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The Dead Sea Scrolls and Antisemitism: Past Results and Future Possibilities

Just over seventy years before the date of the international conference "An End to Antisemitism!" sometime in the early months of 1947 (perhaps this same month of February), a Bedouin shepherd boy threw a stone into a cave on the northwest shore of the Dead Sea and literally struck the clay jars containing the artifacts that came to be hailed as "the greatest manuscript discovery of modern times!"[1] Between 1947 and 1956, in ten more caves in this desert region, the remains of approximately nine-hundred ancient manuscripts were found, Jewish religious writings, copied between the mid-second century B.C.E and the first century C.E. Most of the material was in very damaged condition, just small fragments with much of the text lost forever to time, rain, mice, and bats. The publication of these Dead Sea Scrolls—as the collection came to be called—was a long and complicated process: the official and scholarly series of forty volumes, *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert*, from Oxford Press was not completed until 2009, though popular and accessible translations of some texts had been available since the late 1950s.[2]

There is a general agreement about the content and fundamental importance of this find: (1) over two hundred of these manuscripts, most very fragmentary, are copies of the books of the Hebrew Bible (except for the book of Esther), copies almost a millennium earlier than the oldest medieval copies; (2) there are copies of certain Jewish works from Second Temple period that previously had been known only from later Christian translation (books such as Enoch and Jubilees); and (3) the largest group of manuscripts, almost two-thirds, are texts not

Note: I wish to express my thanks to the organizers of this conference, especially to Dr. Lawrence Schiffman, for the invitation to attend and to present this paper which challenged me to think about the issues raised here specifically within the context of this event.

1 The much quoted words of W. F. Albright, from a letter to John Trever in Jerusalem, dated March 15, 1948, when he saw for the first time some of the earliest photographs; quoted by W. W. Fields, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A Full History* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 76. Fields's monograph gives a full account of early years, 1947–1960; a subsequent volume is promised that will cover the history after 1960. For an abbreviated account, including a timeline that goes up to 2006, cf. W. W. Fields, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A Short History* (Leiden: Brill, 2006).

2 For a concise overview of the complex process of publication, see J. J. Collins, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A Biography* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), especially 16–20 and 213–42.

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previously known at all (rules of life [*serekim*], legal rulings, prayers, biblical commentaries, and biblical rewritings) from a pious sect/group of Jews (whether these are the Essenes described by the classical authors Philo, Josephus, and Pliny, or a related group is still much debated[3]). All this is material that can contribute to, and indeed radically refashion, our understanding of Judaism in the Second Temple period. Contrary to initial speculation and hopes, no texts were discovered that spoke of Jesus or the early Christian church per se, though there was much—from ideas about messianism and eschatology to practical details of community organization—that pointed to some type of relationship between this group and the beginnings of Christianity (again, the precise relationship and links are still much debated).

Over the past fifty-plus years, the impact of the discovery of Dead Sea Scrolls on fields of scholarship such as Old Testament Studies, New Testament Studies, Jewish Studies (in particular, the development of Jewish liturgy and halakah), textual criticism, issues of canon and the formation of the Bible, and Hebrew and Aramaic linguistic studies has been acknowledged and frequently discussed. But there has been little reflection from the specific perspective of this conference, that is, how the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls has made an impact on relations between Christians and Jews and on the issue of antisemitism specifically.[4] Of course, the Scrolls were discovered at an especially sensitive moment in history (1947–1956). The impact and trauma of the post-World War II and post-holocaust context in general and the unstable political situation in the Middle East area are obvious, but this was also a time of recovery and the beginnings of a new dialogue. One of the first post-war meetings of Jews and Christians, officially called the "International Emergency Conference on Anti-Semitism," was held in the Swiss village of Seelisberg, in August 1947, just months after the first public announcements of the finds in the Judean desert.[5]

I think we can agree that there is an overall sense, in both academic and popular circles, that the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls was "good for" Jewish-Christian relations. Indeed, the American biblical scholar quoted earlier, W. F. Albright, is said to have once made the statement that "had the Dead Sea

3 For a survey of the material and various theories, see Collins, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, 33–66.
4 I first considered this topic at the conference held at the Gregorian University in Rome on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the Second Vatican Council document *Nostra Aetate* and published a short article, cf. E. Schuller, "The Dead Sea Scrolls and Jewish-Christian Dialogue," in *From Judaism to Christianity Tradition and Transition: A Festschrift for Thomas H. Tobin*, ed. P. Walters (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 48–58.
5 The "Ten Points of Seelisberg" produced by this conference are recognized as foundational guidelines for Jewish-Christian dialogue.

Scrolls been found but a few years earlier the Holocaust could have been averted." Like any apocryphal statement, this one is virtually impossible to trace; Lawrence Schiffman claimed that he had heard the Albright quote from Samuel Iwry, a student of Albright, a Holocaust survivor, and the author of one of the first (perhaps *the* first) dissertation on the Scrolls.[6] Schiffman himself has written,

> Behind this exaggeration, however, was a prescient observation. By showing us the extent to which Christianity is based on Jewish roots, the scrolls call for greater understanding between Jews and Christians in the modern world [...] We do have a wonderful new treasure, one which can illuminate the history of Judaism and the background of Christianity, and one which, when studied properly, has the power to help us to heal the wounds of two millennia.[7]

Nevertheless, not everything has been positive. Issues around the Dead Sea Scrolls have both reflected, and at times intensified, tension between Jews and Christians on the individual and the collective level. We need only recall the twenty years (1948 – 1967) when Jewish and Christian scholars worked on the Scrolls in isolation from each other on different sides of the Mandelbaum Gate in Jerusalem. And, the traumatic days and months in the fall of 1990 when explicit charges of antisemitism were made after a newspaper interview that was given by John Strugnell, then editor-in-chief of the Scrolls project charges that were part of his dismissal as editor and his replacement by Emanuel Tov of Hebrew University as the first Jewish editor-in-chief. We can also acknowledge the more subtle tensions and agendas implicit in the ongoing debates about the "ownership" of the Scrolls: ownership on one level, in the claim that is a need to "reclaim" the Scrolls as Jewish texts because they had been expropriated and Christianized,[8] and ownership on a more concrete, physical level, as played out as very recently in the cancellation in January 2018 of a planned exhibit of the Scrolls in Frankfurt, when the German Foreign Ministry would/could not guarantee their return to Israel.[9]

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6 Personal correspondence, August 2005.

7 L. H. Schiffman, "The Scrolls and the Search for the Secret Gospel," in *Jewish World*, April 16 – 23 (1993), 18 – 19.

8 L. H. Schiffman, *Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls: The History of Judaism, the Background of Christianity, the Lost Library of Qumran* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1994); L. H. Schiffman, "Confessionalism and the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls," *Jewish Studies: Forum of the World Union of Jewish Studies* 31 (1991): 3 – 14.

9 In January 2010, when there was a Scrolls exhibit at the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, Canada, Jordan filed a complaint with UNESCO after Canada refused to take custody of the frag-

I will limit my remarks to three different areas where the Scrolls have had a tangible impact: (1) the role of the Scrolls in the academic study of early Judaism and early Christianity; (2) their role in formal Jewish-Christian dialogues and official dialogue statements; (3) and the more nebulous, but equally important, realm of influence on the level of personal experience and in the public (non-academic) domain.

The Academic Study of Early Judaism and Early Christianity

With regards to the influence of the Scrolls on the academic study of early Judaism and early Christianity, I can be very brief.[10] Let me just give one quotation, taken from the preface to an influential collection of essays that stemmed from a joint conference between Princeton and Oxford Universities in 2003; there Annette Reed and Adam Becker wrote:

> Postwar developments also paved the way for the new rapprochement between Christian scholars and Jewish scholars [...]. In this, another contributing factor was the publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which helped to open a space in which much needed interdisciplinary dialogue could flourish. In the library of the Qumran community, experts in Second Temple Judaism, early Christianity, and Rabbinics alike have found sources that shed new light on key issues and debates in their respective fields. Furthermore, these newly unearthed sources have exposed the dazzling diversity of Second Temple Judaism and the profound continuities that connect it with *both* rabbinic Judaism *and* early Christianity.[11]

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ments that were on display and turn them over to Jordan who claimed ownership. In the previous months, the Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad had made an official request to the Canadian government to seize the materials on exhibit and hand them over to the Palestinian Authority.

10 For further reading, see A. Lange and M. L. Grossman, "Jews and Judaism between Bedevilment and Source of Salvation: Christianity as a Cause of and a Cure against Antisemitism," in *Comprehending and Confronting Antisemitism: A Multi-Faceted Approach, vol. 1 of "An End to Antisemitism!"* ed. A. Lange, K. Mayerhofer, D. Porat, and L. H. Schiffman (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2019), 133–64; L. H. Schiffman, "Scrolls, Testament and Talmud: Issues of Antisemitism in the Study of Ancient Judaism," in *Comprehending and Confronting Antisemitism: A Multi-Faceted Approach, vol. 1 of "An End to Antisemitism!"* ed. A. Lange, K. Mayerhofer, D. Porat, and L. H. Schiffman (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2019), 193–208.

11 A. Yoshiko Reed and A. H. Becker, "Introduction: Traditional Models and New Directions," in *The Ways that Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. A. Yoshiko Reed and A. H. Becker (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 14–15. Italics original.

Many similar statements from academic books and articles could be quoted. Each of the components of this statement (1) that Judaism in the Second Temple period was a vital, rich, diverse, and complex reality; (2) that Jesus and the early Christian community are to be situated firmly within the Judaism of the time and cannot be understood apart from that environment; (3) that the Dead Sea Scrolls have played a singular and unique role in this profound and radical reconfigurations of earlier scholarly understandings—such conclusions have become a given in contemporary academic study, and I need not belabor the point.

Let me add three nuances to how the Scrolls have "opened up a space" in academic discussion. First, in attempting to trace out lines of influence, there is always the danger of falling into a simplistic pan-Qumranica.[12] It was not *only* the discovery of the Scrolls that brought about the radical rethinking of Second Temple Judaism. Other finds and texts were, and are, important. In the past five decades, there has been a comparable and significant, even dramatic, revival of interest in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, the Septuagint and the Targums—though the impetus for a revitalized study of these long-known materials has often been triggered precisely by new questions raised by the Scrolls.

Secondly, in the early years, it often seemed as if the Dead Sea Scrolls were most important for Christian scholars and those studying Christian origins and theology,[13] and that they could be ignored or at least treated as peripheral by Jews and for Jewish Studies since they were judged to represent "some digression which turned into a cul-de-sac" and ultimately "a dead end."[14] This slant-toward-Christianity was the case, at least on the popular level, even in Israel where much of the familiarity with the Scrolls in the early years came via the popular talks by David Flusser on the Israel Army Raid in the 1960s and 1970s where he presented the Scrolls mainly as pre-Christian documents.[15] It was

12 For a cautionary and salutary warning about the limitations of what the Scrolls can contribute, see R. Alter, "How Important are the Dead Sea Scrolls?" *Commentary* 93, no. 2 (1992): 34–41; J. Kugel, "What the Dead Sea Scrolls Do Not Tell," *Commentary* 106, no. 5 (1998): 49–53.

13 For example, K. Stendahl, ed., *The Scrolls and the New Testament* (New York: Harper, 1957); P. Benoit and J. Murphy O'Connor, eds., *Paul and Qumran: Studies in New Testament Exegesis* (London: G. Chapman, 1968). It was not until around 1975 that a survey of the impact on Jewish Studies first appeared, cf. G. Vermes, "The Impact of the Dead Sea Scrolls on Jewish Studies in the Last Twenty-Five Years," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 26, no. 1–2 (1975): 1–14.

14 S. Sandmel, *The First Christian Century in Judaism and Christianity: Certainties and Uncertainties* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), 85.

15 For Israeli scholarship on the Scrolls, cf. E. Tov, "Israeli Scholarship on the Texts from Judaean Desert," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls at Fifty: Proceedings of the 1997 Society of Biblical Literature Qumran Section Meetings*, ed. R. A. Kugler and E. M. Schuller (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999), 123–27; the series of articles "Dead Sea Scrolls Scholarship in Israel," in *The Dead Sea*

only post-1990, when the bulk of the legal materials were finally published (most notably, 4QMMT, the legal sections of the Damascus Document, and the DJD volume XXV on *Halakhic Texts*) by scholars with specialized training in halakha and rabbinics that the full import of the Scrolls for Jewish Studies became clear. Even more recently has come the recognition of the significance of the over two-hundred prayers and poetic texts for an understanding of the development of Jewish liturgical traditions and fixed statutory prayers.[16]

And thirdly, given that the complex and painstaking technical work of editing manuscripts for first publication as scholarly editions in the *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert* series is complete, the field of Dead Sea Scrolls studies and the key players are changing. Philologists, paleographers, linguists, and text critics are being replaced by literary critics, social scientists, and those trained in cognitive psychology. These are new voices, many of whom do not identify with, or are basically uninterested in, the traditional concerns of either the Jewish or Christian tradition. How this will impact on the field in the years to come remains to be seen.

Jewish-Christian Dialogues and Statements

Although in academia the role of the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in precipitating major changes in scholarly assumptions and paradigms has been explicitly acknowledged and documented, it is more complex—and less well documented—to understand how the Scrolls have or have not been influential in relation to official and semi-official Jewish-Christian dialogues and the documents produced within that framework. As noted above, there is a chronological correspondence between the discovery of the Scrolls and some of the very earliest post-war dialogue statements, yet over the years, points of contact seem minimal and rather insignificant. In a standard reference work such as *Lexikon der Jüdische-Christlichen Begugnung*, there is only a brief entry on the Scrolls, and the author, Clemens Thoma, concludes with a summary evaluation "für den Di-

Scrolls in Scholarly Perspective: A History of Research, ed. D. Dimant (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 237–402.

16 See, for instance, E. G. Chazon, "Shifting Perspectives on Liturgy at Qumran and in Second Temple Judaism," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls in Context: Integrating the Dead Sea Scrolls in the Study of Ancient Texts, Languages, and Cultures*, ed. E. Tov, A. Lange, M. Weigold (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 513–31; E. G. Chazon, "Liturgy Before and After the Temple's Destruction: Change or Continuity?" in *Was 70 CE a Watershed in Jewish History? On Jews and Judaism Before and After the Destruction of the Second Temple*, ed. D. R. Schwartz and Z. Weiss (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 371–92.

alog zwischen Christen und Juden ist Qumran von untergeordneter Bedeutung."[17] The more recent *Dictionary of Jewish-Christian Relations* from the Cambridge Centre for the Study of Jewish-Christian Relations commissioned only a very short article on the Scrolls, not written by a specialist in the field.[18] On the basis of a random survey (not complete but fairly extensive) of books and collections of essays about Jewish-Christian relations, I observe that that the topic is rarely treated explicitly or in any depth.[19]

In official documents, there are very few references to the Dead Sea Scrolls (I give only a very few examples, drawn from Catholic sources, although likely the same observation could be made about statements from Protestant sources). At the Second Vatican Council, the foundational document *Nostra Aetate, Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions* (1965) spoke only in general terms of "the spiritual patrimony common to Christians and Jews."[20] The 1974 *Guidelines and Suggestions for Implementing the Conciliar Declaration Nostra Aetate*, prepared by the Vatican Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, is somewhat more expansive, "Judaism in the time of Christ and Apostles was a complex reality, embracing many different trends, many spiritual, religious, and social values" (Section III).[21] I assume that the authors of this document had in mind the distinctive worldview and apocalyptic piety of the community at Qumran as one of these different trends, but this is not named explicitly. In a 1988 document from United States Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, *God's Mercy Endures Forever: Guidelines on Presentation of Jews and Judaism in Catholic Preaching*, there is encouragement for Catholics "to draw on Jewish sources (rabbinic, medieval and modern) in expounding the meaning of the Hebrew Scrip-

17 J. J. Petuchowski and C. Thoma, *Lexikon der Jüdisch-Christlichen Begegnung* (Freiburg: Herder, 1989), 322–23.

18 E. Kessler and N. Wenborn, eds., *A Dictionary of Jewish-Christian Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 122.

19 One welcome exception is the essay by L. H. Schiffman "Judaism and Early Christianity in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Jewish-Christian Encounters over the Centuries: Symbiosis, Prejudice, Holocaust, Dialogue*, ed. M. Perry and F. M. Schweitzer (New York: Peter Lang, 1994), 27–44.

20 Pope Paul VI, *Nostra Aetate: Declaration On The Relation Of The Church To Non-Christian Religions*, issued October 28, 1965 (accessed July 17, 2018, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decl_19651028_nostra-aetate_en.html), 4.

21 Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, *Guidelines and Suggestions for Implementing the Conciliar Declaration Nostra Aetate*, issued December 1, 1974 (accessed July 17, 2018, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/relations-jews-docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_19741201_nostra-aetate_en.html), III.

tures and apostolic writings" (Section 30 i[22]), but there is no mention of how the more contemporary texts from the Dead Sea Scrolls (both sectarian texts such as *pesharim* and other types of biblical interpretation as the "rewritten Bible" in *Genesis Apocryphon*) could contribute to our understanding of how Jews were interpreting the Bible at the time of the Gospels. We need to turn to documents prepared by the Pontifical Biblical Commission to find explicit mention of the scrolls.[23] In 1984, in *Instruction on Scripture and Christology*, the need to study "the literature from Qumran" along with the Palestinian Targum is acknowledged in a single sentence (Section 1.1.5.1). In a 1993 document, *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*, "the manifold research stimulated by the discoveries at Qumran" is noted, particularly the *Genesis Apocryphon* as an example of "the abundance and variety of interpretations of the Scriptures themselves;" special note is taken of the quotations of the Old Testament in Qumran "since the New Testament often quoted the Old Testament in a similar fashion" (Section 1.C.2). In the 2002 document, *The Jewish People and Their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible*, a section is devoted to "Exegesis at Qumran and in the New Testament" (2.13) that acknowledges that "with regard to form and method, the New Testament, particularly the Gospels, presents striking resemblances to Qumran in its use of Scripture;" however no mention is made of the very important halakhic and liturgical materials in the Scrolls that had been recently published.

There are probably multiple reasons why there is so little attention paid to the Scrolls. Some have to do with the very nature and genre of such dialogue documents: they are usually short statements, written in non-academic language, to be accessible for the general public. A primary focus is usually on presenting to Christians a revised understanding of the Pharisees whom they encounter regularly in the Gospel readings (whereas the Essenes and Qumran community are not mentioned). I suspect that many of those involved in authoring dialogue statements (or the Jewish colleagues whom they consulted) are more at home in traditional rabbinic studies than in what is still often perceived as the peripheral and specialized field of Dead Sea Scrolls studies. And where there is explicit discussion about Qumran and the Scrolls, these sections have

22 Bishop's Committee on the Liturgy, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *God's Mercy Endures Forever: Guidelines on the Presentation of Jews and Judaism in Catholic Preaching*, issued September 1988 (accessed July 17, 2018, http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/ecumenical-and-interreligious/jewish/upload/God-s-Mercy-Endures-Forever-Guidelines-on-the-Presentation-of-Jews-and-Judaism-in-Catholic-Preaching-1988.pdf), 11.

23 Documents from the Pontifical Biblical Commission can be found at: http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/pcb_index.html.

evoked varied reactions: approval in that they introduce a much richer and more nuanced presentation of Second Temple Judaism but also concern that undue attention may be being given to establishing a relationship between Qumran and Christianity, especially if this can be perceived as a subtle way of avoiding links between Christian origins and "real" (rabbinic) Judaism or Judaism of today.[24] In addition, the question has been raised whether focusing on the Dead Sea Scrolls can be a convenient way for Christian scholars to avoid having to come to know and to deal with the abundance and complexity of rabbinic/Talmudic literature.[25]

Impact on the Personal Level and in the Public Domain

In this third part of my paper, I want to reflect on some ways in which the Dead Sea Scrolls have made a contribution to Jewish-Christian relations and reducing anti-Semitism in what I will call (for want of a better term) "the realm of lived experience." This can be on a personal level. For instance, one of the great pioneers in Jewish-Christian relations, the Swedish theologian, New Testament scholar, and Church of Sweden Bishop, Krister Stendhal always credited what he called "my life-long quest for a better way to understand Jewish-Christian interplay" to a seminar that he took on the Dead Sea Scrolls with André Dupont-Sommer back in 1951.[26] Many others could give a similar testimony about how work on Scrolls was for them personally a determinative factor in establishing life-long values and priorities. Indeed it would be extremely valuable and instructive to collect some of these testimonies while the "second generation" of Scrolls scholars are here to speak; we have already lost most of the "first generation" and such personal recollections.

Jewish-Christian dialogue statements have frequently called for "fraternal [sic] dialogue" (*Nostra Aetate*, Section 4) and "collaboration with Jewish schol-

24 Such concerns have been raised by A.-J. Levine, "Roland Murphy, The Pontifical Biblical Commission, Jews, and the Bible," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 33, no. 3 (2003): 105; A.-J. Levine, "The Jewish People and Their Sacred Scripture in the Christian Bible: A Jewish Reading of the Document," *The Bible Today* 41, no. 3 (2003): 167–72.

25 See D. Satran, "Qumran and Christian Origins," in *The Scrolls of the Judaean Desert, Forty Years of Research,* ed. M. Broshi, S. Japhet, D. R. Schwartz, and Sh. Talmon (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute and the Israel Exploration Society, 1992), 152–59 [Hebrew].

26 K. Stendahl, "Qumran and Supersessionism—And the Road Not Taken," *Princeton Seminary Bulletin* 19 (1998): 134–42.

ars" (*Guidelines and Suggestions*, Section III). But even in today's increasingly pluralistic and diverse world, whether for academics, religious leaders or "ordinary folk," concrete situations that actually bring together Jews and Christian in a meaningful way (beyond superficial and professional interactions) are still often few and far between. I would suggest that it is the Dead Sea Scrolls that have provided, and can continue to provide, unique and perhaps hitherto fore unrecognized opportunities for interaction and collaboration.

As early as the 1950s, when the Dead Sea Scrolls were still very new, Cardinal Tisserant, the Dean of the College of Cardinals in the Vatican, wrote a famous letter to Msgr. John Oesterreicher, one of the pioneers in Jewish-Christian dialogue at Seton Hall University in New Jersey, expressing his hope that "the findings of Qumran will open a new field of studies where Christians and Jews will be able to collaborate."[27] As already noted, collaboration has not always been the norm. There were the twenty years, 1948–1967, of physical separation between Jewish scholars who had access only to the seven scrolls at Hebrew University and then in the Shrine of the Book in West Jerusalem, and the International Team, put together under the auspices of the Jordanian Department of Antiquities and the École Biblique, who worked at the Palestine Archaeological Museum/Rockefeller Museum in East Jerusalem. Yet the barriers have not only been geographic and political but also linguistic—even until today. Much important Israeli scholarship (most notably the early commentaries of Jacob Licht on the *Hodayot* and the Rule Scroll[28]) was in Modern Hebrew, and thus often inaccessible and ignored, though this is slowly changing as more non-Israeli scholars become fluent in Modern Hebrew. In addition, the isolation of Jewish and Christian scholars in the early years must be situated within the norms and practices of the times with regard to ecumenical and interreligious relations of any sort. In the 1950s, the International Team was considered radical and even suspect because Protestants and Catholics were sitting at the same table to work on biblical texts—at that time, it was hard to imagine that Jews might join the table.

Since the late 1980s, however, the publication of the Scrolls has brought together Jewish and Christian scholars in shared endeavors at a level and with an intensity that had little precedence or comparison. Cooperation in editing, translation, and publishing has yielded concrete results, most notably, the co-edited

27 This letter is quoted in "A Word of Thanks," in *The Bridge: A Yearbook of Judaeo-Christian studies*, ed. J. M. Oesterreicher (New York: Pantheon Books, 1955), 2:9.

28 J. Licht, *Megilat ha-hahodayot mimegilot midbar Yehuda* (Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 1957); J. Licht, *Megilat ha-serakhim mimegilot midbar Yehuda* (Jerusalem: Moda Bialik, 1965).

major reference work, the *Encyclopedia of Dead Sea Scrolls.*[29] The level of trust and commitment that allowed and called forth such endeavors did not come about by chance. I am convinced that the decades of separation and the intense emotion and mutual suspicion that was generated in the late 1980s around issues of accessibility and rights could not have been overcome without intense experiences of sustained personal contact. In particular, the decade between 1987 and 1997 (the year of the fiftieth anniversary of discovery) saw a remarkable series of international conferences held almost annually around the world (in Oxford, New York, Haifa, Groningen, Mogilany to name just some major conferences).[30] Of particular import was the Congress held in 1991 at the University of Salamanca and at El Escorial palace in Madrid, at the invitation of the king and queen of Spain, where for five intense days, Jewish and Christian Scrolls scholars, many of whom had not met personally before, shared not only formal academic meetings but lived and traveled together. I suggest that the experience of these years merits consideration as a case-study of what is required to pass from intense antagonism and suspicion to mutual trust and real collaboration; I suspect that there are lessons about the primacy and indispensability of personal contact in that process that are applicable to broader issues of dialogue. This experience can alert us to what is needed in terms of personal interaction with scholars from Jordan and elsewhere in the Arabic world who are only now beginning to venture into Scrolls study.

But in addition to scholarly interaction in publication, conferences and joint projects, it is also important to name what is and has been happening for decades now at the local level, involving "ordinary folk." The remarkably persistent and virtually unprecedented popular interest in the Dead Sea Scrolls has provided unique opportunities for Jewish-Christian contact.[31] Because activities on this

29 L. H. Schiffman and J. C. VanderKam, *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000). A few scroll manuscripts were assigned for co-publication to a Jew and Christian; for example, 4Q371–373, Narrative and Poetic Composition, was assigned jointly to Moshe Bernstein of Yeshiva University and myself in *Wadi Daliyeh II: The Samaria Papyri from Wadi Daliyeh and Qumran Cave 4: Miscellanea, Part 2* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2001), 151–204.

30 The papers from most of these conferences were published quickly in conference proceedings, usually by E. J. Brill in the series Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah. Often these conferences were the occasion for presenting preliminary editions of previously unpublished texts, so that in these years much material was actually being circulated and shared among "Qumran specialists" before it was formally published.

31 The widespread interest in the Scrolls has itself become an object of study from the point of view of popular culture, communication studies, and media analysis. See the series of papers in the thematic issue, C. Murphy and M. Grossman, "Introduction: The Dead Sea Scrolls in the Popular Imagination," in *Dead Sea Discoveries* 12, no. 1 (2005): 1–5.

level are so often local and spontaneous, much is undocumented. From my own experience and talking to colleagues, I know so many examples where a talk on the Dead Sea Scrolls has been the first occasion for a Christian church to invite a rabbi or a Jewish speaker, or for a synagogue to have a Christian scholar speak in a study session or as part of a Friday night service. For many participants this may be the first—and only—experience of Jewish-Christian interaction.

Equally significant are events that do not draw primarily upon the synagogue/church crowd but are in the "secular" domain: talks held in public libraries, retirement clubs, television interviews, and above all, public exhibitions of the Dead Sea Scrolls. These public exhibitions merit more explicit attention and reflection than they have generally received.[32] There have been over one hundred exhibits since 1949, especially in the last decades, in major cities around the world attracting literally hundreds of thousands of viewers.[33] While some attendees certainly belong to local churches and synagogues, many are from other religions (at the 2009 exhibit in Toronto, the third largest number of organized groups to register for lectures and educational tours were Muslim). A significant number of attendees would be "nones" (those with no religious affiliation). A public exhibition of the Scrolls might well be the only place where such people would be confronted in a serious way with fundamental questions of the origins of Judaism and Christianity and how the two religions are related. Although there is much to be critical about how the media has sensationalized and exploited the worst of bizarre theories and esoteric speculations, popular interest in the Scrolls is not to be scorned, and perhaps we, who are part of this conference, could be thinking more creatively about how to tap into this interest as an entry point to questions of Jewish-Christian relations and the elimination of stereotypes.

Given that we were asked to make concrete suggestions, I will close with one small but specific proposal: the promotion and formation of study groups that actually read and discuss the Scrolls. Such groups could be formed jointly by a church and synagogue from their members, or, more challenging, could seek to attract a more diverse clientele if advertised via social media, adult education networks or broadly based community channels. Precisely because the group

32 A. D. Roitman, "Exhibiting the Dead Sea Scrolls: Some Historical and Theoretical Considerations," in *Archaeology and Society in the 21st Century: The Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Case Studies*, ed. N. A. Silberman and E. S. Frerichs (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2001), 46–66.
33 For a comprehensive list of all exhibits, see J. Kalman, "Out of the Caves and Under Glass: The Politics of Exhibiting the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *To Fix Torah in Their Hearts: Essays in Jewish Studies and Biblical Interpretation in Honor of B. Barry Levy*, ed. J. S. du Toit et al. (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 2018), 431–82.

would be reading texts that are not "canonical" or "Scriptures" for any of the participants, I suspect that these texts could be a vehicle for "opening up" discussion about content and concepts (love and hate of the enemy, "end of times" expectations) and about group identity (how we deal competing claims to authenticity: is stringency in legal interpretation the most effective means of ensuring survival?). In such a shared reading, it may be possible to move beyond the level of ideas to explore what the discovery of these ancient texts have meant on an emotional and personal level: why some Jews/Israelis find "something symbolic in the discovery of the scrolls and their acquisition at the moment of the creation of the state of Israel;"[34] why some Christians get so excited and inspired about scraps of material from the time and place of Jesus; why some people continue to look to the Scrolls for secret wisdom and access to hidden mysteries preserved apart from either Jewish or Christian tradition. The shared reading and discussion of actual Dead Sea Scrolls passages, using the translation and study aids now readily available, might just be one small way these ancient texts could contribute to the aims of this conference in promoting dialogue and eliminating antisemitism.

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34 Y. Yadin, *The Message of the Scrolls* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1957), 14.

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