

# Interpreting and Living God's Law at Qumran

*Miqṣat Ma'āse Ha-Torah*

Some of the Works of the Torah (4QMMT)

*Scripta Antiquitatis Posterioris  
ad Ethicam RELigionemque pertinentia  
XXXVII*

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**Mohr Siebeck**

# SAPERE

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ad Ethicam RELigionemque pertinentia

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zu ethischen und religiösen Fragen

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Band XXXVII





# Interpreting and Living God's Law at Qumran

*Miqṣat Ma'āse Ha-Torah*  
Some of the Works of the Torah (4QMMT)

Introduction, Text, Translation and Interpretative Essays by  
Jonathan Ben-Dov, John J. Collins, Lutz Doering,  
Jörg Frey, Charlotte Hempel, Reinhard G. Kratz,  
Noam Mizrahi, Vered Noam, Eibert Tigchelaar

edited by  
Reinhard G. Kratz

Mohr Siebeck

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## SAPERE

Greek and Latin texts of Later Antiquity (1st–4th centuries AD) have for a long time been overshadowed by those dating back to so-called ‘classical’ times. The first four centuries of our era have, however, produced a cornucopia of works in Greek and Latin dealing with questions of philosophy, ethics, and religion that continue to be relevant even today. The series SAPERE (*Scripta Antiquitatis Posterioris ad Ethicam Religionemque pertinentia*, ‘Writings of Later Antiquity with Ethical and Religious Themes’), now funded by the German Union of Academies, undertakes the task of making these texts accessible through an innovative combination of edition, translation, and commentary in the form of interpretative essays.

The acronym ‘SAPERE’ deliberately evokes the various connotations of *sapere*, the Latin verb. In addition to the intellectual dimension – which Kant made the motto of the Enlightenment by translating ‘*sapere aude*’ with ‘dare to use thy reason’ – the notion of ‘tasting’ should come into play as well. On the one hand, SAPERE makes important source texts available for discussion within various disciplines such as theology and religious studies, philology, philosophy, history, archaeology, and so on; on the other, it also seeks to whet the readers’ appetite to ‘taste’ these texts. Consequently, a thorough scholarly analysis of the texts, which are investigated from the vantage points of different disciplines, complements the presentation of the sources both in the original and in translation. In this way, the importance of these ancient authors for the history of ideas and their relevance to modern debates come clearly into focus, thereby fostering an active engagement with the classical past.



## Preface to this Volume

The present volume is in many respects an exception in the SAPERE series. It is dedicated to a text in Hebrew which has not been handed down completely, but only in fragments. It is the writing of an unknown author to an equally unknown addressee, which was found in one of the caves near the settlement of Khirbet Qumran at the Dead Sea and is entitled *Miqṣat Ma'ase Ha-Torah*, "Some of the Works of the Torah", others prefer the translation "Some Precepts of the Torah" (abbreviated 4QMMT or just MMT). This writing itself is also an exception, as it is the earliest and only evidence of a proper interpretation of the Jewish Torah, the so-called *Halakhah*, as it later became common in rabbinical Judaism. However, the work dates from pre-rabbinical, Hellenistic-Roman times and thus belongs in the historical context of ethical writings that appear in the SAPERE series and are made available to a wider audience. Up to now, only Jewish voices in Greek, such as Philo of Alexandria, have had their say in this series. With 4QMMT, Hebrew-speaking Judaism will be presented for once, which was of eminent importance in the same period and had slightly different views than Greek-speaking Judaism. Apparently completely rooted in the Hebrew or – more precise – biblical tradition and internal Jewish perspective, this writing nevertheless documents in its own way the formative interrelation between Hellenistic and Jewish culture.

As usual, the present volume is divided into three parts: Introduction, Text and Translation, and Essays. The Introduction offers in its first paragraph an overview on the Dead Sea Scrolls and the so-called community of Qumran, i.e. the group which was responsible for the transmission and (in parts) the production of the manuscripts found in the eleven caves near the settlement of Khirbet Qumran and other places at the Dead Sea. In the following, a second paragraph gives an introduction into the work of 4QMMT, its content, its manuscripts and their state of preservation, the previous editions and research, and finally the editorial principles followed in this volume.

The second part of the volume provides a new critical and synoptic edition and translation of 4QMMT according to the format of the manuscript 4Q394. As far as it is preserved, we follow this individual manuscript, gaps and missing parts are filled with text from the other manuscripts within the format of manuscript 4Q394, text overlaps are marked with underlining. In the edition as well as in the following essays three systems of notation are used to quote 4QMMT: a. according to the individual manuscripts, con-



sisting of the number of a manuscript, column (in small roman figures), fragment and line (in Arabic figures), e.g. 4Q394 i 3–7 1–19 etc.; b. according to the edition of this volume (noted at the right side of the Hebrew text), both in the preserved parts and the reconstructed parts of the underlying manuscript 4Q394, consisting of column (in small roman figures) and lines (in Arabic figures), e.g. i 01–20 etc.; c. in parallel to b. according to the edition of the so-called Composite Text in the series DJD (noted at the left side of the Hebrew text), e.g. A19–20 and B01–16.

In the third part of this volume the reader will find a collection of essays on relevant topics concerning 4QMMT. The first two contributions are dealing with the paleography and material reconstruction of the text (Eibert Tigchelaar) and its language (Noam Mizrahi). The next four essays are focused on the literary-historical context of 4QMMT, treating its relationship to the Hebrew Bible (Reinhard G. Kratz), to the calendars from Qumran (Jonathan Ben-Dov), to the wider Dead Sea Scrolls (Charlotte Hempel) and to rabbinic *Halakhah* (Vered Noam). Finally, the last three essays turn to the broader historical context, dealing with the relationship of 4QMMT to contemporary historical events (John J. Collins), Hellenistic literature (Lutz Doering) and the New Testament (Jörg Frey). The latter essay was already published in Frey 2019.

Both, the edition and the essays were discussed at a colloquium held in Göttingen at July 17/18th, 2017, and subsequently revised. The editor would like to express his cordial thanks to all contributors for their articles and helpful feedback as well as to the editors and the staff of the series SAPERE, especially Simone Seibert, Andrea Villani, and the student assistants (Marius Pfeifer, Sean Ciaran Reyhn, Tim-Fabian Wilke), for their advise, patience, and not least, the editorial work that posed particular challenges due to the strange material.

Göttingen, spring 2020

Reinhard G. Kratz

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## *A. Introduction*



# Introduction

Reinhard G. Kratz

## 1. The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Community of Qumran

The text edited in this volume, called *Miqṣat Ma'āse Ha-Torah*, “Some of the Works of the Torah” (4QMMT), is one of the most interesting texts among the famous Dead Sea Scrolls discovered near the settlement of Khirbet Qumran and its vicinity in the middle of the twentieth century and now finally published in full.<sup>1</sup> The author of this text is unknown to us, and, therefore, we are unable to provide a biography as is usual in the series SAPERE. Instead, we will give a short introduction into the Dead Sea Scrolls and the people behind them, i.e. the community of Qumran.<sup>2</sup>

### 1.1. The Findings

The high epic history of the Dead Sea Scrolls' discovery has enjoyed frequent repetition. A shepherd boy putatively searched for a goat that went astray or – here the accounts diverge – enjoyed throwing stones into hidden caves, whereupon he came across stoneware jugs filled with mysterious scrolls. A footrace then ensued between local Beduins and professional archaeologists, which resulted in the discovery of eleven caves at the northwestern edge of the Dead Sea, near the settlement of Khirbet Qumran, between 1947 and 1956. Fragments of Hebrew, Aramaic, and even a

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<sup>1</sup> DJD; DSSP; DSSR; DSSSE; DSSHW; MAIER 1995–1996 and Id. 1997; LOHSE 1981 and STEUDEL 2001; an overview of all available texts is provided by Tov 2002 and E. Tov, *Revised Lists of the Texts from the Judaean Desert* (Leiden 2010).

<sup>2</sup> The following paragraph is based on KRATZ 2015, 153–165. Valuable introductions include H. STEGEMANN, *Die Essener, Qumran, Johannes der Täufer und Jesus*, mit einem Nachwort von Gert Jeremias (Freiburg im Breisgau 1993 [<sup>10</sup>2007]; english translation: *The Library of Qumran: On the Essenes, Qumran, John the Baptist, and Jesus* [Grand Rapids, MI 1998]); J. C. VANDERKAM, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today* (Grand Rapids, MI <sup>2</sup>2010); G. G. XERAVATIS / P. PORZIG, *Einführung in die Qumran-Literatur. Die Handschriften vom Toten Meer* (Berlin 2015); D. STÖKL BEN EZRA, *Qumran. Die Texte vom Toten Meer und das antike Judentum*. Jüdische Studien 3 (Tübingen 2016); on particular writings and subjects, see SCHIFFMAN / TOV / VANDERKAM / MARQUIS 2000; BROOKE / HEMPEL 2019; on the main writings, see the very useful introductions by KNIBB 1987; on the history of research, see J. J. COLLINS, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A Biography* (Princeton, NJ 2012); DIMANT 2012.



few Greek manuscripts, written on either leather or papyrus, materialized here and in Qumran's surroundings, all the way down to Masada.

Quite quickly, the significance of these findings was clear. The texts comprised, presumably, the most spectacular trove of Jewish manuscripts discovered in the twentieth century. As determined by paleographic analysis and scientific measurements, these materials were written at the turn of epochs, between ca. 250 BCE and 150 CE, and bear witness to texts that are much older in some cases. Scholarly convention designates each item according to its provenance and either a number or an abbreviated title (e.g., 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> for manuscript A of the book of Isaiah from Cave 1 at Qumran; 1Q8 = 1QIsa<sup>b</sup> for the manuscript B of the book of Isaiah from Cave 1 at Qumran). After the principle denomination then comes numeration of fragments, columns, and lines.

In essence, three classes of texts have emerged from the eleven caves at Qumran and neighboring sites:

One class comprises manuscripts of biblical books, the oldest known thus far.<sup>3</sup> Up until seventy years ago, the text of the Hebrew Bible came only from medieval manuscripts, its greater antiquity attested only indirectly. Confirming these deductions, the Dead Sea Scrolls trace back close to the formation of the Hebrew Bible during the pre-Christian period. Biblical manuscripts have materialized not only in the caves of Qumran but also at other scattered locations. Here as well as in the non-biblical manuscripts we can observe the techniques and practices of the ancient scribes.<sup>4</sup>

Fragments of para-biblical writings in their original language constitute a second class of texts discovered in the Dead Sea vicinity.<sup>5</sup> Originally composed in Hebrew or Aramaic, these works survived only in ancient translations – i.e., second- or third-hand – if previously known at all. Such texts, classified as the Apocrypha or Pseudepigrapha, were “not held equal to the Scriptures but are useful and good to read,” as the German reformer Martin Luther eloquently wrote. Some of these writings, like Ben Sira and Tobit, appear as addenda to Luther's translation or the King James Version and enjoy canonical status in the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches. Others – such as Jubilees or the books of Enoch – belong to the canonical scriptures of eastern national churches (viz., the Syrian, Ethiopian, and Coptic Churches) and have been transmitted in this way. Still other compositions, e.g., the texts called Apocryphon of Jeremiah,

<sup>3</sup> LANGE 2009; TOV 2012; cf. F. M. CROSS / S. TALMON (eds.), *Qumran and the History of the Biblical Text* (Cambridge, MA / London 1975); ULRICH 1999; J. C. VANDERKAM, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI 2012).

<sup>4</sup> See TOV 2004.

<sup>5</sup> See the editions in n. 1. The relevant material, excluding the rewritten scripture texts, is collected in DSSR 3 and 6. See DIMANT 2014, 153–169.

Apocryphon of Ezekiel, and Pseudo-Daniel,<sup>6</sup> had vanished into oblivion until their remains materialized nearly seventy years ago among the caves in the Dead Sea area. Significantly, the second class of texts surfaced only in the caves of Qumran and at Masada. Some of them actually stand between the two classes of “biblical” manuscripts, on the one hand, and the “Apocrypha,” on the other. They belong to the genre denominated *rewritten bible* or *rewritten scripture*, which provides the “biblical” text – in different variations – with additions, omissions, and reformulations.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> For the Apocryphon of Jeremiah (4Q383–4, 385a, 387, 387a, 388a, 389, 390), see DJD 19; for Pseudo-Ezekiel (4Q385, 385b, 385c, 386, 388, 391), see DJD 30; for the Prayer of Nabonidus (4Q242) and Pseudo-Daniel (4Q243–5, 246), see DJD 22. Cf. G. BROOKE, “Parabiblical Prophetic Narratives”, in: FLINT / VANDERKAM 1998, 271–301.

<sup>7</sup> Significant examples include Reworked Pentateuch 4Q158 (DJD 5) and 4Q364–7 (DJD 13), which is more a “biblical” manuscript than rewritten scripture; Genesis Apocryphon 1QapGen (FITZMYER 2004; MACHIELA 2009); Pseudo-Jubilees 4Q225–7 (DJD 13); Commentary on Genesis A 4Q252 (DJD 22); Jubilees (R. H. CHARLES (ed.), *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English, with Introductions and Critical and Explanatory Notes*, 2 vols. (Oxford 1913) 2:1–82; J. H. CHARLESWORTH (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2 vols. (Garden City, NY 1983 / 1985) 2:35–142; H. F. D. SPARKS (ed.), *The Apocryphal Old Testament* (Oxford / New York 1984) 1–140; VANDERKAM 1989; DJD 1, 3, 13, 23, and 36); Temple Scroll (YADIN 1983; DSSP 7; DJD 25). On this material, see CRAWFORD 2008 as well as ZAHN 2011 for the Reworked Pentateuch; M. SEGAL, *The Book of Jubilees: Rewritten Bible, Redaction, Ideology and Theology*. JSJSup 117 (Leiden 2007) for Jubilees; S. W. CRAWFORD, *The Temple Scroll and Related Texts*. Companion to the Qumran Scrolls 2 (Sheffield 2000) and SCHIFFMAN 2008 for the Temple Scroll; BERNSTEIN 2013 for the Genesis Apocryphon and other writings; furthermore D. DIMANT / R. G. KRATZ (eds.), *The Dynamics of Language and Exegesis at Qumran*. FAT II/35 (Tübingen 2009); Iid. (eds.), *Rewriting and Interpreting the Hebrew Bible. The Biblical Patriarchs in the Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls*. BZAW 439 (Berlin 2013); A. FELDMAN, *The Rewritten Joshua Scrolls from Qumran. Texts, Translations, and Commentary*. BZAW 438 (Berlin 2013); D. DIMANT / A. FELDMAN / L. GOLDMAN, *Scripture and Interpretation: Qumran Texts that Rework the Bible*. BZAW 449 (Berlin 2014). For the fluidity between textual and compositional history in these compositions, see E. Tov, *Hebrew Bible, Greek Bible, and Qumran*. TSAJ 121 (Tübingen 2008); Id., “The Many Forms of Hebrew Scripture. Reflections in Light of the LXX and 4QReworked Pentateuch”, in: A. LANGE / M. WEIGOLD / J. ZSENGELLÉR (eds.), *From Qumran to Aleppo: A Discussion with Emanuel Tov about the Textual History of Jewish Scriptures in Honor of his 65<sup>th</sup> Birthday*. FRLANT 230 (Göttingen 2009) 11–28; Id., “From 4QReworked Pentateuch to 4QPentateuch”, in: M. POPOVIĆ (ed.), *Authoritative Scriptures in Ancient Judaism*. JSJS 141 (Leiden 2010) 73–91; Id. 2012; ULRICH 1999; for further discussion see N. DÁVID / A. LANGE (eds.), *Qumran and the Bible: Studying the Jewish and Christian Scriptures in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Leuven 2010); DÁVID / LANGE / DE TROYER / TZOREF 2012; on the term and phenomenon of rewritten bible or scripture, see G. VERMÈS, *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism. Haggadic Studies*. Studia post-biblica 4 (Leiden 1973); G. J. BROOKE, “The Rewritten Law, Prophets and Psalms: Issues for Understanding the Text of the Bible”, in: E. D. HERBERT / E. TOV (eds.), *The Bible as Book: The Hebrew Bible and the Judaean Desert Discoveries* (London 2002) 31–40; SEGAL 2005; CRAWFORD 2008; M. M. ZAHN, “Rewritten Scripture”, in: LIM / COLLINS 2010, 323–336; Ead. 2011; Ead., “Building Textual Bridges: Towards an Understanding of 4Q158 (4QReworked Pentateuch)”, in: G. J. BROOKE / J. HØGENHAVEN (eds.), *The Mermaid and the Partridge: Essays from the Copenhagen Conference on Revising Texts from Cave Four*. STDJ 96 (Leiden 2011) 13–32; Ead., “Talking about Rewritten Texts: Some Reflections on Terminology”, in: H. VON WEISENBERG / J.

The third class of texts found in the Dead Sea area contains the writings of the community reflected in the texts themselves. For the sake of simplicity, I designate the collective according to the provenance of the findings, namely, “the Qumran Community,” without advancing any further claims concerning the origin or historical localization of the community itself. Prominent examples of the literary class include regulations for organization and communal life – i.e., the Community Rule or Manual of Discipline (*Serekh ha-Yahad*) (QS) along with its complement, the Rule of the Congregation (*Serekh ha-’Edah*) (1QSa), and the Damascus Document (QD) – in addition to a collection of prayers called the Thanksgiving Hymns (*Hodayot*) (QH), a description of a holy apocalyptic war hence titled the War Scroll (*Serekh ha-Milhamah*) (QM), and, last but not least, commentaries on the biblical prophets, *Pesharim* (Qp), which receive their appellation from a formula employed in the commentaries themselves, *pishro*, meaning “its interpretation”.<sup>8</sup> With the exception of the Damascus Document, which surfaced in medieval copies among the texts discovered in the Cairo Genizah, all these works were unknown until their recent discovery. They, too, were unearthed only in the caves of Qumran and at Masada and provide essential information about the religious group’s life and thought. Beyond the particular Qumranic texts, this community likely bore responsibility for transmitting other texts and depositing them in the caves of the Dead Sea vicinity.

A fourth and final division encompasses economic and administrative texts as well as letters derived from various epochs and written in different languages. Almost exclusively found among neighboring sites of discovery (Ketef Jericho, Wadi Murabba’at, Nahal Hever, Masada), some texts of this type materialized in the caves of Qumran and the settlement of Khirbet Qumran in the form of ostraca as well.<sup>9</sup> The precise relationship between such practical materials – supposing they even stemmed from the

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PAKKALA / M. MARTILA (eds.), *Changes in Scripture: rewriting and interpreting authoritative traditions in the Second Temple period*. BZAW 419 (Berlin 2011) 93–119; Ead., “Genre and Rewritten Bible”, *JBL* 131 (2012) 271–288; BERNSTEIN 2013, 39–62; J. ZSENGELLÉR / K. GÁSPÁR (eds.), *Rewritten Bible after Fifty Years: Texts, Terms, or Techniques? A Last Dialogue with Géza Vermès*. JSJ.S 166 (Leiden 2014).

<sup>8</sup> For editions of the text, see n. 1 above; for QS, QD, QM and Qp, see esp. DSSP, for QH the edition in DJD 40; for an introduction, see KNIBB 1987 as well as S. METSO, *The Serekh Texts*. Companion to the Qumran Scrolls 9 (London / New York, NY 2007) (QS); HEMPEL 2000 (QD); J. DUHAIME, *The War Texts: 1QM and Related Manuscripts*. Companion to the Qumran Scrolls 6 (London / New York, NY 2006) (QM); T. H. LIM, *Pesharim*. Companion to the Qumran Scrolls 3 (London / New York, NY 2002) and J. G. CAMPBELL, *The Exegetical Texts*. Companion to the Qumran Scrolls 4 (London / New York, NY 2006) (Qp and other exegetical texts); H. HARRINGTON, *The Purity Texts*. Companion to the Qumran Scrolls 5 (London / New York, NY 2006) (Purity texts).

<sup>9</sup> See DJD 2, 104–109, 122–134; DJD 27, 34–37, 65–70; YADIN 2002, 72–108; B. JANOWSKI / G. WILHELM (eds.), *Texte aus der Umwelt des Alten Testaments*. Neue Folge, 7 vols. (Gütersloh

same point in time – and the other three textual classes is elusive and not yet fully analyzed. Indeed, some of these documents related to daily life might have emanated from members of the Qumran community as well.

## 1.2. The Problem of Historical Contextualization

Who was this community, and whence come the numerous manuscripts of so many different works? Modern scholarship has puzzled over such questions.<sup>10</sup> Some envision a library of the Qumran community, which would have intermittently inhabited the settlement at Khirbet Qumran – a site in immediate proximity to the caves containing the texts – and itself produced and recorded the manuscripts. Others hypothesize an inventory from the Jerusalem temple's library. Owing to multiple copies of one and the same literary work, still other scholars assert such manuscripts were used in different locations throughout the land, perhaps by different groups and only secondarily collected in the caves near the Dead Sea.

Quite certainly, not all manuscripts arose in Khirbet Qumran itself. Many predate either the settlement's foundation or use by the Qumran community. Moreover, the manuscripts were likely deposited in the caves only secondarily, to conceal them from the advancing Roman army in the first century CE. All other explanations depend on historical questions with respect to the identity of the community reflected in the texts and to possible connections between the manuscripts found in the caves, the community described in the texts, and the archaeological site of Khirbet Qumran. Unfortunately, actual certitude is far less than commonly believed.<sup>11</sup>

Early scholarship identified the Qumran community with one of the religious factions of ancient Judaism known from the Hellenistic-Roman pe-

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2004–2013) 1:270–278; cf. A. LANGE, "Qumran", in: H. D. BETZ et al. (eds.), *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Tübingen 42003) vol. 6 [1873–1896], 1891–1894.

<sup>10</sup> See, e.g., COLLINS 2010; DIMANT 2014; on methodology, see G. J. BROOKE, *Reading the Dead Sea Scrolls: Essays in Method* (Atlanta, GA 2013); on the manuscripts, see A. LANGE, "The Qumran Dead Sea Scrolls – Library or Manuscript Corpus?", in: GARCÍA MARTÍNEZ / STEUDEL / TICHELAAR 2006, 177–193; M. POPOVIĆ, "Qumran as Scroll Storehouse in Times of Crisis? A Comparative Perspective on Judaean Desert Manuscript Collections", *JSJ* 43 (2012) 551–594; also E. TOV, "Some Thoughts About the Diffusion of Biblical Manuscripts in Antiquity", in: METSO / NAJMAN / SCHULLER 2010, 151–172; and E. ULRICH, "The Evolutionary Production and Transmission of the Scriptural Books", *ibid.* 209–255.

<sup>11</sup> For the traditional reconstruction, see STEGEMANN 1971; concerning more recent discussion, see M. L. GROSSMAN, *Reading for History in the Damascus Document: A Methodological Study*. *STDJ* 45 (Leiden 2002); *The Community of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, *DSD* 16/3 (2009); M. GOODMAN, "Constructing Ancient Judaism from the Scrolls", in: LIM / COLLINS 2010, 81–91; P. R. DAVIES, "What history can we get from the Scrolls, and how?", in: HEMPEL 2010, 31–46; COLLINS 2010; Id. 2011, and in this volume, p. 161–178; J. C. VANDERKAM, "The Pre-History of the Qumran Community with a Reassessment of CD 1:1–11", in: ROITMAN / SCHIFFMAN / TZOREF 2011, 59–78; on the archaeological evidence, see MAGNESS 2002.

riod. The New Testament attests four such parties: the priestly caste (Saducees), the scribes and Torah teachers (Pharisees), the insurrectionists revolting against Roman foreign rule (Zealots), and – last but not least – the disciples of Jesus and early Christians, which stemmed from the movement of John the Baptist. In addition, the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus and other ancient sources mention yet another group: the Essenes. According to ancient sources, the Essenes distinguished themselves through a kind of biblical fundamentalism and concomitant radical, pious lifestyle, which strictly conformed to the precepts of Jewish law and displaying other peculiarities.<sup>12</sup>

In terms of lifestyle and ideas, several points of contact between the Dead Sea Scrolls, on the one hand, and reports from ancient historians, on the other, have led scholars to believe the Essenes and the Qumran community were but one and the same faction.<sup>13</sup> Pliny the Elder and Dion Chrysostom seemed to support such equation with their reference to an Essenic settlement on the Dead Sea's northwestern coast, thereby suggesting a connection between the caves along with their texts and the settlement of Khirbet Qumran. Yet neither identification with the Essenes nor connection with the settlement can simply be assumed. Already criticized in the early years of Qumran scholarship, both assumptions have now fallen into heated controversy. For this reason, the texts should first be read on their own so that a portrait of the community depicted can appear on its own terms; afterwards – and only afterwards – can this portrait then be compared with and, if appropriate, related to reports from ancient sources concerning the Essenes, on the one hand, and the findings of modern excavators concerning the settlement's archeology, on the other.

### 1.3. The Witness of the Texts

To delineate the profile of the community, the third class of texts – i.e., writings from the Qumran community – demands initial scrutiny. Within their own compositions, the community calls itself *ha-Yahad*, which means nothing more than “the community” in Hebrew. This group broke away from other forms of contemporary Judaism and claimed to represent the one true Israel. Perhaps separated as early as the end of the third or beginning of the second century BCE, the division probably resulted from social and religious dislocations instituted by the Hellenization of Judaism. Through

<sup>12</sup> For the sources, see A. DUPONT-SOMMER, *Die essenischen Schriften vom Toten Meer unter Zugrundelegung der Original-Texte*, translated by Walter W. Müller (Tübingen 1960) 24–43; for the historical context, KRATZ 2015, 39–45.

<sup>13</sup> For the comparison between Josephus' account and the Dead Sea Scrolls, see T. S. BEALL, *Josephus' Description of the Essenes Illustrated by the Dead Sea Scroll*. SNTS.MS 58 (Cambridge 1988).

distinction between the just and the wicked, such dislocation already occurs in later texts of the Hebrew Bible itself.<sup>14</sup> The first psalm in the biblical collection formulates this contrast in short and memorable form:

Happy are those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or take the path that sinners tread, or sit in the seat of scoffers; but their delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law they meditate day and night. (Ps 1:1-2, NRSV).

Preserved in IQS V–VII, the oldest version of the Community Rule (*Serekh ha-Yahad*) builds upon this passage: accordingly, the “men of the community” establish their own order:

to convert from all evil and to keep themselves steadfast in all he commanded in compliance with his will. They should keep apart from the congregation of the men of injustice in order to constitute a Community in law (*torah*) and possessions (IQS V 1-2, DSSSE).

The community, organized in the style or at least similar to Hellenistic associations,<sup>15</sup> seems to have grown steadily over time and spread itself across numerous localities throughout the land, as suggested by the diverse ordinances in QS and QD. The regulations for communal life underwent multiple adaptations to new conditions as well as greater differentiation.<sup>16</sup> In these particular texts, the community and its sprigs provide themselves with strict ordinances for admission and expulsion, segment themselves hierarchically into leading officials and various other member classes, and prescribe themselves a stringent *modus vivendi* under penalty of sanctions. While they certainly betray temporal and regional differences, in the course of time these regulations continued to draw closer and closer to the biblical ideal – especially as formulated in the book of Numbers – of the people of Israel as a military camp and collective dominated by priests.

This differentiation in directives involved an increasingly sophisticated means of legal interpretation (*Halakhah*), both formally and substantially, that oriented itself toward the Hebrew Bible’s juridical tradition as expressed in the Torah. A more or less linear path thus led from the oldest legal corpus of the Hebrew Bible, the so-called Covenant Code in Exod 20–23, through its rewriting in the book of Deuteronomy along with the Holiness Code of Lev 17–26 to the stipulations in the so-called *Penal Code*

<sup>14</sup> On the relationship between the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament), see R. G. KRATZ, “Das Alte Testament und die Texte vom Toten Meer”, *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 125 (2013) 198–213 and Id. 2013.

<sup>15</sup> See GILLIHAN 2012; ECKHARDT 2019; A. R. KRAUSE, “Qumran Discipline and Rites of Affliction in Their Associational Context”, in: B. ECKHARDT (ed.), *Private Associations and Jewish Communities in the Hellenistic and Roman Cities*. JSJ.S 191 (Leiden 2019) 58–75.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. the divergent versions of QS and QD in DSSP 1–3; on this topic, see S. METSO, *The Textual Development of the Qumran Community Rule*. STDJ 21 (Leiden 1997); HEMPEL 1998; Ead. 2013; for a “new paradigm,” see A. SCHOFIELD, *From Qumran to the Yahad. A New Paradigm of Textual Development for the Community Rule*. STDJ 77 (Leiden 2009).

(1QS VI–VII) as well as its own updating (*Fortschreibung*) in the regulations of QS and QD.<sup>17</sup> Perhaps the most impressive example of Halakhah as developed in this trajectory, is our text edited in this volume, *Miqṣat Ma'ase Ha-Torah*, “Some of the Works of the Torah” (4QMMT), which concerns several cases of legal interpretation and, most notably, considers questions of purity debated among different schools of thought.

Alongside the study and practice of Torah, the community at Qumran created its own tradition of prayer. Presumably, it replaced the sacrificial cult of the temple in Jerusalem, from which the community had distanced itself both inwardly and outwardly. Represented by multitudinous manuscripts among the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Psalter provided a prominent model. One particular exemplar (11Q5 = 11QP<sup>a</sup>), which encompasses approximately the Psalter’s final third (Pss. 100–150), reproduces the individual psalms at times in different order and also contains additional compositions.<sup>18</sup> In the style of the Psalms, the Thanksgiving Hymns or *Hodayot* (QH) comprise a collection of individual hymns and prayers.<sup>19</sup> Consistently commencing with “I thank you, O Lord” or “Praised be you, O Lord,” they center on the supplicant’s distress and deep despair as well as his deliverance in addition to the insight and enlightenment that befall him.

Not all songs are the same, however. Some display greater individuality while others exhibit a more collective character. On the basis of these and other features, scholarship often distinguishes between songs of the “Teacher of Righteousness” and those of the community. Yet the *Hodayot* never mention a teacher explicitly. Rather, the supplicating “I” may only

<sup>17</sup> KRATZ 2011; Id., “Laws of Wisdom: Sapiential Traits in the Rule of the Community (1QS 5–7)”, in: S. E. FASSBERG / M. BAR-ASHER / R. A. CLEMENTS (eds.), *Hebrew in the Second Temple Period: The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls and of Other Contemporary Sources*. STDJ 108 (Leiden 2013) 133–145; A. STEUDEL, “The Damascus Document (D) as a Rewriting of the Community Rule (S)”, *RdQ* 25 (2012) 605–620.

<sup>18</sup> On manuscripts of the psalms, see P. W. FLINT, *The Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls and the Book of Psalms* (Leiden 1997); U. DAHMEN, *Psalmen- und Psalter-Rezeption im Frühjudentum: Rekonstruktion, Textbestand, Struktur und Pragmatik der Psalmenrolle 11QP<sup>a</sup> aus Qumran*. STDJ 49 (Leiden 2003); E. JAIN, *Psalmen oder Psalter? Materielle Rekonstruktion und inhaltliche Untersuchung der Psalmehandschriften von Qumran*. STDJ 109 (Leiden 2014); on 11QP<sup>a</sup> (DJD 4) also R. G. KRATZ, “‘Blessed Be the Lord and Blessed Be his Name Forever’: Psalm 145 in the Hebrew Bible and in Psalms Scroll 11Q5”, in: PENNER / PENNER / WASSEN 2012, 229–243.

<sup>19</sup> DJD 40; on the *Hodayot*, see JEREMIAS 1963; N. LOHFINK, *Lobgesänge der Armen: Studien zum Magnifikat, den Hodayot von Qumran und einigen späten Psalmen, mit einem Anhang, Hodayot-Bibliographie 1948–1989 von Ulrich Dahmen*. Stuttgarter Bibelstudien 143 (Stuttgart 1990); NEWSOM 2004; A. K. HARKINS, *Reading with an “I” to the Heavens: Looking at the Qumran Hodayot through the Lens of Visionary Traditions*. Ekstasis, Religious Experience from Antiquity to the Middle Ages 3 (Berlin 2012); on hymns and prayers in general, see B. NITZAN, *Qumran Prayer and Religious Poetry*, translated from Hebrew by Jonathan Chapman. STDJ 12 (Leiden 1994); D. K. FALK, *Daily, Sabbath, and Festival Prayers in the Dead Sea Scrolls*. STDJ 27 (Leiden 1998); PENNER / PENNER / WASSEN 2012.

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