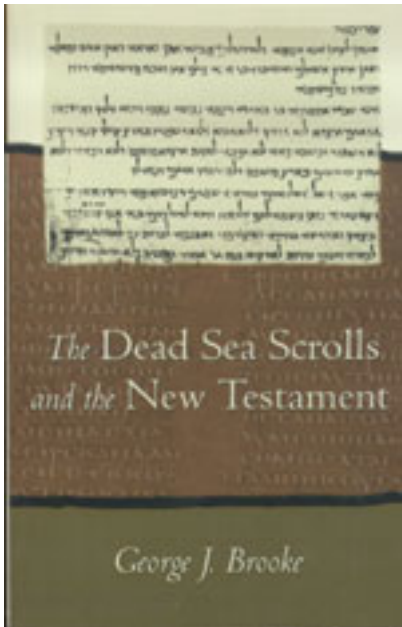


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Brooke, George J.

The Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament

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Those familiar with the fundamental research into the Dead Sea Scrolls have certainly come across the name George J. Brooke, Rylands Professor of Biblical Studies at the University of Manchester, England. Being one of the founding editors of the highly acclaimed *Dead Sea Discoveries* (DSD) and on the international editorial board for the Dead Sea Scrolls, having edited three volumes on the Scrolls himself, and being part of diverse research projects, Brooke is one of the leading Scrolls scholars. With this volume he “illuminates the first-century world shared by the Qumran community and the writers of the New Testament” so that additionally to scholars of the Old Testament even “New Testament scholars can use the Scrolls to learn more about the linguistic, historical, religious, and social contexts of Palestine in the first century” (according to the back of the book cover). Definitely, the Scrolls from the Dead Sea (and associated texts as well) are often neglected in New Testament studies, and it is about time that exegetes and commentators become more aware of the significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls in order to gain a more concise picture of their world and, thus, to shed new light on the New Testament as well. So who else would be most suited to this task to impart the appropriate knowledge to New Testament scholars if not George J. Brooke?

Readers who expect a coherent treatment of the relationship of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament will immediately be disappointed after learning from the preface (vii–

viii) or from a close reading of the text on the back of the book cover that the volume comprises of fifteen essays previously published somewhere else that are “revised and updated” (most of the essays in minor ways, some in a more extensive way [vii]). To avoid frustrated expectations, the publishers should have chosen a subtitle for the book, such as “Selected Essays” or the like. Be that as it may, the reader nonetheless receives first-class information on some highlighted topics. Additionally, the essays are arranged in such a way that the volume is divided up into three parts, more or less from general topics to very special ones. First of all, however, there are a preface (vii–viii), acknowledgements (ix–x), abbreviations (xi–xiv), and an introduction (xv–xxii), the latter with a brief presentation of each of the sixteen essays to follow.

Part 1, “Generally Illuminating,” consists of five essays that address fundamental and at the same time very problematic issues. After an initial survey of “The Qumran Scrolls and the Study of the New Testament” (3–18)—Brooke identifies four periods of scholarly engagement leaving the fourth with a question mark—the second study, “Jesus, the Dead Sea Scrolls and Scrolls Scholarship” (19–26), narrows the scope of interest and leads to reflections on a possible link between Qumran and Jesus. Based on the lack of evidence of Jesus in the Dead Sea Scrolls and of the Essenes in the New Testament, Brooke comes to the conclusion that “assessing the significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls for understanding Jesus has been to deny any connection between the two” (25). Essential for those readers who might have asked themselves how one can compare two sets of texts so different in length and character at all, Brooke offers some methodological thoughts in his “The ‘Canon within the Canon’ at Qumran and in the New Testament” (27–51). Certainly from what we have today we may point out which texts appear to have been more popular with those connected with the Dead Sea Scrolls or the New Testament and which less, and then deduce from that data which texts cited in and alluded to in the Dead Sea Scrolls *and* the New Testament were the most popular ones, namely, Genesis, Deuteronomy, Isaiah, and the Psalms (50). However, the significant usage of extracanonical writings in Qumran and the complex relationship of the canonical texts of the New Testament and the so-called apocryphal works may form two further aspects that could have been taken into account here.

Consequently, Brooke offers further insights in the “Biblical Interpretation in the Qumran Scrolls and the New Testament” (52–69) in his next essay. Here he can conclude that again the four biblical books mentioned above “are the focus of attention. But it should also be noted that despite this seeming similarity in the contents of the so-called ‘canon within the canon’, in fact the two corpora for the most part focus on rather different sections of these various biblical books” (68). Furthermore, “[t]he scrolls from Qumran present an immense range of compositions which use biblical traditions in an extremely rich and variegated way. These new compositions, for all that some of them may be

exclusively sectarian in authorship and orientation, provide a new context for the assessment of the use of biblical traditions in the New Testament.”

The last essay of part 1 offers some thought-provoking and refreshing analyses of exemplary biblical texts interpreted both in the Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament (“Shared Intertextual Interpretations in the Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament” [70–94]). Even if none of the seven passages singled out from the New Testament “explicitly cites any literary work found in the Qumran caves” (92), some of the biblical texts quoted in both areas are used very similarly in both corpora. Nevertheless, the contexts they are embedded into make them appear to be distinct again. Here, as throughout all the other essays, Brooke judges very carefully, when he states, for instance, about Gen 1:27 in Mark 10:6 // Matt 19:4 and CD IV 21 (92): “But we have noticed that these similarities need to be handled carefully.” This is proof of a high appreciation of the difficulties in this area of research.

Focusing on specific issues and special scrolls from the Dead Sea, the six essays forming part 2, “Particular Scrolls Illuminate Their New Testament Counterparts,” are of a different nature than the previous ones. The readers must decide on their own which of the detailed studies they regard as being essential for their future research. Again the titles are well chosen and help to find what one is looking for: “The *Temple Scroll* and the New Testament” (97–114); “Levi and the Levites in the Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament” (115–39); “The *Apocryphon of Levi*^b? and the Messianic Servant High Priest” (140–57); “Luke-Acts and the Qumran Scrolls: The Case of MMT” (158–76); “The *Commentary on Genesis A* and the New Testament” (177–94); and “From Qumran to Corinth: Embroidered Allusions to Women’s Authority” (195–214).

Then in the final part 3, “The Scrolls and the Gospels: Mutual Illumination of Particular Passages,” five essays are collected that highlight specific issues in all the four canonical Gospels of the New Testament. Brooke’s “The Wisdom of Matthew’s Beatitudes” (217–34) is more dedicated to 4QBeatitudes published by Émile Puech in 1988 than its New Testament counterpart. Its text is given in a handy English translation and contrasted with (the English translation of) 1QH^a VI 2–7 and then with the Matthean Beatitudes. Finally, Brooke can point out that “[i]t goes without saying that the publication of 4QBeatitudes should act as a corrective influence on those who assign all the differences between Matthew’s and Luke’s Beatitudes to the creative genius of Matthew. Although there is no need to argue for literary dependence of Matthew upon 4QBeatitudes...” (233), and, thus, he can prove the significance the Dead Sea Scrolls have for an adequate interpretation of the writings of the New Testament and vice versa. The other essays of this part of the volume are analogously structured and have the headings “4Q500 1 and the Use of Scripture in the Parable of the Vineyard” (235–60); “Qumran: The Cradle of the Christ?”

(261–71); “Songs of Revolution: The Song of Miriam and Its Counterparts” (272–81); and “4Q252 and the 153 Fish of John 21.11” (282–97).

The book is completed by a select bibliography (298–301) that is quite short and basic and indices of Bible references (302–5), nonbiblical sources (306–10), and modern authors (311–14).

Even if the reader occasionally gets the impression that despite Brooke’s repetitive declaration of the equal level of interpretation and usability of both corpora there is more to get out of these high-quality studies for scholars of the New Testament than those of the Dead Sea Scrolls, this collection of essays will serve their purpose very well: scholars of both areas of research will have a further and, above all, essential tool to keep an eye on that area they have not specialized in so far. Brooke succeeds in demonstrating the value of knowledge in both the Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament for an interpretation of these writings in a more appropriate way and according to the days in which they were composed and utilized. The rich notes and the concise conclusions after each essay make this book a significant contribution to the investigation of the relationship of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament.

Please allow me a personal remark to finish this review: I felt quite relieved when I noted that with the exception of page 19 note 1 and implicitly in note 1 on page 6 no mention of the fragments from Cave 7 is made. As someone who was once inclined to formulate his critical thoughts about the treatment of the papyrus 7Q5 as part of the Gospel of Mark in *Revue de Qumran*, I very much appreciate that Brooke turns toward the more significant and more influential traits of the massive amount of the Dead Sea Scrolls.