scenario, the obvious question at the very outset is: Why another study on the scrolls? or What new dimension is this study going to bring to existing Qumran scholarship?

Direction of Travel

In the following chapters, we will embark on journey entailing a detailed investigation into the role and function of repentance in the religious experience of the Qumran community. We will do this through the evidence provided by the Dead Sea Scrolls against the backdrop of contemporaneous Second Temple literature. The

1. H. Stegemann, “Qumran Challenges for the Next Century,” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Fifty Years after Their Discovery*, ed. L. Schiffman, E. Tov, and J. VanderKam (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2000), 944–50 (944).
2. G. Nickelsburg says: “We should recognize and celebrate the fact that the first decade and a half of Qumran scholarship produced a great deal of intelligent and even brilliant work on the scrolls and their context, and we should acknowledge that this pioneering work was foundational for what followed and that will continue to inform further studies.” G. Nickelsburg, “Currents in Qumran Scholarship: The Interplay of Data and Agendas, and Methodology,” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls At Fifty*, ed. R. Kugler and E. M. Schuller (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999), 79–99 (80).

purpose of such an exercise is to show that repentance was the very basis of the community's existence and a key factor that shaped its religious self-identity. In doing so, it establishes the Qumran community as an important penitential movement within Second Temple Judaism. Our focus then is to explore how this penitential worldview dominated and permeated every level of the community's religious experience and existence.

Our guiding principle is that motifs, language, and images elucidating "repentance" as a vital theological-soteriological concept at Qumran can be used as an analytical tool to reconstruct how repentance functioned within the belief system at Qumran, and to what extent. That is to say, repentance never occurred in a vacuum; it was an integral part of the religious experience of a real, historical community. In other words, our hope is that at the end of this journey, the study of repentance texts in the Dead Sea Scrolls will help postulate how such texts might have been translated into daily life at Qumran.

As hinted at above, I will do this by interacting with repentance motifs in other Second Temple literature. This will show that despite the shared theological and ideological climate of the scrolls, the Apocrypha, and Pseudepigrapha, and their similarities in the understanding of repentance, the emergent and distinctive features regarding the role and function of repentance in the scrolls present the Qumran community as an important penitential movement in Second Temple Judaism. Furthermore, this Second Temple material can "provide us with important information about the development of Jewish religious thought."³ The use of this additional material serves a twofold purpose: First, against the backdrop of contemporaneous sources, we will be able to discover any features

3. A. Tomasino, *Judaism Before Jesus: The Events and Ideas that Shaped the New Testament World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 32.

particularly emphasized or distinctive regarding the concept of repentance in the scrolls; second, we will use any such picture of repentance that might emerge from our comparison as a “tool” to reconstruct the function of repentance in the Qumran community.

How will we do this? Beginning with the question of how repentance justified the community’s separated existence in the Judean wilderness and reshaped their understanding of covenant, we will explore how repentance determined who was “in” and who was “out” of God’s plan, how repentance featured prominently in daily governance and cultic activities, and how it authenticated their view of the end times. This panoramic sweep, which covers the place of repentance from entry into the community through existence within the community right up to the eschatological expectations of the community, will firmly establish an overriding penitential worldview that prevailed at Qumran.

This detailed study of the concept of repentance in the Dead Sea Scrolls addresses a significant lacuna in Qumran scholarship. To date, this subject has not received sufficient scholarly attention, as repentance at Qumran is usually taken for granted and thus relegated to a peripheral position. As such, it has never received any comprehensive or systematic investigation. Our study addresses this lack by attempting to establish the importance of the penitential framework of religious experience at Qumran.

Scrolls and Caves: The Qumran Community

Up to now, I have been talking about the Qumran community and the Dead Sea Scrolls as documents that offer us an insight into this community. This necessarily assumes that there was indeed a link between the remains of a community dwelling that was excavated on the northwestern shores of the Dead Sea and the large cache of scrolls discovered in the caves nearby. However, we cannot take this

link for granted (as this connection between the community and the scrolls is vital to the scope of this book), and therefore it warrants a brief mention. Once this is done, we can get on with our journey and begin to explore how this isolated desert community saw repentance as an integral part of their religious experience.

The site at Qumran might have been the “City of Salt” (Josh. 15:62), in around the eighth to seventh centuries BCE.⁴ If this was the case, after remaining unoccupied for a few centuries there was a period of reoccupation beginning around 140 BCE (Phase 1a). In 134–104 BCE (Phase 1b), there was an expansion of buildings. Phase 1b ended abruptly because of an earthquake and a fire, occurring around 31 BCE, after which the site was abandoned. Reoccupation began after the death of Herod in 4 BCE (Phase 2) and lasted until the settlement was possibly destroyed by a Roman army in 68 CE.⁵ Activity began again when Roman troops stationed at Qumran built some barracks (Phase 3). Judging by the coins belonging to this period, this phase possibly ended around 90 CE.

More recently, J. Magness has argued for a revised chronology for Qumran, attributing a later date to the beginning of the community. She argues that there is insufficient archaeological evidence to maintain Phase 1a as theorized by French archaeologist and biblical scholar R. de Vaux.⁶ Further, Magness subdivides de Vaux’s Phase 1b into a pre-31-BCE and post-31-BCE period⁷ and concludes that the sectarian settlement at Qumran began around the first half of the first century BCE (c. 100–50 BCE).⁸

4. See R. de Vaux *The Archaeology of Qumran* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973).

5. It is generally believed that the Essenes almost certainly perished with this attack. For the continuing existence of the Essenes, see A. Negoitsa, “Did the Essenes Survive the 66–71 War?,” *RevQ* 6 (1969), 517–30.

6. J. Magness, *The Archaeology of Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 63–69.

7. This enables us here to confine Phase 1a remains to the pre-31-BCE period of Phase 1b. Magness, *Archaeology of Qumran*, 64.

De Vaux's theory that there was a relationship between the community that deposited the documents found in the eleven caves and the site excavated nearby at Khirbet Qumran still enjoys scholarly consensus.⁹ The best evidence for a connection between the scrolls caves and the settlement at Qumran is the fact that pottery found in both places is virtually unique to Qumran.¹⁰ J. Magness comments that "Qumran provides the unique opportunity to use archaeological evidence combined with the information from ancient historical sources and scrolls to reconstruct and understand the life of a community."¹¹

This leads to the natural question: What was the identity of this community that lived at Qumran and deposited the scrolls into the eleven caves? In the early days of scrolls scholarship, the Essene connection was taken for granted. In 1956, B. J. Roberts said: "Khirbet Qumrân is now generally acknowledged to be the remains of an Essene convent, and consequentially the Qumrân scrolls should be regarded as Essene literature, because there can be no doubt about the direct connexion between the scrolls and the convent."¹² Scholars are now much more reluctant to assert a priori an Essene identification. F. F. Bruce says that "the Qumran community has been identified in turn with every religious party in Judaism in the later period of the Second Commonwealth—with the Sadducees, Pharisees, Zealots and Essenes."¹³

8. Magness, *Archaeology of Qumran*.

9. This connection of the manuscripts with the archaeological discoveries has not gone unchallenged. One theory has it that Qumran was a "country villa" that was taken over by the Essenes. See Jean-Baptiste Humbert, "L'espace sacré à Qumrân" *RB* 101 (1994): 161–214.

10. Magness, *Archaeology of Qumran*, 44. She points out that the type of ceramic or pottery items found in the caves and on the excavated site is identical.

11. Magness, *Archaeology of Qumran*, 13. She confirms that the scrolls provide evidence that complements the archaeology.

12. B. J. Roberts, "The Qumran Scrolls and the Essenes," *NTS* (1956): 58–65 (58).

13. F. F. Bruce, *New Testament History* (London: Oliphants, 1971), 109. The identification of the community with the Pharisees is no longer advocated since it is generally accepted that the Pharisees are criticized in the scrolls. P. R. Davies, G. Brooke, and P. Callaway, *The Complete*

However, despite the various theories, the Essene identification has become “a kind of *opinio communis*.”¹⁴ This is chiefly because of the accounts about and descriptions of the Essenes in the classical sources, chiefly in the writings of Pliny,¹⁵ Philo,¹⁶ and Josephus.¹⁷ Although the community at Qumran largely resembles these sources’ description of the Essenes, there are considerable differences¹⁸ that have led some scholars to reassess this identification.¹⁹ Still, as Geza Vermes says: “The Essene theory appears not only to be sound but endowed with a high degree of intrinsic probability. To reject it would not render any of the other hypotheses more likely but merely lead to the conclusion that the Qumran relics must belong to a hitherto totally unknown Jewish sect almost identical to the Essenes!”²⁰ Insofar as our journey is concerned, I accept this view that there was indeed a connection between the scrolls and the

World of the Dead Sea Scrolls, 205. L. H. Schiffman suggests that in its earliest stages, the Qumran community was Sadducean or at least exhibited heavy Sadducean influences on its legal positions. L. Schiffman, *Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls: Their True Meaning for Judaism and Christianity* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1994). C. Roth presses for a Zealot identification based on a fragment of the *Songs* at Masada. C. Roth, “Qumran and Masadah: A Final Clarification Regarding the Dead Sea Sect,” *RevQ* (1964): 81–88. He is convinced that the pacifist Essenes did not participate in the revolt against Rome. C. Roth, “Why the Qumran Sect Cannot Have Been Essenes” *RevQ* (1959): 417–22. N. Golb argues that the scrolls represent the wealth of the libraries of Jerusalem hidden there by people who fled from the approaching Romans around the time of the First Jewish Revolt. For Golb, it is more plausible that so many manuscripts came from a large intellectual center rather than a small group. N. Golb, *Who Wrote the Scrolls? The Search for the Secret of Qumran* (London: Michael O’Mara, 1995).

14. G. Vermes, “The Essenes and History,” *JJS* (1981): 18–31 (20).
15. Pliny, *Natural History* 5.15.73. R. Kroft cautions that Pliny “had no first hand knowledge” of this group about which he reports. R. Kroft, “Pliny on Essenes, Pliny on Jews,” *DSD* 8, no. 3 (2001): 255–61 (260).
16. Philo, *Apology for the Jews* as preserved in Eusebius, *Praeparatio evangelica*. 8.10.
17. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 13.5.9 (§§171–73); 18.1.5; *Jewish War* 2.8.2–13 (§§119–61).
18. Despite the differences, the similarities that do exist are striking and appear to fit into the evidence better than the others. Hence, the burden of proof is with those who outrightly reject the Essene theory. See T. Beall, *Josephus’ Description of the Essenes Illustrated by the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).
19. Another theory suggests that the Essene movement had two offshoots, the Qumran community and the Therapeutae in Egypt. F. García Martínez and A. S. van der Woude, “A ‘Groningen’ Hypothesis of Qumran Origins and Early History,” *RevQ* (1990): 521–42.
20. Vermes, “Essenes and History,” 21.

remains of the community, and assume that the scrolls belonged to the community. A study of these documents, then, could provide a useful window into the lives of the community that used them.

We are now ready to move on and highlight some methodological issues that need to be borne in mind. Given that I have been talking about *repentance* “texts,” “concepts,” “images,” and “motifs,” how do we identify them?

Methodological Considerations

Repentance Texts

In any journey, there needs to be a starting point, a sense of ‘rooting’ that serves as a point of reference. We too need a “rooting point,” a working definition that we can return to again and again in order to get our bearing, to check that we are on track. Such a working definition ought to be fluid and general so that we can develop it as we go along. A repentance text therefore should exhibit a general conformity to our working definition, either explicitly or implicitly through language, metaphor, image, or allusion. Before we can proceed further, we need to pin down this “working definition” of repentance and for that, this definition is very helpful:

Repentance is the radical turning away from anything which hinders one’s whole-hearted devotion to God and the corresponding turning to God in love and obedience.²¹

Although this definition is very unspecific, it expresses the bare outlines of what repentance is, thereby allowing us to supplement

21. J. Milgrom, “Repentance,” in *Encyclopedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1974), 14:74. It may be argued that the reference to “love” in this working definition has Christian overtones and therefore is incompatible to this study on the scrolls. However, it can be pointed out that one of the very purposes of the *Rule of the Community* is stated thus: “in order to love everything which he selects and to hate everything that he rejects” (1QS 1:3b–4a). This maintains the general thrust of our working definition.

and modify it as we go along. A couple of other clarifications are necessary at this point. I have been talking about how to identify “repentance texts” in the “Dead Sea Scrolls.” Because of the many archaeological finds around the region of the Dead Sea, this raises the question, which Dead Sea Scrolls? J. Fitzmyer says that the term could denote the scrolls and fragments recovered from the eleven caves in the vicinity of Khirbet Qumran,²² and texts related to them found either at Masada²³ or in the Cairo Genizah.²⁴

Just when we think we have narrowed down our literary corpus, it will be pointed out that the Dead Sea Scrolls (as defined above) are made up of biblical, extrabiblical (apocryphal and pseudigraphical), and sectarian literature. Of this mix, “sectarian literature”²⁵ is what we are primarily concerned with, as this corpus provides “information on the beliefs and practices of the sect that used (and in some cases composed) these scrolls and deposited them in the caves at Qumran.”²⁶ Again, further clarification is necessary when talking about this “subcategory” within the scrolls. Scholars have proposed various criteria for describing a particular work as “sectarian.” For example, E. Chazon²⁷ says that in order to determine whether a particular document is of sectarian authorship, one must consider features such as orthography and language; absence of these features

22. J. Fitzmyer, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and Christian Origins* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 2.

23. The single copy of the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* (Mas 1k).

24. CD A and B.

25. Those works that prior to their discovery were largely unknown but that are distinctive in style and ideology. D. Dimant, “The Qumran Manuscripts: Content and Significance,” in *Time to Prepare the Way in the Wilderness*, ed. D. Dimant and L. Schiffman, STDJ 10 (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 25–58 (26).

26. Magness, *Archaeology of Qumran*, 36. S. W. Crawford says that these hitherto unknown documents “betray certain traits and biases that identify them as the property of a particular Jewish group.” S. W. Crawford, “Not According to Rule: Women, the Dead Sea Scrolls and Qumran,” in *Emanuel: Studies in Hebrew Bible, Septuagint and Dead Sea Scrolls in Honour of Emanuel Tov*, ed. S. Paul, R. Kraft, L. Schiffman, and W. Field (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 127–50 (129).

27. E. Chazon, “Is *Divrei Ha-Me’orot* a Sectarian Prayer,” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Forty Years of Research*, ed. D. Dimant and U. Rappaport (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 3–17.

suggest a nonsectarian origin.²⁸ Likewise, if the script of a scroll predates the settlement of Qumran, it is nonsectarian;²⁹ if it can be positively shown that a particular scroll represented the version of a prayer in general usage at that time, it might indicate a nonsectarian origin. Further, the content of documents that deal with the sect's history and organizational patterns use distinctive ideas and terms. The absence of such language and ideas is indicative of a nonsectarian work.

C. Newsom proposes a wider set of criteria to identify a sectarian work;³⁰ for her, sectarian material implies that it was written by a member of the sect or that it was read by members of the sect no matter who wrote it. Further, Newsom suggests that the term *sectarian* describes a text with rhetorical purpose and polemic emphasis. While both Chazon's and Newsom's criteria are helpful, Newsom's slightly broader approach should be borne in mind since we are concerned with assessing the larger picture of how repentance may have functioned in the community. Therefore, those documents that were composed at Qumran will not be treated differently from those that were imported to or copied at Qumran. This does not affect our overall emphasis on repentance.

However, that said, this approach presents us with one potential difficulty, and that relates to the development of ideas over a period of time. Not all the scrolls come from the same period. Since our texts have been composed or copied between 150 BCE and 68 CE,

28. See E. Tov, "The Biblical Scrolls Found in the Judean Desert and their Contribution to Textual Criticism," *JJS* 39 (1988): 5–37; Tov, "The Orthography and Language of the Hebrew Scrolls Found at Qumran and the Origin of These Scrolls," *Textus* 13 (1986): 31–57.

29. On the relation between scripts and dating, see F. Cross, "The Development of Jewish Scripts," in *The Bible and the Ancient Near East: Essays in Honour of W. F. Albright*, ed. G. E. Wright (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961), 133–202.

30. C. Newsom, "'Sectually Explicit' Literature from Qumran," in *The Hebrew Bible and Its Interpreters*, ed. W. Propp, B. Halpern, and D. Freeman (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 167–87.

the possibility of development and progression in thought and ideas regarding the community's understanding of repentance is very real. We can never be sure whether an idea received the same emphasis throughout the community's various stages of development; the importance of repentance could have waxed and waned over the various periods of the community's existence. This "development" of ideas was noted even in the early days of scrolls research. A. Dupont-Sommer points out that "as far as the Qumran documents are concerned . . . these writings are not all of the same age and can betray, from one document to the next, a certain evolution in institutions and beliefs."³¹ Similarly, E. P. Sanders says: "It should be noted that the Qumran material is not perfectly homogenous. In some instances a developmental history can be traced, and the various documents—and parts of documents—represent differences of opinion on individual points as well as differences of overall intention and view point."³²

As our study of repentance texts proceeds, we will bear this difficulty in mind and take it into consideration when attempting to reconstruct how repentance may have functioned within the community.³³ However, this does not prevent us from approaching these documents as a whole. Unless necessary, we will not confine ourselves to text-critical issues such as deciding whether a text is from an early or later stage of the community. C. Evans and P. Flint acknowledge the diversity of the material that the scrolls represent but also observe that "such a diversity does not preclude the existence

31. A. Dupont-Sommer, *The Essene Writings From Qumran* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1961), 66.

32. E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (London: SCM, 1977), 239n1.

33. A.S. van der Woude warns: "In the first decades of Qumran research, many authors tended in those years to look upon the corpus of texts as reflecting a homogeneous system of thought." A. S. van der Woude, "Fifty Years of Qumran Research," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years*, ed. P. Flint and J. VanderKam (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 1:1–45. He also mentions that some scholars unfortunately still advocate this approach (*ibid.*, 36).

of central ideas or a common core.”³⁴ It is such a “common core” regarding repentance that we are attempting to investigate, albeit keeping in mind the above proviso regarding the development of ideas.³⁵ I have highlighted in the next section (below) selected texts that feature prominently in the subsequent chapters.

Overview of the Scrolls to Be Used

What follows below is a very brief overview of some of the key sectarian scrolls that we will be interacting with. The purpose of this overview is merely to serve as a reference point, an aide-mémoire, for the background of these particular scrolls. It should be remembered that the list of scrolls below is representative rather than exhaustive of the key scrolls I have used. I have divided the material purely on the basis on the caves in which they were discovered. I hope that having this “reference point”/summary of these scrolls will facilitate a smooth transition when we read sections of these scrolls as repentance texts.

34. C. Evans and P. Flint, introduction to *Eschatology, Messianism, and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. C. Evans and P. Flint (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 1–9 (5). On the back cover of *Religion in the Dead Sea Scrolls*, G. Brooke comments that the collection of essays is the first attempt after the release of all the unpublished fragments in 1991 “to consider in a comprehensive way the various religious perspectives to be found in the whole body of evidence” (emphasis added). Thus our investigation seeks to consider in a comprehensive way the various aspects of repentance to be found in the whole body of evidence. In fact, Brooke acknowledges that “though there is much more yet to be said on the topics raised here, and indeed on others not included, in many ways these essays will set the agenda for future discussion.” Our investigation seek to address one such topic “not included.”
35. The difficulty of tracing the development of ideas in the scrolls is affirmed by G. Brooke: “At the moment, the texts from Qumran refuse to be arranged in chronological order or presented as ideologically uniform in any one period.” G. Brooke, review of G. S. Oegema, *DSD* 4 (1997): 367.

Cave 1

1QpHab

This document contains thirteen columns of text and is written in a Herodian script. It is the “longest and best preserved of all the Qumran *pesharim*.”³⁶ It also is one of the most important sources “not only for sectarian Bible interpretation but also for the study of the history of Qumran origins.”³⁷ Its importance lies in the fact that the author uses the biblical book as a pattern to understand his own times.³⁸ Just as the biblical book speaks of the threat posed to Judah by the Babylonians, the author of the *peshar* reinterpreted it for his own times as the threat posed by the Kittim (in all probability, the Romans); similarly, the internal struggles between the pious worshipers of God and the ungodly of the biblical were understood by the author as the conflict between the Teacher of Righteousness and his opponents (including the wicked Priest). The commentary is based on the first two chapters of the biblical book.³⁹

1QS (*The Rule of the Community*)

1QS was among the first scrolls to be discovered and also has the distinction being the “best preserved manuscript from cave one.”⁴⁰ It throws valuable light on the *modus operandi* of the community. Despite its composite nature,⁴¹ it is thought to be one of the oldest

36. E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.–A.D. 135)*, rev. and ed. G. Vermes, F. Millar, and M. Goodman (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986), vol. 3, pt. 1, 433.

37. *Ibid.*, 434.

38. DSSNT 114.

39. The silence regarding the prayer of chapter 3 (in the biblical book) might indicate that the text used by the author of the *peshar* lacked this prayer; alternatively, it may indicate that this liturgical section did not suit the author’s interpretative aims. See E. Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 471.

40. G. Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987), 61.

41. *Ibid.* S. Metso, *The Textual Development of the Qumran Community Rule* (Leiden: Brill, 1997); J. Pouilly, *La Règle de la Communauté de Qumrân. Son Évolution Littéraire* (Paris: Gabala, 1976);

documents of the community, its oldest form going back to about 100 BCE.⁴² Immediately prior to the publication of the 4QS fragments, G. Vermes predicted: “At a preliminary glance, it can be already surmised that 1QS is more likely to be an expanded edition of the Cave 4 texts rather than 4QS an abridgement of 1QS.”⁴³ The existence of twelve copies shows its popularity and importance in Qumran.⁴⁴ Despite the varied nature of its contents, it provides us with the “fullest picture now existing of the actual functioning of the sect.”⁴⁵ P. S. Alexander notes that 1QS was “not an exhaustive rule-book or code of practice for new members, but an *aide-memoire* for someone well versed in the community’s ways.”⁴⁶

1QSa (*The Rule of the Congregation*)

1QSa consists of two columns that have been reconstructed from fragments originally part of the scrolls containing 1QS and were most likely to have been copied by the same scribe during the same period of 1QS.⁴⁷ This composition sets down regulations for the eschatological integration of the entire “congregation of Israel” into the Zadokite-led community.⁴⁸ C. Hempel comments that “most commentators on 1QSa would agree that this so called Messianic Rule reflects the life of an existing earthly community.”⁴⁹ Although the prevailing consensus is that it is an eschatological rule describing

M. Bockmuehl, “Redaction and Ideology in the Rule of the Community,” *RevQ* 72 (1998): 541–60.

42. Vermes, *Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 61.

43. G. Vermes, “Preliminary Remarks on Unpublished fragments of the Community Rule from Qumran Cave 4,” *JJS* 42, no. 2 (1991): 250–55 (255).

44. D. Dimant, “Qumran Sectarian Literature,” in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period*, ed. M. Stone (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1984), 483–550 (498).

45. *Ibid.*, 497.

46. P. S. Alexander, “The Redaction History of *Serek ha-Yahad*,” *RevQ* 17 (1996): 437–56 (438).

47. Schürer, *History of the Jewish People*, 386.

48. *Ibid.*, 386.

49. C. Hempel, “The Earthly Essene Nucleus of 1QSa,” *DSD* 3 (1996): 254.

the life and conduct of the community in the messianic era, H. Stegemann believes that 1QSa is the oldest rule book of the *yahad* for the present age.⁵⁰

1QH (*Hodayot*)

It is now an accepted fact that this scroll, written in a Herodian script, was written at least by two scribes.⁵¹ The fragmentary nature and frequent lacunae in 1QH make interpretation difficult.⁵² From the eighteen columns and numerous fragments found, there are about twenty more-or-less complete psalms. The remaining fragments could possibly make up to about twenty more.⁵³ The existence of six other copies of the scroll in Cave 4 hints that it was highly valued and rated by the community.⁵⁴ The collection of hymns in 1QH consists of spiritual expressions and confessions, adoration of God, expressions of total submission to his will, sinfulness, hope for eternal bliss, and so on.

Cave 4

Pesharim

The pesharim⁵⁵ are “hermeneutical” compositions comprising two parts, the sacred text of the Torah and a commentary that follows. The pesharim reveal the way the community saw their recent past

50. H. Stegemann, “Some Remarks to 1QSa, to 1QSB, and to Qumran Messianism,” *RevQ* 17 (1997): 479–505 (495). According to Hempel, 1QSa 1:6-2:11a was “a traditional Essene communal legislation that was later incorporated into an eschatological setting.” Hempel, “The Earthly Essene Nucleus of 1QSa,” 254.

51. S. Holm-Nielsen, *Hodayot: Psalms from Qumran* (Aarhus: Universitetsforlaget, 1960), 9.

52. Dupont-Sommer, *Essene Writings*, 198–99. Dupont-Sommer describes 1QH as “the jewel of all the mystical literature from Qumran.”

53. *Ibid.*, 198.

54. *Ibid.*, 199.

55. This introduction also governs 1QpHab. See M. P. Horgan, *Pesharim: Qumran Interpretations of Biblical Books* (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1979).

by scrutinizing the Scriptures (primarily the prophetic books) and saw the fulfillment of these prophecies in their own life in the community.

4Q171

This scroll, written in a Herodian hand, contains pesher-type commentaries on sections of Psalm 37, 45, and 60.⁵⁶ While no clear dating criterion can be discerned from the existing material, it may be assumed that, like other pesharim, this document also originated in the first century BCE.⁵⁷ Particularly relevant to our purposes is the treatment of Psalm 37 where a description of the destiny of the righteous and the wicked is applied to the sectarians and their opponents.⁵⁸

4Q174

This document consists of a selection of biblical texts with expository comments, written in an “early Herodian” hand.⁵⁹ The section that we are concerned with is 1:14–17 and is introduced as מדרש “implying no doubt an interpretative method whereby the meaning of the text under consideration is derived from other biblical quotations.”⁶⁰

4Q186

4Q186 is an unusual document, written from left to right. It also irregularly uses letters of the archaic alphabet mixed with Greek characters.⁶¹ It is written in “Herodian” script and employs

56. Schürer, *History of the Jewish People*, 438.

57. *Ibid.*

58. *Ibid.*

59. *Ibid.*, 445. Twenty-six fragments were found, of which only the first ten were large enough to be meaningful.

60. *Ibid.*

physiognomy. P. Popovic describes it thus: “Physiognomics is the means to discern another person’s character, disposition or future from his physical features.”⁶² This text enabled one to draw conclusions regarding the observed person’s inner character.

4Q215a

Written in late “Hasmonean” or “early Herodian” script,⁶³ a Qumran authorship is rejected because of its more universal outlook,⁶⁴ although it cannot be completely excluded since it looks forward to the renewal expected after the eschatological war.⁶⁵ In fact, the language of 4Q215a creates “a strong sense of ‘heightened eschatology.’”⁶⁶ Based on the content, it is not difficult to see why the Qumran community might have appropriated and copied this text, even if it was not composed at Qumran.

61. *Ibid.*, 464–65. Coded writing was to control the accessibility of the learning contained in the text. See P. Popovic, “Physiognomic Knowledge in Qumran and Babylonia: Form, Interdisciplinarity, and Secrecy,” *DSD* 13, no. 2 (2006): 150–76. Delcor points out that such astrological horoscopes were a common contemporary phenomenon especially in the Greco-Roman world. M. Delcor, “Recherches sur un Horoscope en Langue Hébraïque provenant de Qumrân,” *RevQ* 5 (1964–1966): 521–42 (534–38).
62. Popovic, “Physiognomic Knowledge,” 150–51.
63. E. Chazon and M. Stone, “4QTime of Righteous,” in *Qumran Cave 4. XXVI*, ed. S. Pfann et al., DJD 36 (Oxford: Clarendon, 2000), 173.
64. T. Elgvin, “The Eschatological Hope of 4QTime of Righteousness,” in *Wisdom and Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in the Biblical Tradition*, ed. F. García Martínez (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2003), 89–102. He says that it speaks of “the expected renewal that is for all mankind (and likely all Israel as well), not for a narrow sectarian group” (94).
65. *Ibid.*, 101. Although Elgvin opts for a non-Qumran origin, he notes that the orthography demonstrates that the text was copied and read at Qumran and that the composition “would easily lend itself to a sectarian reading” describing the trials and giving meaning to the struggles of the elect.
66. Chazon and Stone, “Time of Righteous,” 174. The eschatological expectations of this composition share many themes with biblical end-of-days’ prophecies and with extrabiblical eschatological predictions.

4Q267–273 CD

The “Damascus Document” (CD) is “the only sectarian document to have been found before the discoveries at Qumran.”⁶⁷ With the discovery of the Qumran documents, scholars observed striking doctrinal, verbal, or organizational parallels between CD and some of the distinctively sectarian material.⁶⁸ That the medieval MSS were based on an ancient original was proved by the discovery of fragments of this work in Caves 4, 5, and 6 at Qumran.⁶⁹ Unlike caves 5 and 6, however, Cave 4 contained significant amounts of the text along with previously unknown portions of the document.⁷⁰ Ever since, the close relation between CD and the 4QD documents has been unquestioningly accepted.⁷¹ The medieval Genizah manuscripts can be divided into two distinct parts: “the admonition,” containing exhortations, moral addresses and historical teachings, and “the laws,” containing halakic prescriptions and sectarian regulations.⁷²

4Q393 (*Communal Confession*)

The script in this scroll contains a mixture of late Hasmonean and early Herodian formal hands.⁷³ The fragments belong to a type of postexilic prayers that make up a response to the warning of Lev. 26:40–45, where a confession of one’s own sins and the sins of one’s ancestors is expected.⁷⁴ D. Falk observes that the concept of

67. Dimant, “Qumran Sectarian Literature,” 490.

68. P. R. Davies, *The Damascus Covenant* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1983), 14. See also C. Hempel, *The Damascus Texts* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2000).

69. 4Q266–4Q273; 5Q12; 6Q15.

70. J. Baumgarten et al., eds., *Qumran Cave 4. XIII. The Damascus Document (4Q266–273)*, DJD 18 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996).

71. Davies rightly observes, “CD has . . . for all practical purposes been treated as one of the scrolls and included in virtually every edition of Qumran texts and translations.” Davies, *The Damascus Covenant*, 14.

72. Dimant, “Qumran Sectarian Literature,” 491.

73. D. Falk, “Works of God and Communal Confession,” in *Qumran Cave 4. XX. Poetical and Liturgical Texts, Part 2*, ed. E. Chazon et al., DJD 29 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1999), 47.

communal confession was not unique to Qumran. In the Second Temple period, such confessions might have been occasioned by national or community distress, penitential liturgies for specific fast days, annual festivals, covenant renewal, or weekday prayers.⁷⁵ In all probability, this work was used as an integral part of the community's worship.

4Q394–399 (4QMMT)

4QMMT is described as one of the most significant documents reconstructed from Cave 4.⁷⁶ The original document was discovered in six manuscripts (4Q394–399) reduced to almost one hundred fragments.⁷⁷ E. Qimron initially said that 4QMMT represented copies of a letter written by the Teacher of Righteousness to his rival, the wicked priest.⁷⁸ However, he later described the work as a “group composition” rather than a personal letter, addressed to an individual leader and his people Israel.⁷⁹ Terms typical of, and frequent in standard sectarian works, are absent in MMT, possibly suggesting a dating very early in the organization of the Qumran movement.⁸⁰ However, the polemical nature could make it a sectarian work: the editors say that “nowhere else is in the Qumran literature is there any mention of such an effort to convince the leader of Israel of

74. D. Falk, “4Q393: A Communal Confession,” *JJS* 45, no. 2 (1994): 184–207 (184).

75. Falk, “4Q393,” 206.

76. J. Kampen and M. Bernstien, introduction to *Reading 4QMMT: New Perspectives on Qumran Law and History* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 1.

77. Because of the poor state of preservation, “some passages remain a matter of conjecture since no reconstruction based on fragmentary evidence can ever be considered for certain to be an exact reproduction of the original text.” Qimron, “The Nature of the Reconstructed Composite Text of 4QMMT” in *Reading 4QMMT*, 9.

78. Davies, Brooke, and Callaway, *Complete World of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 137.

79. E. Qimron and J. Strugnell, “MMT,” in *Qumran Cave 4.V. Miqsat Ma’ase Ha-Torah*, DJD 10 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994), 121.

80. *Ibid.*, 113.

the validity of the sect's halakhic views and of the invalidity of those of its opponents."⁸¹

More recently, S. Fraade has argued that MMT was not a letter, but was addressed to members or potential members of the community. It consisted of a call to study its set of rules with its unique emphases as "a way of reinforcing the process of social separation and religious return that they had begun."⁸² The texts in their present forms bear witness to the active intramural employment of the document. Thus Fraade asks: "How would [4QMMT] have functioned intramurally at such a later stage in the community's history?"⁸³

M. Grossman⁸⁴ uses MMT to show that it is not enough to read sectarian and protosectarian scrolls for their historical content and assume that when they corroborate one another, they reflect historical fact. What they reflect, instead, is an ideological tradition, developed over a course of several generations. In facing new challenges, the members of the community would have written new texts and reread old ones to confirm the truths that have shaped their understanding of their own history.⁸⁵

Thus, by considering a series of possible interpretations, without selecting a unitary, correct reading of the text, we can isolate the range of historical accounts that this text supports.

81. *Ibid.*, 5.

82. *Ibid.*

83. Fraade, "To Whom it May Concern: 4QMMT and Its Addressee(s)," *RevQ* 19 (2000): 507–27 (525). Similarly, J. Høgenhausen suggests that the epistolary form in 4QMMT is a central part of its rhetorical strategy and that it operates on two levels: first, it refers to the historical epistolary situation of the sender and addressee; second, it influences the subsequent reading of the document within the historical community that received and preserved it. J. Høgenhausen, "Rhetorical Devices in 4QMMT," *DSD* 10, no. 2 (2003): 187–204.

84. M. Grossman, "Reading 4QMMT: Genre and History," *RevQ* 77 (2001): 3–22.

85. *Ibid.*, 22.

4Q434–438 (4QBarkhi Nafshi)

Based on the opening lines: ברכי נפשי את אדני (“Bless, O my soul, the Lord”), five texts (4Q434–438) have been titled the *Barkhi Nafshi* hymns.⁸⁶ Of these, 4Q434 contains the largest section of text.⁸⁷ These hymns are praises of thanksgiving to the Lord for his deliverance of his people and for his grace shown to them.⁸⁸ The recipients of God’s deliverance and grace could be the members of the community.⁸⁹ D. Seely sees in these hymns many connections in language, themes, and ideas with explicitly sectarian works and posits a sectarian origin for them.⁹⁰ M. Weinfeld says that the *Barkhi Nafshi* collection describe “praise to God for the salvation of the pious and for giving them a pure heart that will keep them away from temptation.”⁹¹

4Q504–506 (4QDibHam)

This liturgical work consists of prayers to be used each day of the week. It is “one of the most informative prayer texts found at Qumran”⁹² and offers a glimpse into the “community piety of Qumran.”⁹³ These texts consist of a survey of biblical history from

86. D. R. Seely, “Implanting Pious Qualities as a Theme in the *Barkhi Nafshi* Hymns,” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Fifty Years after their Discovery*, ed. L. H. Schiffman, E. Tov, and J. VanderKam (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2000), 323.

87. M. Weinfeld and D. Seely, “Barkhi Nafshi,” in *Qumran Cave 4. XX. Poetical and Liturgical Texts, Part 2*, ed. E. Chazon, DJD 29 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1999), 267.

88. Weinfeld and Seely, “*Barkhi Nafshi*,” DJD 29, 267.

89. Ibid.

90. Ibid. He says that the *Barkhi Nafshi* hymns “echo sectarian themes and theology” (330). Brooke argues that there is “no explicit sectarian vocabulary in the extant fragments of *Barkhi Nafshi*.” Thus their composition probably occurred in nonsectarian circles but were “used” by those responsible for the collection of these manuscripts. The contents 4QBarkhi Nafshi are “entirely consistent with the community’s worldview.” G. Brooke, “Body Parts in the *Barkhi Nafshi* and the Qualification for Membership of the Worshipping Community,” in *Sapiential, Liturgical and Poetical Texts from Qumran*, ed. D. Falk, García Martínez, and E. Schuller (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 80–94.

91. M. Weinfeld, “Grace after Meals in Qumran,” *JBL* 111 (1992): 427–40 (427).

92. D. Falk, *Daily, Sabbath, and Festival Prayers in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 59.

Adam to the (writer's) present,⁹⁴ maintaining a tone of supplication. There are forty-eight fragments of the two, possibly three manuscripts.⁹⁵ 4QDibHam provides a rare instance in which the original title has survived.⁹⁶ The general pattern followed by the first six prayers consists of a call to God to remember his past acts, a summary of some aspect of Israel's history, a request for God's mercy/deliverance, and a closing benediction.⁹⁷ The early date that 4Q504 was copied suggests that it was a presectarian composition adopted by the sectarians and used by them for a very long time.⁹⁸ The frequency of use (daily and weekly) points to the fact that the document appealed to the sentiments of the community and was in keeping with their own ideas.

Cave 11

11Q13 (11QMelchizedek)

In this document, written in late Hasmonean or early Herodian book hand, the main theme involves the heavenly prince Melchizedek and final salvation.⁹⁹ This document provides interesting information concerning the eschatology of the Qumran community.¹⁰⁰ According to É. Puech, the central figure is clearly considered as the high priest of the heavenly liturgy of the Day of Atonement since he

93. J. Charlesworth, ed., *Pseudepigraphic and Non-Masoretic Psalms and Prayers*, PTSDSSP (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), vol. 4A, 107. The piety captured in this document is ancient. Baillet says that "on pourra voir dans ces textes une relique de la piété assidéenne de l'époque des Maccabées." M. Baillet, "Un Recueil Liturgique de Qumrân, Grotte 4: Les Parôles Des Luminaires," *RB* 68 (1961): 195–250 (250).

94. J. Davila, *Liturgical Works*, Eerdmans Commentaries on the Dead Sea Scrolls (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 239.

95. *Ibid.*

96. *Ibid.*, 240.

97. *Ibid.*, 241

98. *Ibid.*, 242.

99. Schürer, *History of the Jewish People*, 449.

100. M. De Jonge and A. S. van der Woude, "11QMelchizedek and the New Testament," *NTS* 12 (1965): 301–26.

executes divine judgments and makes definitive expiation, which is seen in his divine pardon of the sins committed by those of his lot.¹⁰¹

11Q19 (*The Temple Scroll*)

Consisting of nineteen pieces of leather, this is the largest of the scrolls discovered, with a total length of nine meters, consisting of sixty-six columns. Several copies of part of the text have been found. The original date of composition is placed before 100 BCE.¹⁰² It was possibly written by two scribes, with one writing columns 1–5 and the rest of the scroll by the other.¹⁰³ Much of the content of the scroll is concerned with the temple itself and is a type of “blueprint for a new temple to be built in the future when the right people were in control.”¹⁰⁴ There are also large sections on festivals and sacrifices to be observed at this new temple.¹⁰⁵

Use of other Second Temple Literature

I mentioned earlier that, from time to time, we will consider some repentance motifs that we identify in the scrolls with material contemporaneous to the scrolls, primarily Second Temple literature. However, in using texts from corpora that have come to be known as “Apocrypha” and “Pseudepigrapha,” it will be useful at this stage to clarify how we will understand the terms. “Apocrypha” and “Pseudepigrapha” refer first of all to “categories created in the context of the transmission of the texts in question and refer thus to the

101. É. Puech, “Notes sur le Manuscrit de XIQMelkišèdeq,” *RevQ* 12 (1987): 483–513. See also F. García Martínez, E. Tigchelaar, and A. Van Der Woude, eds., *Qumran Cave 11. II. (11Q2–18, 11Q20–31)*, DJD 23 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1998); and P. J. Kobelski, *Melchizedek and Mechirešá’*, CBQMS 10 (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1981), 826; J. Maier, *The Temple Scroll: An Introduction, Translation and Commentary* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1985), 1.

102. Maier, *Temple Scroll*, 2.

103. Dimant, “Qumran Sectarian Literature,” 526.

104. J. C. VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 59.

105. *Ibid.*

Christian canonical process in which the texts were preserved and transmitted.”¹⁰⁶ F. García Martínez comments, “In spite of their inadequacy these categories are useful shorthand labels that bring together a great variety of different texts, and as such their use seems to me completely justified.”¹⁰⁷ I am aware of the anachronistic nature of these terms and that they allude to modern, artificial categories. I understand “Apocrypha” as referring to “Jewish works of the period of the Second Temple not included in the Hebrew Bible but which are to be found in the Greek and Latin Old Testaments.”¹⁰⁸ Similarly, “Pseudepigrapha” has been understood in two different ways in recent scholarship. Originally, it referred to texts falsely ascribed to an author (usually of great antiquity) in order to enhance their authority and validity.¹⁰⁹ Later, the connotation of this word was expanded to include a collection of Jewish and Christian writings dating from the last centuries BCE to the first centuries CE that did not become part of the canon in either religion.¹¹⁰ They are “books written in the age of the Second Temple, and for the most part Jewish”¹¹¹ (and generally excluding the Apocrypha). When I talk about Second Temple texts in the subsequent chapters, these are the main two corpora I have in mind. It is acknowledged that this could run the risk of being selective, as I have omitted valuable information from texts by Philo or Josephus or the Septuagint, all of which are more or less contemporaneous to the scrolls. Nevertheless, due the confines of space, such selectivity and omissions are unfortunate but necessary.

106. F. García Martínez, “Apocryphal, Pseudepigraphical, and Para-Biblical Texts from Qumran,” *RevQ* 83 (2004): 365–77 (370).

107. *Ibid.*

108. M. Stone, “The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Pseudepigrapha,” *DSD* 3, no. 3 (1996): 270–95 (270).

109. J. H. Charlesworth, ed. *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. vol. 1, *Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments*. London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1983, 1:xxv. [Hereafter, *OTP*, 1]

110. M. Bernstein, “Pseudepigraphy in the Qumran Scrolls: Categories and Functions,” in *Pseudepigraphic Perspectives: The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha in the Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. E. Chazon and M. Stone, *STDJ* 31 (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 1–26 (1).

111. Stone, “Dead Sea Scrolls and the Pseudepigrapha,” 270.

The use of these corpora can be justified by the fact that several texts from the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha have been discovered (in different states of preservation—some more fragmentary than others) among the Dead Sea Scrolls. The presence of these texts in the Qumran caves justifies my use of selection of this corpora rather than any other, as there was a fair chance of their having been read at Qumran. For example, fragments of two manuscripts of the Hebrew text of Sirach have been found at Qumran¹¹² and at Masada,¹¹³ confirming that Sirach was read at Qumran. Five fragmentary manuscripts of Tobit were discovered at Qumran. This attests an early date and a Semitic original as well as the popularity of this work at Qumran.¹¹⁴ *First Enoch* was also popular at Qumran. Regarding the Cave 4 Aramaic MSS of *Enoch*, five copies of the Book of Watchers were found, none of the Book of Parables; four fragmentary MSS of the Astronomical Book were discovered; the Book of Dreams is also represented by four fragmentary MSS; the Epistle of Enoch was found in two fragmentary Aramaic MSS. J. T. Milik dates the earliest of these Qumran *Enoch* MSS to around early 200 BCE.¹¹⁵ While the *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs* as we know it was not found at Qumran, sources for some of the individual testaments have been discovered in Cave 4.¹¹⁶ Similarly, twelve

112. J. van der Ploeg describes Sirach as “part of the devotional reading of Qumran, as the remains of it testify.” J. van der Ploeg, *The Excavations at Qumran: A Survey of the Judean Brotherhood and Its Ideas* (London: Longmans, Green, 1958), 115.

113. G. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah* (London: SCM, 1981), 64 (2Q18 and 11Q5 21:11-18). G. Sauer says, “Die funde von Qumran und auf Masada konnten für diese Frühzeit die hebräische Textform nachweisen.” G. Sauer, *Jesus Sirach*, in *JSHRZ* 3.5 (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlaghaus; Gerd Mohn, 1981), 484.

114. The Qumran Aramaic and Hebrew MSS of Tobit date from between 100 bce to 50 ce. Fitzmyer suggests that these are only possible dates of the *copies* found at Qumran and not the actual date of composition of the book. J. Fitzmyer, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and Christian Origins* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 12. Two texts are relevant for our purposes (Tob. 13:6; 14:6). Unfortunately both these texts have not survived in the Qumran Tobit fragments. Either the beginning or the ending is lost. The latter part of Tob. 13:6 remains in 4Q196 fr. 17, 2, while the latter part of Tob. 14:6 is found in 4Q198, fr. 1.

115. H. F. D. Sparks, ed., *The Apocryphal Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1984), 173–77.

fragmentary Hebrew manuscripts of *Jubilees* have been found at Qumran. G. W. E. Nickelsburg says that “connections between the *Book of Jubilees* and the Qumran community are especially close.” He points out that “the religious ideas, theology, and laws in *Jubilees* closely parallel and are often identical with those in writings unique to composition at Qumran.”¹¹⁷

Literary Approach

I will adopt a *literary* approach, relying primarily on texts from the scrolls to provide relevant information regarding the function of repentance in the life of the community who used these scrolls. Since I am interested in the examination of the concept itself rather than a word study of “repentance,” this investigation will necessarily be inductive. A study of this nature would require a broad textual base in the primary sources. However, a considerable amount of selectivity is employed since we will examine only repentance texts (in, of course, their wider literary, theological, and historical setting in the scrolls).

Repentance never occurred in a vacuum; it was an integral part of the soteriological aspirations of a real, historical community. This approach will attempt to show how such texts might have been translated into daily life at Qumran.¹¹⁸ Therefore I am not merely attempting to reconstruct from these texts the function of repentance but also to locate it in space and time within the framework of the community.

116. Sources for *T. Naph.* (4Q215), *T. Jud.* (3Q7; 4Q484; 4Q538), *T. Lev.* (Aramaic Levi Document: 4Q213–14, 1Q21), and possibly *T. Jos.* (4Q539). VanderKam, *Dead Sea Scrolls Today*, 40.

117. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 79.

118. S. Metso’s caution is valid: although he is speaking specifically about Rule texts, he remarks that even though a text might originate in a simple, historical occurrence, it could assume a life of its own: “If the text passes through several editorial hands, the resulting text that we read may have been disconnected from its historical moorings and no longer reflects that history but a developed set of thoughts.” S. Metso, “Methodological Problems in Reconstructing History from Rule Texts Found at Qumran,” *DSD* 11, no. 3 (2004): 315–34 (334).

In light of the literary approach, it should be noted that since I am treating repentance as a concept, I will not deal with minute text-critical issues. Rather, I will adopt a complementary approach to all technical, restoration, and reconstruction studies that have been undertaken until now.¹¹⁹ Ever since the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, scholars have devoted incredible amounts of time and energy to piecing together the scrolls and restoring and reconstructing damaged fragments or partially erased letters, words, and even sections of texts.¹²⁰ We must acknowledge the benefits and advantages of earlier scholarly work in this area and seek to build on the reconstructions of other scholars. Hence, I will not focus on the reconstruction of texts unless it has direct bearing on the interpretation of a repentance text.

Finally, it is worth pointing out some of the limitations of the task at hand. While some scrolls are in a better state of preservation than others, the material is largely of a fragmentary nature. At interesting and key parts of the text, there are gaps and tears or the script is too faint to produce a definitive reading. As a result, a comprehensive and often coherent picture of the contents of many of the scrolls is not possible. Furthermore, because of the fragmentary nature of the texts, one is largely dependent on the reconstruction of texts by scholars. However plausible these might be, at best they are guesses (educated guesses, but nevertheless guesses). But these “scholarly guesses” are invaluable to any research on the scrolls. Further caution is also in order in attempting to locate repentance within the religious experience of the community, for the following reason: “We cannot fully understand a religion—Its preferred attitudes and emotions, its

119. Especially the Discoveries in the Judaean Desert series (I-XXXIX) published by Clarendon Press, Oxford.

120. One may recall photographs from the early days of scrolls research of the first groups of scholars, surrounded by thousands of scraps of leather of different shapes and sizes, intensely poring over their work with magnifying glasses!

prescribed Rituals, its important stories and myths, and its recommended way of life—by simply looking at it.”¹²¹ As in the case of “scholarly guesses” in relation to the texts, the same scenario applies to any reconstruction of the religious experience of a community that existed over a millennium ago.

Now that we have an initial sense of direction, we must further map out the terrain and consider at least briefly the “religious parameters” within which we are trying to locate our discussion of repentance texts: What is religious experience? How did repentance at Qumran fit in with the general religious climate of the day? A survey of the lay of the land is the task of the first chapter.

121. M. Peterson, W. Hasker, B. Reichenbach, and D. Basinger, *Reason and Religious Belief: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 5.