

Book Reviews

administration, and rule by both priest and king. Horbury shows how the title *nasi* was a kingly title, and that Bar Kokhba claimed to be reviving the ancestral constitution. Horbury argues that the evidence of the claims on the coins as well as the documents and letters from the time agree with the later patristic and rabbinic views of the messianism of the uprising. “The whole enterprise will have gained energy from the messianic expectations bound up with the constitutional terms; ‘prince’, ‘priest’ and ‘brother’ are closely knit with ‘liberty and redemption’, understood to include recovery of the sanctuary and the land” (388). The third section of this chapter shows how the Roman troops, aided by the Syrian fleet, massacred civilian populations and confiscated property, so that, not by open combat, but by wearing down the population, they finally succeeded. The final defeat, in which Bar Kokhba was killed, took place at Beththera, probably Beitar in the district of Bethlehem, in the late summer of 135 CE. Finally, Horbury notes how the Romans maintained their attitude of protection towards synagogue worship, and reflects on the maintenance of Jewish traditions after the wars and the fact that Christianity at this time still maintained its ties to Judaism.

The intricate and minute probing of all the sources that speak of these wars makes this a book with which all future scholars will have to deal. My only complaint is that Horbury might have provided a timeline in which his conclusions, even if at times tentative, might be easily accessible. The maps he provides either have too little detail or too much so that they do not help forward the argument. This, however, is a richly informative work.

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Alex P. Jassen. *Scripture and Law in the Dead Sea Scrolls*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014. 298 pp.
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The present volume is boldly conceived and meticulously argued. A general introduction (1–17) covers matters of method and scope. This is followed by two more introductory chapters: chapter 2 (18–40) is entitled, “The Dead Sea Scrolls and the History of Jewish Law and Legal Exegesis,” and chapter 3 (41–67) is entitled, “Jewish Legal Exegesis and the Origins and Development of the Canon.” The bulk of this book—chapters 4 to 10 (68–215) is about Sabbath law at Qumran and, by comparison, among the rabbis. The titles of chapters 4 through 6 all begin with the words “Isaiah 58:13 and the Sabbath Prohibition on Speech in ...,” with chapter 4 focusing on the Damascus Document (CD 10:17–19), chapter 5 focusing on 4QHalakha B, and chapter 6 on Jubilees and rabbinic literature. Chapters 7 and 8 are titled similarly: “Isaiah 58:13 and the Restriction on Thoughts of Labor on the Sabbath ...,” with chapter 7 focused on the Dead Sea

Scrolls (esp. CD 10:20–21), and chapter 8 reaching out to Philo and rabbinic literature. Chapters 9 and 10 turn to “Jeremiah 17:21–22 and the Sabbath Carrying Prohibition,” again in the Dead Sea Scrolls (ch. 9) and Nehemiah, Jubilees, and rabbinic literature (ch. 10). Chapter 11 broadens things out once again, surveying “Non-Pentateuchal Passages as Prooftexts” (216–46). A conclusion (247–52) is followed by a full bibliography (253–83) as well as detailed indices of ancient sources, modern authors, and subjects (285–98). Exegetical processes are illustrated throughout by block quotes and tables, with key words and phrases underlined in various formats to highlight allusions, quotations, and other points of comparison.

Scripture and Law in the Dead Sea Scrolls turns out to be, simultaneously, much more and a little less than it claims to be. Although its title suggests a focus on the scrolls, the book is in fact deeply embedded in the broader context of ancient Jewish legal materials, delving into relevant sources from Scripture through the Talmud and its medieval commentaries. On the other hand, the title does not indicate the particular focus of the book’s core. I have repeatedly heard a quip, articulated independently by students and editors alike: too many books on ancient Judaism have colons in the titles. But if any book I have read recently really needs a subtitle, this may be the one. *Scripture and Law at Qumran* is also, in large part, a detailed case study, honing in on the exegetical basis of certain Sabbath regulations for the Qumran sectarians and the later rabbinic sages.

As the titles of chapters 4 through 10 also indicate, the legal passages concerning the Sabbath provide an opportunity to reconsider a larger issue that has gone largely unaddressed in recent scholarship: the use of prophetic texts in legal discourse at Qumran. This indeed is the book’s second key subtheme, and the one chapter following the introductory materials that looks beyond the Sabbath (ch. 11) demonstrates conclusively that, as far as the Dead Sea Scrolls are concerned, “there is no hesitation to turn to a non-Pentateuchal passage as a legal prooftext” (245; cf. 5–12). At first, this may appear to provide an important contrast with rabbinic literature, where such a hesitation is indeed generally manifest, and at times explicitly stated (e.g., B. Bava Kamma 2b; p. 39). Yet Jassen’s well-chosen case demonstrates similarity in this respect too, for there can be little doubt that the rabbinic Sabbath law builds on Isaiah 58:13, and there can be little doubt that, for legal purposes, the Pentateuch remains ever more important than prophetic texts, even at Qumran. This conclusion is aligned with the book’s general thrust to place Qumran and the rabbis within the same historical spectrum, in line with “the growing recognition that rabbinic juridical activity should be viewed as continuous with its Second Temple-period antecedents” (169).

Readers of this volume will find it difficult to argue with Jassen’s call for recognizing continuities between Qumran and the rabbis. Yet we must also consider broader disputes in the Second Temple period, not all of which can be explained in terms of two-sided exegetical arguments. Both Josephus (*Ant.* 13.297–98) and the New Testament (e.g., Mark 7:1–23) affirm that the Pharisees attributed their distinctive practices not just to Scripture, but to inherited traditions as well. In a rather different way, the Sermon on the Mount (esp. Matt 5:17–48) depicts

Jesus as drawing contrasts between scriptural stipulations deemed insufficient and his own more expansive legal mandates (which are not, strictly speaking, exegetical). Closer to Jassen's concerns, a great deal of the Mishnah presents law as divorced from Scripture. Jassen recognizes this, of course, and points out, for example, that M. Shabbat 23:3 articulates a prohibition of work-related Sabbath conversations, without alluding in any way to Isaiah 58:13 (110–11). Jassen correctly describes how the later rabbinic traditions explicitly connect the mishnaic ruling to its Isaianic precedent. However, the general legal agreement here remains differentiated by a key variable—the possibility that any given matter of law need not be justified exegetically at all. If we are committed to finding continuities, in this respect the connection may link the later rabbis not with Qumran, but with prior depictions of the Pharisees and their nonscriptural traditions.

This leads to one further issue that, to my mind, could have been developed more fully. Here and there in the book Jassen argues that the rabbis (like others before them) were engaged in an “ambitious and audacious program of canon renewal,” infusing new meaning in older texts (63–65; quote from p. 65). Elsewhere, Jassen speaks more specifically of a directional process: a “scriptural exegesis that sought to make ancient Israelite law portable to new sociological, theological, and geographic contexts” (29), a process exemplified by the “robust exegetical expansion of Sabbath law in ancient Judaism” (249). The underdeveloped contrast here is that between generative exegesis (which would imagine the rabbis working with Scripture for practical purposes, to create new laws) and supportive exegesis (which would envision the rabbis as engaging in the less practical activity of providing exegetical justification for rulings already accepted as traditional by themselves or their constituents). To be sure, Jassen is well aware of the difference between mishnaic and midrashic forms, and argues forcefully for their coexistence (36–38). But coexistence in some places does not demonstrate interdependence across the board. Mishnaic forms may be a way of preserving laws derived, earlier, from Scripture. Yet mishnaic forms may also be a way of preserving rulings that enshrine customary practices, or were established for whatever reason, without exegetical foundation. Once again, what has fallen through the cracks are those Jews—Pharisees, early Christians, and others no doubt as well—for whom legal exegesis played something less than a primary, authoritative, and generative role.

Be all this as it may, this book should, and will, be read by all scholars interested in the history of legal exegesis in ancient Judaism broadly conceived. It will prove equally important to those interested in canon, exegesis, or Jewish law in general, or Sabbath law in particular. Users looking back to the book as a point of reference for one or another of these topics will also benefit from the thorough bibliography, many discursive notes, and helpful indices.

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