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Foreword

Those who do not know Hebrew may finally read the English versions of David Flusser's collected essays. The present volume, *Judaism of the Second Temple Period: Qumran and Apocalypticism*, is the culmination of a remarkable effort and collaboration on the part of translator Azzan Yadin and three publishers: Magnes Press, Jerusalem Perspective, and Eerdmans. It is with great satisfaction that the publishers bring Flusser's insights to a wider audience.

Flusser conversed fluently in nine languages and read scholarly literature in an additional seventeen. His first language was German. His second, learned fluently only after his immigration to Israel, was Hebrew. Consequently, most of Flusser's published writings are in German or Hebrew. Only a small percentage of Flusser's articles were authored in English. The scope and importance of Flusser's research is so great that it is unthinkable that his Hebrew and German writings should for long remain untranslated to English. Flusser's contributions to Dead Sea Scrolls research, Apocalypticism, and Apocalyptic Literature is inestimable. Jerusalem Perspective is pleased to have had a hand in this publishing endeavor.

Though Flusser wrote less often in the English language, he did succeed in producing two volumes in English: with the help of his student R. Steven Notley, he wrote *Jesus (The Sage from Galilee)*, 4th ed., Eerdmans, 2007); and with the help of his student Brad H. Young, he collected most of his English articles into *Judaism and the Origins of Christianity* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1988, 725 pp.).

My relationship with Flusser was one of a pupil to his mentor. Enrolled as a student in the department of Jewish History at the Hebrew University, I

began to study New Testament and Early Christianity with Flusser in 1964. At that time, he was only 46 years old. He continued to enlighten me until the final days of his life, even from his hospital bed at the Hadassah University Medical Center in Jerusalem. Professor Flusser died on September 15, 2000, his 83rd birthday.

Flusser was one of the world's leading Jewish authorities on the New Testament and Early Christianity. His pioneering research on Jesus and Christianity's relationship to Judaism won him international recognition. Flusser's collaboration with Robert L. Lindsey, beginning in 1961, resulted in a new approach to the Synoptic Gospels, the approach espoused by The Jerusalem School of Synoptic Research (www.js.org), which is an association of Jewish and Christian scholars. This unique cooperation was capped recently by the twelve essays (including one by Flusser, posthumously) of *Jesus' Last Week: Jerusalem Studies in the Synoptic Gospels* (ed. R. S. Notley, M. Turnage and B. Becker; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2005).

In my judgment, disciples should assure that all the unpublished material of a prominent teacher is published before they publish their own research. The teacher's work takes precedence over the disciple's. With this in mind, I approached Hai Tsabar, director of Magnes Press, the publishing arm of the Hebrew University, about the possibility of translating into English the two-volume collection of Flusser's Hebrew articles that Magnes Press recently had published. To my delight, Hai was as enthusiastic about the project as I was. It is my pleasure here to thank him publicly for facilitating this difficult and lengthy project.

Even before the project was envisioned, Jerusalem Perspective had made an effort to expand Flusser's English bibliography. Since 1989, we have published most of Flusser's English output; note these examples: ". . . To Bury Caiaphas, Not to Praise Him" (*Jerusalem Perspective* 33 & 34 [Jul.-Oct. 1991], 23-28), and "New Portrait of Salome" (*Jerusalem Perspective* 55 [Apr.-Jun. 1999], 18-23). These and Flusser's other recent articles also have been published electronically at <http://www.jerusalemerspective.com/>.

The publishers wish to express their appreciation to Serge Ruzer. In consultation with Professor Flusser, Dr. Ruzer collected, arranged and brought to press the two volumes of Flusser's published Hebrew articles. (The present volume is the translation of the first volume of that collection.) The publishers are greatly indebted to the volume's translator, Azzan Yadin, Associate Professor of Jewish Studies at Rutgers University. My thanks are extended to the editors and graphic artists of Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, who have given us a product worthy of Flusser's genius.

Finally, I would like to sincerely thank the donors who made this volume possible (see the Acknowledgments page), especially the Branch family.

DAVID BIVIN

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Introduction: Qumran and the Essenes

The articles in the present collection consist of my studies of the Dead Sea Scrolls, a pursuit I began when the scrolls were first discovered and which continues to this day, as their publication continues. Though some of these studies were published years ago, I chose not to needlessly update them. I have spared the readers many of the hypotheses put forward by some scholars, primarily because I do not wish to take part in the creation of the “phantasms” that seem to have sprouted like mushrooms in the wake of the “shocking” discovery, a discovery that, for whatever reason, causes some people to throw discretion to the wind. That said, every publication, be it of a worthwhile study or — and particularly — of a new Qumran text, requires a willingness to reexamine our assumptions and, on more than one occasion, to abandon established conclusions. This ongoing process is reflected in the studies gathered in this volume.

Most scholars rightly identify the Qumran community with the Essenes, who are known to us from the writings of Josephus, Philo, and Pliny the Elder. If in the early days of Qumran scholarship Josephus shed light on the scrolls, today the roles are reversed and the scrolls aid in interpreting Josephus. In the course of investigation it has, moreover, become apparent that Josephus is a more accurate witness than Philo in all matters Essene. Of course, there are facts that neither author mentions, and details they mention but the scrolls pass over in silence. Ultimately, however, there are not many points of contradiction between Josephus’ account and the writings of the sect.

The identification of the Qumran community with the Essenes does not answer all questions. It is clear that not all the Qumran writings are sec-

tarian or reflect a specifically Essene sensibility. After all, the Qumran corpus contains parts of all the books of the Bible except the Scroll of Esther (which was rare at the time), and even fragments of Ben Sira (Sirach), whose view certainly was at odds with that of the Qumran community. This apparent discrepancy may be due to the fact that the Dead Sea sect, like many of its contemporaries, considered Ben Sira part of the biblical canon. In light of this, it is necessary to distinguish between the sectarian writings and the rest of the Qumran texts. One scholar has proposed an orthographic criterion: that the sectarian writings employ a unique *plene* spelling. But while this hypothesis cannot be rejected out of hand, there is no reason to assume that a Qumran scribe could not have employed this spelling when copying non-sectarian texts. Another distinguishing criterion may be the special, somewhat artificial language of the sectarian texts, though here too the distinction is not absolute.

There is no question that the whole (or almost whole) scrolls that were composed by the Qumran sectarians include the War Scroll, the Community Rule (also called the Manual of Discipline) and the Rule of the Congregation, the Hodayot, the Temple Scroll, and 4QMMT. The status of the Damascus Document is more complicated, since it was published before the discovery of the scrolls from a medieval witness preserved in the Cairo Genizah. When the scrolls were first discovered, there were scholars who recognized a connection between the Damascus Document and the Qumran writings. Since then, a number of important Damascus Document fragments from Qumran have been published (see DJD XVIII, 1996). The Qumran fragments preserve a reference to Damascus (there, p. 44), though it occurs in a problematic sentence that speaks of “the Interpreter of the Law who will come to Damascus” (CD 7.18-19). Now, the Interpreter of the Law is an important figure within the community. We further find reference to “the converts of Israel, who left the land of Judah and lived in the land of Damascus” (CD 6.5), and to “all the men who entered the new covenant in the land of Damascus” (CD 8.21, and see also 10.19; 19.34; 20.21). It appears, then, that the Interpreter of the Law came to Damascus, where a new covenant was established among those who left Judah and “lived in the land of Damascus.” The matter is further complicated by the fact that the community of the Damascus Document differs with regard to its laws and its social structure from the strict ideological structure of the Qumran community, reflecting more closely the description of the Essenes found in Josephus. What was the fate of the Damascus group? Why did the laws of the Damascus Document merge with parts of the Rule of the Congregation? Perhaps the community eventually settled near the Essenes on the banks of the Dead Sea, though there will undoubtedly be scholars who

will use these issues as a launching pad for much more colorful hypotheses (assuming, of course, they are aware of the severity of the problem).

As noted, we ought to distinguish the texts that contain the Essene worldview from the Qumran trove as a whole. A similar challenge exists with regard to the relationship between the Essene writings and the biblical apocrypha. It is clear that the Essene writings are apocalyptic — this is a major issue in the scrolls. Among the Jewish apocryphal works there are some that emerged from the same dualistic conception that gave rise to the Essene cult, including Jubilees, the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, and the Book of Enoch which is preserved in its entirety in Ethiopic (Geez).

One area that has not received the attention it merits is the potential contribution of Qumran Hebrew to the history of the Hebrew language. I believe the language of the scrolls is largely artificial. The Qumran authors took care to avoid rabbinic Hebrew, preferring to imitate the Hebrew of the Bible, but the shift is not always smooth; occasionally one finds in the Qumran texts clear influence of Rabbinic Hebrew and even of Aramaic. Moreover, there are Qumran passages whose Hebrew is very similar to that used in Jewish liturgy to this very day — passages composed by members of the sect itself. In this regard, it is important to bear in mind that the Essene sect, and the broader movement within which it took shape, are part of the wondrous phenomenon known as Second Temple Judaism. It would be wrong to isolate the Qumran sectarians from the broader Jewish context of the time. Indeed, they bear the same special message that helped shape the spiritual profile of Judaism to the present day.

As for early Christianity, my *Judaism and the Origins of Christianity* is a collection of essays devoted to that topic. Let me state for now that the teachings of Jesus reflect first and foremost the views of the sages, but they are also influenced by Jewish apocalypticism. Jesus knew the Essenes but rejected their cultish separatism. To the extent that his teachings show traces of Qumran influence, it was most likely transmitted through John the Baptist, who was closer to the Essene sectarians (though he too rejected their separatism). Interestingly, the Qumran theology exerts greater influence on the second layer of formative Christianity, that is, on the epistles of Paul and other New Testament texts. A detailed discussion of these matters is available in my aforementioned book.

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